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The Latest

City of North Las Vegas employees attend Benefit Fair

And CCCU Marketing Director Craig Fraley was there to greet them

Wildlife, new automobiles, and a very animated representative from CCCU were all in one place on Wednesday, December 7. The event was an employee benefit fair at the City of North Las Vegas' new City Hall. The event was also the first one of its kind to be held in the new facility. In fact, workers are still putting finishing touches on the building even while it is now officially operating for public services.

Craig Fraley, CCCU's Marketing Director for all Select Employer Groups was there to meet current CCCU members. He also brought along membership materials to offer to CNLV employees interested in the financial benefits of credit union membership.

Sherry Morris, Senior Analyst Human Resources for CNLV, helped organize the event to allow CNLV employees a chance to learn more about health and financial benefits available to them throughout the community. CCCU and other providers, including companies represented by Employee Network were there to meet and counsel attendees.

As always, Fraley's enthusiasm was infectious and current active credit union members introduced their friends to credit union membership. "I love presenting at these events," said Fraley. "It's so great to hear our members tell their co-workers how much they love being a credit union member, where we care what happens to them and their finances."

CCCU (a full service financial institution) is not open to the public, but is state-chartered for emergency first responders and city, county and medical employees throughout Clark County. Eligible work groups are listed at the website: www.ccculv.org.



Sherry Morris, Senior Analyst Human Resources CNLV; Craig Fraley, Marketing Director CCCU

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The Latest

Five Helpful Tips to Teach Your Children About Money

If you give your child the tools, saving will become a way of life

Opening a savings account for your children or grandchildren is the perfect introduction to a bright financial future. Not only will they begin to accumulate savings, but they'll learn lessons in managing their money as well. Parenting website PiedmontParent.com states, "Kids love money and are all ears to find out more about it. But surveys show fewer than one in five parents [is] confident enough to have the 'money talk' with their kids."

Prosperity4Kids.com and PiedmontParent.com have some tips to help teach your children about money.

1. **Money meetings matter.** Kids are inquisitive and curious, which you can use to your advantage to have financial family meetings once or twice a month. At each meeting, ask your children what they would be interested in discussing or what money questions they might have. Then help answer their questions. Have some basic resources at your fingertips – perhaps a financial book such as *Money Sense for Kids* by Hollis Page Harman and a computer to do some quick research. These meetings can go a long way to empower your children financially and give them confidence.

2. **Budgets and goals.** "Waiting for someday" is never a good plan when it comes to budgeting. For some, it's always easier to spend hard-earned cash than it is to save it. Therefore, teaching your children how to create a budget can help them understand the importance of financial goals.

Setting up a simple budget can be both rewarding and fun for youngsters.

MyBudgetPlanner.com offers inexpensive and colorful budget planners for kids and teens. Have your youngster set goals, such as saving a portion of his or her allowance to purchase a musical instrument and keeping the rest in a savings account.



3. **Purchase costs and spending.** NannyJobs.org states, "If you don't buy something you have no idea how much it costs." When you take the kids clothes shopping, give them a budget. Spend time with your children browsing for clothes and looking at the price tags. Discuss with them that they have \$250 for clothes and shoes; if they spend \$100 on fashionable shoes, they

won't have much left for clothes. Learning this concept firsthand can be a great wake-up call for your youngsters.

4. **Time is an asset.** Your children have time on their side. If they start saving now, it can translate to wealth by the time they retire. Help them understand the importance of compound interest and saving money daily, weekly or monthly. The road to a solid financial future is by saving consistently throughout one's life.
5. **Foster career passion.** Do your children have special talents or interests? Guiding and nurturing your children's gifts at an early age can help them become adults who are passionate about their careers. Help your youngsters explore various interests and plan a career path incorporating their natural talents. Doing so will teach them that saving for their future can be a joy rather than a burden.

Begin teaching your kids about money when they are very young so that the concept of savings becomes second nature. If you have older children, it's not too late to help them too. Talk to your financial institution about the best savings plan for your children.

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Getting Ahead

Meet the Financial Services Team

Their goal is to help you meet your goals

Who do you turn to when you need reliable financial information you can trust? Sometimes Grandpa, sometimes a friend in the business, sometimes the Internet. Many CCCU members turn to their Financial Services Representative at CCCU. Team members at the not-for-profit credit union sometimes take on the role of a friendly uncle – or aunt – who can offer some solid advice without hiding ulterior motives.

When Mike S. needed to make an emergency medical payment of over \$4,000.00, he called in and asked for a quick personal loan. His credit was rough considering the times, yet he had been on his county job for 13 years and his payment history with the credit union was solid. During the call, his CCCU loan representative asked a couple quick questions and soon advised that a personal loan was not as good a choice as an alternative. What she suggested to Mike was to take a secured loan on his truck equity instead. The rate was much lower and the payment was something he could handle over 24 months far easier than the personal loan.

This happens all the time, according to group manager and Vice President Matt Kershaw. “We make it our business to help the member get a deal that is best for them – not necessarily for us. We are in this to serve people, not make a profit like a bank does.” Kershaw said that his team of Financial Services Representatives (FSR) is really well practiced at recognizing helpful solutions to personal financial situations. “We look at the person and what is affecting their life at the moment – not just a credit score. We want things to turn out well in the end.”

The team has an interesting way of working together, too. When a member calls into the main number, they will speak with one of seven different individuals who can open a new account, or advise them on loan rates and payments. If the member’s request requires research and a call back, it may be that same FSR, or it may be someone else on the team who responds.

“We have a very fluid and coordinated operation behind the scenes,” said Kershaw. “Any one of the team members can pick up the ball and run with it at any moment.” Members seem to like this, as it helps move the request forward more quickly.

Financial Services may be reached by calling 702-228-2228. Services offered include new accounts, vehicle loans, signature loans, VISA and debit cards, mortgage loans, checking and savings accounts, and – of course – lots of friendly advice.

Meet the Financial Services team members:

Terri Knight – A long time employee, Terri notices that the credit union members say they feel like they are family at CCCU. She notices this in how her clientele treats her, and what they have to say when they come into a branch for a signing appointment. “People want to – need to – save money these days. One way I help them is to refinance their car loan from another lender over to CCCU for a lower rate and payment than they had elsewhere.”

Jennifer Bernier – The longest-term employee of the group, Jennifer agrees; “We are like family here. When I have a new member join the credit union for the first time, I always say, ‘Welcome to the family!’ I love to help my members. When they call in, they know I’ll tell them the best rate I can get

for them right off, instead of starting high like some lenders and trying to get away with it. I want to help them out – not hurt them.”

Alyson Schweimler – “I see a lot of need for personal loans especially at this time of year. Some families need them to get through the season. I help get it completed, or I find a better answer if I can. I really like the fact that credit union lending is so very personal. I feel connected to the members in a personal way when I interview them and when they come in to the branch to see me.”

Adam Ballner – “I have been at CCCU nearly four months now. I come from the commercial real estate field, where I gained a lot of experience with large ticket deals and the lending process. I used to work on just a few deals a month. Now I help as many as 100 to 150 members a month with new accounts, new car loans, refinances, mortgages.” Ballner says he loves the customer service opportunities he’s received at CCCU. “I especially like finding ways to help members out with their special needs.” Adam commented, “I already have repeat members coming back to me to help them another time.”

Katie Kilby – Kilby has been with the group since only August, however has really enjoyed joining the team. “We have such sweet members,” she said. “I love the change from the teller line to the loan department because I can develop one-to-one relationships with my borrowers. It’s a chance to build a quality relationship at a deeper level.”

Christine Tassone – With CCCU since 2005, Tassone came to Las Vegas from Syracuse, New York, where she did the same kind of full-service work at a credit union there. “I always believe in topnotch customer service. I do that by looking at every loan as if it were a loan for myself. I ask myself- what would I want to have happen, what do I need? And then I realize that is exactly what my credit union member would want also.”

TG Yosef – Newest member of the group, TG hired on just last month. Originally from Ethiopia, she is a long time Las Vegas resident. TG says she really likes the credit union environment. “I came to CCCU from Bank of America where I did a lot of second mortgage work. I’m studying now by taking mortgage classes so I can receive Nevada’s state licensing and the national test approval. I didn’t need that at the bank but I will need it here.* I really like the CCCU teamwork culture – everyone is very helpful.”

**Nevada state law has an odd loophole that exempts banks from testing and licensing for mortgage lending. In contrast, 100% of all CCCU mortgage loan originators pass rigorous state and national exams covering laws and best practices for mortgage lending. We’re rather proud of that accomplishment. - Editor*

*Nevada Mortgage License #47791
National Mortgage License Registry #369667
For further information: <http://mld.nv.gov>*



Jennifer Bernier, TG Yosef, Christine Tassone, Terri Kight, Adam Ballner, Alyson Schweimler, Katie Kilby

News & Events

Ribbons, wreaths and Rudolph

CCCU employees decorate at St. Rose Dominican-Siena Hospital

Volunteers from CCCU branch teams recently made a visit to deliver holiday cheer to a local pediatrics hospital ward.

It's become an annual Christmas tradition. Branch representatives and managers from CCCU offices took time off in early December to visit the Pediatrics ward at St. Rose Dominican Hospital – Siena campus to help decorate for Christmas. Credit unions arrange for and donate holiday decorations, and then volunteers come together during the first week of December to decorate the children's' ward floor and rooms.

CCCU employees attending this year's decoration effort (along with other credit unions in the valley) included Denise Spina – Windmill; Jessica Gafeney – Tenaya; Sabrina Coleman – Shadow Lane; Tracy Webb – Henderson; Beverly Arroyo – Service; Debbie Edillon – Security. (See group photo)

Families and kids alike appreciate the cheerful effect, especially for those children who find themselves at the hospital for a long-term stay through Christmas. The effort, a part of the Childrens Miracle Network organization activities, is a worthy one. Monetary donations by interested parties may be made through <http://childrensmiraclenetworkhospitals.org/Hospital/StRoseDominicanHospitals> .

As a Select Employer Group, St. Rose medical professionals and staff are eligible for membership at CCCU. Founded in 1951 and chartered by the state of Nevada, CCCU has over 35,000 members and \$450 million dollars in assets. Not-for-profit and not open to the public, CCCU operates on the principle of "For people. Not profit." Four local full-service branches and 55 ATMs are located throughout Clark County, including ATMs in nearly every hospital in the valley. See website for locations: www.ccculv.org.



News & Events

Notice of CCCU Annual Meeting

When: Thursday, January 19,
2012
5:30-6:30 p.m.

Where: Tenaya Branch
2625 N. Tenaya Way
Las Vegas, NV 89128

The Basics of Auto Loan Cosigning

Cosigning is a big help but also a significant financial commitment

According to a recent Equifax National Credit Trends Report, banks and credit unions issued 820,200 new auto loans in July 2011. This represents just a 2 percent decrease from the same period in 2009. Loans to borrowers who are considered “subprime” make up about 17.6 percent of that number.

Many of the subprime borrowers got their loans by having a cosigner back up their promise to pay the loan, which can be a great way for a subprime borrower to get a second chance – as long as the cosigner understands and accepts his or her responsibilities.

What is a cosigner?

When you cosign a loan, you are stating that you will step up and become responsible for the debt of the primary borrower (the individual you are cosigning for) should he or she stop making payments as agreed. By cosigning a loan, not only are you saying that you believe that the primary borrower is responsible and will pay but also that you are willing to part with your own money if necessary.

As a cosigner, your income and credit will be checked because you are meant to lower a bank’s lending risk with the primary borrower. Therefore, you must be a good credit risk yourself.

What are you really signing up for?

When you cosign a loan, it’s a permanent step. If you cosign a five-year auto loan and in the third year decide that you no longer want to be responsible if the primary borrower defaults, you will most likely not be able to get yourself removed from the loan documents.

If the primary borrower stops making payments for any reason, you will be expected to step up. Any negative information about the loan can affect your credit score and the primary borrower’s, so you must do your homework and make sure that you completely trust the individual for whom you cosign.

What you should consider before you cosign



The first thing any cosigner should consider is his or her willingness and ability to take over payments should the primary borrower default. No matter how much you trust the individual for whom you cosign, even the best-intentioned borrower can experience an unexpected job loss or medical bill, after which you could find yourself required to step up and start making payments in order to avoid a negative mark on your credit report.



Next, you should consider the reasons behind the need for a cosigner. It may be simply that the primary borrower had an incident several years ago that hasn't fallen off his or her credit report yet and is affecting his or her interest rate. Whatever the case, you need to decide for yourself if he or she is a worthy credit risk.

Finally, you need to think about the terms of the loan and whether they make cosigning worthwhile. As a cosigner, you get none of the benefits and all of the risk, so make sure that the improved interest rate and other benefits the primary borrower will enjoy make it worthwhile.

Cosigning any type of loan is as serious as signing for a loan yourself, but it can have a hugely positive impact on the life of someone with no credit who is just starting out or who is making amends for a financial mistake in the past. If you have any questions about whether you're prepared to make this type of financial commitment, stop by – we'd be happy to answer any of your questions.

Lifestyle

Holiday Flying Without the Stress

Tips for a trouble-free airport experience

Whether a last-minute blizzard threatens to cancel your family get-together or that heavy, gift-filled luggage is costing you extra fees, holiday flying can be a nightmare. Fortunately, however, there are things you can do to prepare for, and maybe even avoid, airport chaos this season.

1. **Good timing can save you money:** The folks at FareCompare.com know a thing or two about getting a good deal on airfare. Since airline ticket prices skyrocket during the holiday season, especially around Christmas, knowing when to book your flight can help you save money and avoid stress.

FareCompare.com co-founder Rick Seaney first recommends being flexible on your holiday travel dates if possible; fly before December 17 and you'll likely save hundreds. Seaney also notes that since overweight bags can cost you lots of money, consider shipping gifts instead of packing them.



2. **Pack your presents wisely:** For those bringing gifts onboard, Alaska Airlines reminds passengers to refrain from wrapping gifts, since all carry-on items are subject to inspection. Wrap all presents after you arrive at your destination, or they may be unwrapped at a security checkpoint. Also keep in mind that the Transportation Security Administration's rules apply to gifts as well, so food items such as jams and syrups will not be allowed through checkpoints unless they are in containers three ounces or less and in one quart zip-top bags.
3. **Prepare for Delays and Cancellations:** Since many regions across the United States enjoy snow-filled holidays, it's always a good idea to have a game plan in case your flight is delayed or canceled. *Chicago Tribune* writer Ross Werland offers some tips, courtesy of TravelSmartBlog.com:
 - For up-to-date, accurate information, call your airline to check the status of your flight if the weather looks questionable on either end of your itinerary. Remember to also check conditions in cities where you are scheduled to make connections.
 - If your flight is canceled, get in line immediately to begin the process of rebooking the next available flight. Have your airline's toll-free phone number on hand. If you carry a cell phone, you can call the airline while you're waiting in line and often get rerouted on a new flight before you reach the head of the line. If possible, be flexible with your travel plans. You may be able

to get to your destination or home sooner if you fly into a different, nearby airport.

Being prepared for holiday flying can help you avoid traveling stress. With some common sense and pre-trip planning, your holidays will be filled with only the happiest of memories.

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Lifestyle

Winter Celebrations Around the World

Have fun discovering seasonal customs from an array of cultures

Every culture has its own unique set of customs and beliefs that reflect its history and identity. When winter rolls around, many people around the world celebrate the season in one way or another. Learning about these customs provides interesting insights into the lifestyles of global neighbors, and you'll even discover some fun facts that are great for breaking the ice at holiday parties, too.

A Croatian Christmas involves a tree, paper chains, lights and colored thread or tinsel. In addition, fruits, nuts, heart-shaped cookies and other sweets typically adorn the evergreens in this Eastern European country. Other traditions vary throughout the country, and lucky children might get presents as many as three times during the month of December; Saint Nicholas delivers presents on the eve of December 6 while St. Lucy is said to arrive with gifts on December 13. In some parts of Croatia, Santa Claus has also become an increasingly popular guest in many homes on Christmas Eve.

December below the equator comes in the summer, and this means that Christmas celebrations in South Africa are more likely to take place at the beach than around a blazing Yule Log. Family and friends get together to share the spirit of the season, often going for a swim or finding other outdoor ways to celebrate. Mince pie and plum pudding are very popular holiday foods. Boxing Day, on December 26, is a public holiday during which people relax and enjoy the outdoors.



Toward the other end of the globe, in Finland, every town has a formal celebration with a candle-crowned young girl on December 13, the day of Saint Lucia. Christmas Eve festivities consist of singing traditional carols and enjoying a large holiday meal. In rural areas, no one eats until the birds have finished with the specially-erected feeder filled with grain, nuts and seeds – maybe because it's bad luck, or maybe because it's simply impolite, but most important, because it's tradition.

The Hindu festival of Pancha Ganapati runs from December 21 through the 25 and celebrates Lord Ganesha, the Patron of the Arts and Guardian of Culture. A shrine dedicated to Lord Ganesha is erected in every family's home and is often decorated with tinsel, colored lights and delicate ornaments. Children leave sweet offerings in the shrine, just as milk and cookies might be left out for Santa.

December celebrations are hardly consistent from culture to culture, and part of the magic of the season is the diversity it brings and the window it provides into other ways of life.

Lifestyle

2011 SUVs That Earned the Title of Top Safety Pick

These IIHS winners help keep drivers and passengers safe on the road

Each year, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) conducts thorough evaluations of all new vehicle models. Cars, trucks and SUVs are rated either “good,” “acceptable,” “marginal” or “poor” based on high-speed front and side crash tests, a rollover test, and seat and head restraint protection. After all the tests are performed, the IIHS names its Top Safety Pick winners. These vehicles must have a rating of “good” in all four tests and have available electronic stability control.

During the winter season, many car owners rely on SUVs to maneuver through snowy, slippery or wet driving conditions. These vehicles also offer more passenger seating than cars do, making them popular among families. Safety, therefore, is a top concern for SUV owners and shoppers.

Specifics of the IIHS safety tests from IIHS.org

- **Frontal offset crash test.** A vehicle travels at 40 mph toward a barrier containing a dummy representing an average-size (50th percentile) man as the driver. Forty percent of the total width of the vehicle strikes the barrier on the driver’s side.
- **Side-impact crash test.** A 3,300-pound SUV-like barrier hits the driver’s side of the vehicle at 31 mph. Two dummies representing a small (fifth percentile) woman and a 12-year-old child are positioned in the driver’s seat and the rear seat behind the driver, respectively. Smaller dummies are chosen because women are more likely than men are to suffer serious head injuries in real-world side impacts. Also, shorter drivers have a greater chance of having their heads come into contact with the front end of the striking vehicle in a left-side crash.
- **Rollover/roof strength test.** A metal plate is pushed against one side of a roof at a constant speed. To earn a good rating, the roof must withstand a force of four times the vehicle’s weight before reaching five inches of crush.
- **Rear crash protection/head restraint test.** First, the IIHS measures the two seat design parameters: time to head restraint contact and torso acceleration. Next, the maximum neck shear force and maximum neck tension are evaluated. These neck forces (classified low, moderate or high) indicate how well an occupant’s head and neck would be supported in a rear impact at low to moderate speed.

The 2011 winners

Although several automakers have already introduced their 2012 models, a 2011 Top Safety Pick award is always a good sign when shopping for a vehicle that has not yet been evaluated by the IIHS. Here are a few of the 2011 Top Safety Pick winners from the SUV categories:

Small SUVs



- Honda Element
- Hyundai Tucson
- Volkswagen Tiguan

Midsize SUVs

- Chevrolet Equinox
- Ford Explorer
- Jeep Grand Cherokee
- Hyundai Santa Fe
- Subaru Tribeca
- Toyota Venza

Midsize luxury SUVs

- Audi Q5
- Lexus RX
- Lincoln MKT
- Saab 9-4X
- Volvo XC60

Large SUVs

- Buick Enclave (built after January 2011)
- GMC Acadia (built after January 2011)
- Volkswagen Touareg

Whether you're looking for a small, midsize, large or luxury SUV, there are plenty of Top Safety Picks on the market to keep you and your family safe on the road. For more information from the IIHS, visit www.iihs.org.

If you have any questions about financing your new SUV, stop by – we'd be happy to help.



