The Wisconsin Credit Union League
One League, One Focus - Your Success!

FOR THE RECORD

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Member story illustrates purpose of not-for-profit credit unions

"In May 2006, I found myself with a $300 bill that I could not pay. Desperate for some quick cash, I went to a payday lender online. At the time, I was confident that I would be able to pay off the loan the following payday.

I soon had unexpected bills. These unexpected hardships left me unable to pay off the interest – which amounted to a 600 percent annual percentage rate – or the principal on my loan. I found myself easily getting payday loans to pay off another, until in August, it came to an end. I found myself owing close to $5,500 with eleven payday loans, which included finance charges totaling $1,578.

Desperate for help, I tried borrowing the money from some leaders in the lending industry. All of the companies I contacted requested a co-signer/borrower even though they agreed that my credit was not extremely bad. I had no idea what I was going to do.

At about that time, Enterprise Credit Union became a partner with the company I work for. I spoke with the Vice President of Lending and, in tears, explained my situation.

Within a short period of time, the credit union was able to assess my financial situation, help me pay off the payday loans and recommend other resources – all of which got my financial situation back on track. They tactfully encouraged me to continue to make changes to control my financial situation, requiring some hard work on my part.

The credit union not only understood, but truly has members' needs in mind."

- Contributed by a member of Enterprise Credit Union, Elm Grove

STORY TYPIFIES CREDIT UNIONS' REAL SOLUTIONS

This story typifies the help credit unions are offering to pull people back from the "financial fringe" as part of their REAL Solutions initiative. Through the effort, member-owned credit unions are solving problems adversely affecting their two million members and communities. REAL Solutions won a 2006 Governor's Award for Financial Literacy. Credit unions are cooperatives distinguished by their:

Purpose – to serve members

Governance – volunteer directors elected by members

Member benefits – earnings invested in members and the community

Values – in people, not profits

Real people real needs
REAL SOLUTIONS

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