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Community Financial Operates 23 Student-Run Credit Unions across Michigan.

Financial literacy award presentation is made at **Northville's Hillside Middle School** (Nov. 7, 2005) – Community Financial has made a commitment to teach thousands of Michigan students, from grade school through high school, how to manage their money.

In recognition of Community Financial's efforts, the credit union recently received the Desjardins Financial Literacy Award from the Michigan Credit Union League. A special awards presentation was held at Northville's Hillside Middle School, where Community Financial opened its 21st student credit union last winter.

"We're honored that our school was chosen as the site for Community Financial to receive this award," said Hillside Middle School Principal Jim Cracraft. "The student credit union is a program that teaches our students valuable life skills."

Since 1991, Community Financial has opened 23 student-run credit unions within Michigan schools in its service area. Starting with student-run credit unions in elementary schools, this program has expanded to middle schools and high schools. Northville schools participating include Amerman Elementary, Moraine Elementary, Thornton Creek Elementary, Hillside Middle School and Northville High School.

More than 900 student volunteers will serve this year as credit union tellers, branch managers, marketing representatives, computer operators and bookkeepers at Community Financial's student-run credit unions in Michigan. These student volunteers handle transactions for approximately 2,000 student members.

"This program provides continuity to our financial literacy programs and gives students real life, hands-on experience in handling and managing money," said Community Financial CEO Bill Lawton. "These student-run credit unions have also strengthened our relationships with area schools, educational foundations, students, teachers, and the community-at-large."

Community Financial staff will deliver classroom presentations to nearly 1,000 students during the school year. Presentation topics include learning how to use checking accounts, establishing and maintaining credit, teen investment options, economic concepts such as goods and services, and career opportunities.

The Desjardins Financial Literacy Award is named for Alphonse Desjardins, a credit union pioneer who was instrumental in forming the Canadian and U.S. credit union movements. In addition to founding the first credit unions in the U.S. and Canada, Desjardins pioneered youth savings clubs and in-school "banks."

"Our mission and success can be credited to the participation of all our staff in developing and implementing financial literacy programs," said Community Financial CEO Bill Lawton. "By

raising awareness and helping children and their families understand basic financial concepts, the impact is far reaching.”

Other Community Financial activities and programs include servicing youth accounts, conducting credit union tours, attending school events, and presenting financial education seminars specially designed for young members and their families.

Membership in Community Financial is open to anyone who lives, works, worships, volunteers or attends school in the Michigan cities, townships or counties of Plymouth, Canton, Northville, Novi, Alpena, Otsego and Montmorency. With more than 35,000 members, Community Financial provides financial services to members at seven branch locations and through a variety of automated and online services. For more information, visit the credit union web site at <http://www.cfcu.org/> www.cfcu.org or call (734) 453-1200 or (877) 937-2328, toll free.



Photo Caption: Hillside Middle School student credit union volunteers and sixth grade teacher Megan Monk (bottom left) attended the financial literacy award presentation to Community Financial. Also present were from top left, Hillside Principal Jim Cracraft, Community Financial Education Partnership Coordinator Beth Troost, Michigan Credit Union League Consulting Services Director Brian Paul, who presented the award to Community Financial Senior Education Partnership Coordinator Natalie McLaughlin and CEO Bill Lawton.

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