

Consumer News & Views

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ACC's Adds Credit Unions to Serve Financial Needs of Members in Kansas, Nebraska and New Jersey. The American Consumer Council continued its expansion of financial services to members by adding three new credit union relationships through our state chapters in New Jersey, Kansas and Nebraska. The three new credit unions that are now able to serve ACC members in their respective state regions are: Catholic Family Federal Credit Union, Wichita, KS; Four Points Federal Credit Union, Omaha, Nebraska; and, Campbell Employees Federal Credit Union, Cherry Hill, NJ.

Credit Union savings are protected and insured to at least \$250,000 by the National Credit Union Administration, an agency of the federal government. IRA deposits are insured separately from your savings accounts for at least \$250,000.

Campbell Employees Federal Credit Union – Cherry Hill, NJ.

The New Jersey Consumer Council welcomes Campbell Employees Federal Credit Union as a new sponsoring member. The credit union was founded in 1937 when a small group of Campbell Soup Company plant employees decided to establish a credit union to meet their financial needs.

Our credit union has come a long way since then. Today, Campbell Employees FCU is a \$150 million dollar credit union, serving approximately 11,000 members. Though we have grown since our founding, our commitment to our members has remained the same. Campbell Employees Federal Credit Union continues to deliver financial guidance to employees and their family members and remains a safe, trusted place to save and borrow money.



Since 1937, we have grown and expanded our service community to include employees of Pinnacle Foods (select locations), PHH Mortgage, Pepperidge Farm, Southeast Products, as well as family members of any credit union member.

Our main office is located in Cherry Hill, New Jersey and we have branch offices in many of the plant and office locations of Campbell Soup and our sponsor companies. Members of the New Jersey Consumer Council are also eligible to join the credit union.

Campbell Employees FCU offers members an alternative to banks and the opportunity to own a share of their own financial institution. Revenues are returned directly to the members in the form of higher dividend rates, lower loan rates and reduced fees.

Campbell Employees FCU is confident that the better you know us, the more you will want to do business with us. Helping you is what we do. For membership information on Campbell Employees FCU, please visit:

<http://www.campbellcu.org/about-us/membership/>

Catholic Family Federal Credit Union – Wichita, KS. The Kansas Consumer Council is pleased to announce its partnership with Catholic Family FCU, based in Wichita, KS.

Serving over 4,300 members, Catholic Family Federal Credit Union (CFFCU) was established in 1947 as St. Joseph Federal Credit Union. CFFCU is a full-service financial institution serving individuals, their immediate family members and organizations that are members, employees, volunteers, students, alumni or sponsored groups of affiliated Catholic parishes, schools and institutions in the Wichita area, as well as persons who live, work, worship, or attend school and businesses and other legal entities located in designated underserved low-income areas in Wichita, Kansas.



The Financial Source to Fulfill Our Members' Dreams

If an individual does not meet the above eligibility requirements, they can join the Consumers United Program which makes them eligible to join the Credit Union. The Credit Union will pay the first year annual dues of \$5.

As a member, YOU BELONG and can take advantage of the special services we offer as a not-for-profit financial cooperative. The close ties, which exist between the Credit Union and our members, allow us to offer you competitive rates and incentives to save, invest and use credit wisely.

Catholic Family Federal Credit Union is located in Wichita, Kansas. It has over 4,300 members and \$28 million in assets. The credit union was founded in 1947 by Father Arthur Klyber, C.Ss.R and was named St. Joseph Federal Credit Union. It served members of St. Joseph Catholic Parish, employees of the credit union and members of their immediate families. In 1947, the requirement of membership was to deposit \$.25 each month until five dollars (one share) was deposited. In 1990, St. Joseph Federal Credit Union was re-named Catholic Family Federal Credit Union. CFFCU now serves Wichita area Catholic parishes, schools and institutions and designated low income areas.

In addition to serving Catholic parishioners, CFFCU also serves select employee groups such as Adorers of the Blood of Christ, Catholic Charities, Catholic Schools, Postal Presort and JR Custom Metal Products. Our credit union provides basic financial services including checking, savings, loans, mortgages, credit cards, etc. But we also do a lot more. Some of our unique services include:

- Financial counseling / debt counseling for individuals
- Special home mortgage programs
- Small business services

For membership information, or to join Catholic Family FCU through the Kansas Consumer Council chapter, please visit:

<https://www.cffcu.com/AboutCFFCU/HowToJoin.aspx>



Four Points Federal Credit Union – Omaha, NE. The Nebraska Consumer Council welcomes Four Points FCU, a financial services cooperative offering modern banking products and services to members. We are member-owned, not-for-profit, and governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. We serve members in all 50 states.



Since 1934, Four Points has been serving employees and family members of Ag cooperatives and other select groups – with its original roots in serving the Farm Credit System. We were originally chartered as the Farm Credit Administration Cooperative Credit Association. We were the first credit union chartered in the state of Nebraska!

In 1943, our name and charter changed, and we became F.C.A. Credit Union. This change stayed in place for 24 years until 1967 when we changed our name once again to FCE (Farm Credit Employees) Credit Union. We were known by this name for nearly 40 years.

In 2005, after mergers within the Farm Credit System and credit union world, we again changed our name and charter. This time we adopted a national charter to better allow us to serve members in every state. We became Four Points Federal Credit Union to indicate our nationwide reach.

Historically speaking, Four Points is a pioneer in the credit union movement largely due to the efforts of a young Farm Credit attorney named John Eidam. Mr. Eidam served as the credit union's founding president. After serving as president of the credit union, Eidam went on to serve as Treasurer and then President of the Credit Union National Association (CUNA) in Madison, WI, which today still serves as the largest credit union trade association. In 1950, while Mr. Eidam was President of CUNA, President Harry Truman took part in the historic groundbreaking ceremony with Mr. Eidam for the organization's new memorial to Edward Filene – a philanthropist who donated much of his wealth to help start the first credit unions in the United States. After Mr. Eidam's credit union success, he returned to the Ag cooperative field serving as President of Omaha Bank for Cooperatives.

We are proud of our heritage in the early days of credit unions and the historical bond we share with Farm Credit and the agricultural world. Our traditions of putting member service first have stayed in place and are embraced by our directors, management, and staff.

For Four Points FCU membership information, or to join through the Nebraska Consumer Council, please visit: <http://www.fourpointsfcu.org/membership-eligibility/>



Consumer Confidence Inches Upward in 2016. The University of Michigan reports that consumer confidence inched upward for the fourth consecutive month due to more positive expectations for future economic growth. Despite the rocky stock market performance in January, consumer confidence is expected to gradually inch upwards during the first quarter of 2016 thanks to low interest rates and gas prices.

Chief economist Richard Curtin noted that personal financial prospects have remained largely unchanged during the past year at the most favorable levels since 2007 largely due to trends in inflation rather than wages. Indeed, expected wage gains fell to their lowest level in a year in early January, but were more than offset by declines in the expected inflation rate.



The result was that inflation-adjusted income expectations rose to their highest level in nine years. Consumer optimism is now dependent on the continuation of an extraordinarily low inflation rate. Rather than welcoming a rising inflation rate as a signal of a strengthening economy, consumers are now more likely to reduce the pace of their spending and thus act to erase the Fed's rationale for higher interest rates. Given the favorable overall state of the Sentiment Index, the data continue to indicate that real personal consumption expenditures can be expected to advance by 2.8% in 2016.

ACC Annual Meeting Scheduled for June 10, 2016. The American Consumer Council will hold its annual membership and business meeting on Friday, June 10, 2016 at 10:00 am at The Lodge at Torrey Pines located in La Jolla, CA. The meeting is open to all members of ACC and there is no charge to attend the meeting. The business agenda for the meeting will be published in May 2016. For more information, please contact ACC's meeting department at 1-800-544-0414.



The Lodge at Torrey Pines, La Jolla, CA

ACC's Friend of the Consumer Award Recognizes Outstanding Businesses in 2015-2016.

Is your business consumer-friendly? Does your business deserve greater recognition for its service to consumers? If so, you should apply for the American Consumer Council's Friend of the Consumer Award. Now is the time to apply!

Throughout the year, ACC presents its "Friend of the Consumer" Awards. This prestigious award recognizes manufacturers, retailers, and other businesses that produce or sell products in the United States that meet or exceed federally-mandated standards and are touted by consumers as "consumer friendly."

Each year, ACC awards numerous "Friend of the Consumer" Awards to deserving companies and organizations because they have "demonstrated a commitment to American consumers by providing a specific product or service that fosters consumer confidence and market acceptance."



To apply for the "Friend of the Consumer" Award, complete the online application and return it to ACC with the application fee. Applicants will be notified within 5 days of receipt of their application. Thereafter, a panel of independent judges will review your application and make a formal recommendation within 20 days of receipt of your award application.

For more information, visit: <http://www.americanconsumercouncil.org/awards.asp>

Green CSM Certification Accepting Applications for 2016 Spring Cycle:

If your company or organization would like to increase its credibility with consumers, you should consider applying for the **Green CSM Certification**. Applications for the 2016 Spring cycle are now being accepted through April 1, 2016.

It's a proven fact that consumers want to do business with companies that are eco-friendly and practice Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The process is straight-forward and all applicants are recognized by ACC and the Green USA Institute.

All applicants complete the criteria and submit their responses to ACC's Green Consumer Council for review, assessment and feedback. Program details and the **Green CSM Certification** criteria can be viewed at ACC's website located at: <http://americanconsumercouncil.org/greenc.asp>

