

Members Memos

Spring 2016

Protect Your Identity



If your identity is stolen, it can be scary, infuriating and time consuming trying to get the problem resolved.

One simple way to help protect yourself is to monitor your credit regularly. By law, each of the three major credit bureaus – Equifax, Experian and TransUnion – is required to provide you with a free report every 12 months. Request your report at annualcreditreport.com.

Other good identity-protecting habits to adopt include shredding all papers with personally sensitive information such as social security numbers, credit card numbers, date of birth, etc., using strong passwords (a mix of upper and lowercase letters, numbers and symbols longer than eight characters) and accessing personal data only on secure, private internet connections.

As a member of Members Advantage Credit Union (MACU), you are also encouraged to enroll in IDProtect. For just \$2 per month, IDProtect offers a number of ways to help protect you from identity theft.

The IDProtect's Credit File Monitoring Service provides daily monitoring and automated alerts of key changes the major credit bureau reports. In addition, they monitor more than 1,000 non-credit databases where identity theft could be evident and help discover instances of identity theft in children, which would not be covered by credit bureaus.

When you enroll in IDProtect, you can also register your debit and credit cards to reduce your liability should your cards be lost or stolen.

Should you find yourself a victim of identity theft, IDProtect has dedicated consumer fraud specialists who will work with you until your credit and identity are completely restored. You will also be provided with identity fraud expense reimbursement up to \$5,000 for expenses such as attorney fees, loan application fees, medical record costs, lost wages and more.

To learn more about IDProtect, go to macuonline.org and click on IDProtect link under **Advantages**.

Announcing Our MACU Scholarship Winners

We are pleased to announce the MACU scholarship winners!

The \$1,000 Gail Walker Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Michigan City resident Araya Stahoviak, currently studying accounting at Indiana University. Kristen Gushrowski, number one in her class, is the recipient of the \$1,000 Leona Bruno Scholarship. Kristen is a senior at Michigan City High School.

The two recipients of the MACU Learn to Earn scholarships are Mary Hervey, who attends Bethel College, and Stephanie Van Sickle, who attends Purdue North Central. Each of these students was awarded \$500. We will be awarding two additional Learn to Earn scholarships in the fall.

Fall in Love with MACU

In love with MACU? We know many of you have "broken up with your bank" and begun a positive relationship with MACU. We'd love to hear your stories! What is your favorite product? What makes us different in your eyes? Why did you make the switch to MACU? Individuals, couples and even entire families are encouraged to reply. High-quality and appropriate photos are welcome, too! Send us an email at service@macuonline.org, message us on our Facebook page or give us a call – whatever works best for you!

MEMBERS ADVANTAGE
CREDIT UNION



A Message from the President

Spring is here, and it's time to do some serious cleaning. But don't just dust and declutter your home. Do the same with your finances as well. Now is a good time to review what went well with your finances last year and address actions that need to change.

Take a look at your retirement savings, and make sure you're on track. For as little as \$100, you can open an IRA at MACU, which will help you stay on the right path. We also offer CDs and Money Market accounts.

If you have credit card debt, consider combining it on one low-rate card like the MACU Visa card with its 1.99% APR balance transfer rate. In addition to a great six-month balance transfer rate, you'll get our everyday interest rate as low as 8.5% APR.

We can also save you money when you refinance your auto loan. Our Dare to Compare Refinance Program can save you up to 1% APR (floor limit of 1.99% applies) on your current rate.

While you're at it, take the opportunity to compare MACU to other financial institutions and see how many other ways we help you make the most of your money.

With our Regular Savings and Advantage Savings accounts, you won't pay a monthly service charge, plus, we pay monthly dividends. And, especially for children ages 12 and under, a Penny Panda savings account will help them learn a valuable financial lesson while earning interest.

If you want to earn rewards on your checking account, enroll in Buzz Points. Each time you use your MACU debit card, you'll earn points that you can redeem for gift cards from participating merchants.

To see all of the ways MACU can put some "spring" in your financial health, visit macuonline.org.

Frank Beachnau, President

Best Car Buying Tips

Buying a new or used car involves more than just kicking the tires. Follow these simple tips to make your next car-buying excursion successful.

1. Know how much you want to spend

We recommend your car payment (including insurance and gas) be no more than 20% of your disposable income.

2. Shop around

Don't settle for the first car that catches your eye. Search several dealers, classified ads and use the internet to see what's available.

3. Use free online tools

Kelley Blue Book (kbb.com), Edmunds.com and Auto Smart (cudlautosmart.com) are great sites to research vehicles and compare prices.

4. Get pre-approved

MACU has a quick and easy loan process. You can apply securely online, or you can apply in person. When you get your auto loan from MACU, you'll enjoy rates as low as 1.99% APR, flexible payment options (online, auto transfer or electronic), no pre-payment penalties and value-added insurance and payment protection options.



Say Hello to HELOC

If you're a homeowner, a spring spruce-up can do wonders for your home's value as well as your own attitude. Whether you want to get your house in shape to sell, or maybe you just want to make your home shine, MACU has just what you need.

A home equity line of credit (HELOC) from MACU is different from a conventional home loan because you are not advanced the entire sum up front. Instead, you use it like you would a credit card or checking account, borrowing what you need when you need it up to your pre-set limit. And with a low minimum payment of 1% of the

loan balance, a HELOC lets you save money on interest.

New windows? Use your HELOC. New paint job? Use your HELOC. Whatever you want to do to your home this spring, a HELOC is the solution. With your choice of two introductory rates (1.99% APR for one year or 2.99% APR for two years) and no closing costs (on new HELOC limits of \$10,000 or more), you can't go wrong with a MACU home equity line of credit. Plus, unlike a credit card or auto loan, the interest you pay on your HELOC may be tax deductible.

Whenever you need your HELOC funds, access is easy. You can transfer funds to your checking account, use a MACU Visa debit card or make withdrawals at any of our shared branches or ATMs across the country. As a line of credit, the funds from your HELOC can be accessed over and over again for the exact amounts you need. And, unlike a conventional loan, you don't have to re-apply for money every time you need it.

Even if home improvements aren't in your future, your HELOC uses the equity in your home to give you the flexibility to get whatever you want whenever you want it. A family vacation, student loans, financial emergencies and more can be funded from the collateral in your home.

If you want to get more out of your home, apply for a HELOC at MACU today. One of our customer service representatives will be happy to help you get the funds you need.



Employee Spotlight

Born and raised in Michigan City, Mariam Kobos has been meeting and greeting members in her role as the receptionist at the MACU Michigan City branch since 1998. "This September will mark my eighteenth year here," Mariam noted, "and still, I love my job." Mariam's job entails more than just greeting customers. She also answers the phone, directs members to the appropriate department, handles phone transfers and more. "I guess I do a little bit of everything, and no two days are ever alike," she said. Although MACU has more than 9,000 members, Mariam says she knows many of the members by sight when they visit her branch, and she enjoys interacting with them. "We all understand we're here to help and serve our members, and I think we do a good job at it." When not working, Mariam tries to spend as much time as possible with her son, her daughter and their families, saying, "I can never have too much time with my three grandchildren!"



Practical Money Skills for Success

Want to do a better job with your money to help you achieve your financial goals this year? Here are six money skills you need.

Ensure you are math literate

It's never too late to brush up on your basic math skills. And, for the more involved calculations like figuring out compound interest and percentages, there are many websites that can do the math for you - just visit macuonline.org to access multiple financial calculators.

Live below your means

If you want to create and build wealth, the secret is to live on less than you earn. As the old adage goes, "it's not what you earn; it's what you keep."

Make a budget

By making a budget, you can steer money toward your goals. To begin, track your current expenses so you know where your money is going. Then, write down your long-term goals like retirement, home ownership, etc., as well as your short-term goals, such as a vacation, a new car and others. Next, attach realistic numbers to your goals. Finally, add your current expenses to the budget.

Start an emergency fund

Unplanned expenses are part of everyone's financial life. Start an emergency fund in the form of a savings account and add to it regularly. Whether you contribute \$10 a week or \$100 a month, it adds up quickly, and even a small amount of savings can help cover an unexpected bill.

Pay down credit card debt

With the rates credit companies charge, the less you owe them, the better. If you can't pay it off all at once, whittle away at it steadily. Try not to use a particular credit card until all of the old debt is cleared. Once that is done, pay off the balance monthly.

Save for retirement

You cannot count on social security to fund your entire retirement; you will need something else to supplement it. If your employer offers a retirement plan, you should be contributing something to it. If your company doesn't offer a plan, set up an automatic transfer to a savings account or IRA.

Enjoy More with MACU VISA

With a MACU Visa credit card, you will definitely enjoy more – more ways to save money, more ways to lower your interest rate, more payment options and more peace of mind.

All of our cards feature a 1.99% APR balance transfer rate for six months and rates as low as 8.5% APR. And you'll pay the same low rate whether you use your card for purchases or cash advances.

If you still want more, consider this. The MACU Visa credit card features:

- No annual fee
- No balance transfer fee
- No over limit fee
- Low minimum monthly payment
- Locally made credit decisions
- Same-day approval
- Multiple balance transfers
- Zero fraud liability on lost or stolen cards



Shred Days

Save the date for this year's Shred Days! Bring your documents, CDs and videotapes to be shredded on-site.

Michigan City Shred Day

June 4th from 9am-12pm
Michigan City MACU branch
3064 Ohio Street



Embrace the spirit of community by donating to our friends and neighbors in need. Throughout the month of May and on Shred Day, we will be collecting items for The Salvation Army food pantry at our Michigan City branch.

Portage Shred Day

June 11th from 9am-12pm
Portage MACU branch
6170 US Hwy 6



While documents are being shredded, members can mingle with adoptable pups! We will be hosting a donation drive for Lakeshore Paws during the month of May and on Shred Day at our Portage branch.

For more information and a list of donation items, please visit:
macuonline.org/shreddays.

Election Results

All three candidates for the 2016 Board of Directors - Frances Brennen, George J. Kazmierczak and Michael D. Palmer - were re-elected to serve three-year terms. Jace R. Smith and Sue Kieffer were also re-elected to serve on the Supervisory Committee.

Your Credit Union Is Closer than you Know

One of the many benefits of being a member of MACU is that you can have access to your account in all 50 states through **Shared Branching Credit Union Service Centers**.

In most cases, you can walk into a fully-staffed office where you conduct your business with real people. You can make deposits, withdrawals, loan payments, transfers between accounts and more.

Here's how it works:

Go to macuonline.org and click on **Shared Branching** under the **Info Center** tab. When you visit a Shared Branching Service Center, tell them you are a member of MACU, provide your account number and have a valid government-issued ID.

"Like" Us on Facebook

Did you know MACU has a Facebook page? Look us up and give us a "like." It's a great way to always stay in-the-know about our latest specials, get information and tips on your finances, learn about new products and services, find out ways we are active in your community and more! Feel free to add your comments, too; we love hearing from our members!

Got MACU Mobile yet?

We know how busy you are. That's why we created MACU Mobile. With this super user-friendly app, it's even easier to access your accounts anytime and anywhere. Check balances, transfer funds, make loan payments, pay bills and more. And, it's free, of course!

Have you signed up yet? It's simple. Just search for MACU Mobile in your app store,

and use your existing Home Banking user ID and password to get started. Not registered for Home Banking yet? No worries! Just go to macuonline.org and click on **Register** or give us a call at 219-874-6943. If you prefer, you can also email us at service@macumobile.org, or stop in one of our offices.

Start taking advantage of MACU Mobile today! It's perfect for your on-the-go lifestyle!

Michigan City

3064 S. Ohio Street
Michigan City, IN 46360

M-Th: 9am-5pm

F: 9am-6pm

S: 9am-12pm

(219) 874-6943

Portage

6170 US Highway 6
Portage, IN 46368

M-Th: 9am-5pm

F: 9am-6pm

S: 9am-12pm

(219) 762-6228

Special Holiday Hours

Monday, May 30 – Memorial Day: Closed

Monday, July 4 – Independence Day: Closed

ET (Electronic Teller)

(219) 874-6943, Ext. 6

Toll Free (outside 219 area code)

1-877-874-6943, Ext. 6

Board Members

Frances Brennan
Craig Hinchman
Stephen Janus
George J. Kazmierczak
Ben Neitzel
Michael D. Palmer
Jack Van Etten

Supervisory Committee

Sue Kieffer
Jace R. Smith
Robert Turner



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