

# FREESTAR FINANCIAL NEWSLETTER

January 2023 | Winter Issue



FROM THE DESK OF:

*Drema D. Isaac*

**Drema D. Isaac - President & CEO**

2022 was a fantastic year for the Credit Union, beginning with our Belle River Community Credit Union partnership. This merger provided our members with another location to transact their banking and for the 1,500 Belle River Community Credit Union members to benefit from the great products and services you have enjoyed over the last 65 years. Over 22,000 members accessed our award-winning services via remote technology or at our seven branches.

A 97% Satisfaction Rating from our members was another highlight. Thank you for your survey responses; it was the highest engagement we have experienced. Your satisfaction scores demonstrate that we provide the superior service levels, expertise, and security we promise to members. The most frequent comments were about how professional, friendly, and reliable we are and how easy it is to bank with the Credit Union. The executive team and board of directors reviewed each response and an action plan developed by leadership to enhance your member experience.

On National Credit Union Day, FreeStar Financial celebrated your membership and contributions with donuts and cider. The week was filled with daily giveaways and featured a 1-Year Certificate of Deposit sale. During Make a Difference Day, our hardworking and committed team members volunteered on a Saturday to assist local organizations or rake leaves and clean yards for residents. We had 90% of our team members participate and donate over 200 hours of community service.

FreeStar Financial also participated in Michigan's first annual Credit Union Kind Day. The Michigan Credit Union League created this statewide campaign for credit unions to show how much they care. Our collective efforts helped to spread kindness, impact communities, and create awareness about credit unions. Michigan's 2022 CU Kind Day included 74 participating credit unions and 3,500 volunteers. Together, we affected more than 23,500 people and raised over \$148,500 in goods and donations. FreeStar Financial participated by hosting free shred days at our Chesterfield, Shelby Township, and Sterling Heights branches.

Throughout 2022, FreeStar Financial was more active in the community than in any past years. The Credit Union proudly supported our 2022 charity, Vets Returning Home. Your involvement and donations helped to raise funds and awareness to support their mission to end veteran homelessness. Since we selected this charity in June, FreeStar Financial has presented Vets Returning Home with over \$3,600. Proceeds were raised during shred days, the dunk tank and raffles at our 3rd Annual Halloween Stroll, sales of plush animals, and team member Jean Days. Our goal is to raise a minimum of \$10,000 through 2023 for this charity.

FreeStar Financial also partners with the Metro East Chapter of Credit Unions on fundraising. People helping people is at the heart of what we do as credit unions, and we combine resources for a more significant impact. This year's efforts allowed the Chapter to present \$7,700 checks to Vets Returning Home and the Play-Place Autism & Special Needs Center. Our group of credit unions also donated gifts for Friends of Foster Kids to share at Christmas. The Chapter's joint reach in 2022 has extended as far as raising funds to support Ukraine.

Thank you for such an outstanding and rewarding year. There were several ways to get involved, and we enjoyed each opportunity to serve our members and benefit the community.

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# TAKE YOUR EDUCATION HIGHER!

FreeStar Financial is offering \$4,000 in scholarships:

Military Honor Scholarship  
(2) at \$1,000 each

Community Action Scholarship  
(2) at \$1,000 each

**Apply by:  
February 28, 2023**

See our website for requirements and apply at:  
[freestarfinancial.com/scholarships](https://freestarfinancial.com/scholarships)



## SETTING FINANCIAL GOALS FOR THE NEW YEAR!

Can you believe it's already the start of a new year? Now more than ever is a good time to look at your finances and set goals for 2023. Check out our latest blog for some tips to consider in making your New Years Resolutions into achievable goals.

Read More at: [FreeStarFinancial.com/Blog](https://FreeStarFinancial.com/Blog)



## EARN MORE WITH YOUR MONEY!

If you are looking for great investment options...  
**LOOK NO FURTHER!**

A *Certificate of Deposit (CD)* is not only a great option that allows you to earn a high, fixed interest rate for a specific length of time but when you deposit your money with FreeStar Financial you are choosing to trust your money with one of the market leaders when it comes to CD rates!

**18**  
**MONTH**  
**3.75%** APY\*

**22**  
**MONTH**  
**3.85%** APY\*

**3**  
**YEAR BUMP\*\***  
**3.50%** APY\*

\*APY = Annual Percentage Yield. APY is the total amount of dividends paid on an account, based on the dividend rate and the frequency of monthly compounding for a 365-day period, and expressed as a percentage.

\*\*New Money Only – Funds must come from cash or another financial institution.

No existing FreeStar Financial deposits can be used to take advantage of this promotion. No limitations on the number of CDs opened per household or age of member. Member must visit a branch location or call to take advantage of these specials. Penalties for early withdrawal may apply. Members are able to increase their interest rate (bump) anytime during the term of their certificate to earn a higher rate of return on their funds that they have invested. Bump rates are based on the term of the Bump CD. For example: 3-Year Bump CD opened 01/01/2023 with an APY of 3.50%. On 3/01/2023, the Credit Union increases the APY on the regular 3-Year CD to an APY of 4.00%. On 3/07/2023 the member contacts the CU to "BUMP" their rate on their 3-Year Bump CD. Offer subject to change at any time without notice. Rates subject to change.

# FREESTAR MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY!

FreeStar Financial Credit Union celebrated Make a Difference Day in October with a month of volunteering within the local community. As a credit union built on the fundamental principle of "people helping people," FreeStar Financial believes in improving the financial lives of its members and assisting others for the greater good of the community. Volunteerism plays a significant role in the structure and foundation of credit unions. Each year, FreeStar Financial celebrates that foundation of volunteerism and "people helping people" philosophy through participation in Make a Difference Day.

Make a Difference Day annually falls on the fourth Saturday of October. However, for FreeStar Financial, this day has grown into an entire month of giving back and making a difference in the communities it serves. 68 FreeStar Financial team members volunteered over 200 hours at nine events this year. To make a positive impact in the community and promote team building, each FreeStar Financial department is encouraged to volunteer at the same event.

The Credit Union teams' volunteer service this month supported the following non-profit organizations: Life Remodeled, Families Against Narcotics, Vets Returning Home, Macomb County Services, Second Hand Rose, the Shelby Township Senior Center, and the St. Clair Shores Senior Center.



## WINTER WONDERLOAN

Whatever you are looking to get done this year, FreeStar Financial can turn your to-do lists into checklists with a fixed-rate personal loan.

# 6.99% APR\*

**for up to 24 months**

Apply by 1/31/23 to earn this promotional rate!

\*APR=Annual Percentage Rate. Rate is "as low as" and may change based on credit history, term and other determining factors. Payment example: A loan of \$5,000.00 at 8.74% APR for 26 months would have a monthly payment of \$219.77. Offer requires Payment Protection coverage OR active checking with a full payroll direct deposit of \$1,100 per month. Loan terms up to 24 months, can be extended for Payment Protection. APR may be higher, based on term of loan, and credit score. New money only. Rates are subject to change at any time.



# WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

## Ashley Ciamillo

Ashley Ciamillo was appointed to the Board of Directors in September 2022. She was chosen because of her extensive sales and marketing experience. Mrs. Ciamillo is currently a strategic leader at Tenneco and has previously held management positions at Stellantis (formerly Fiat Chrysler Automobiles), Volkswagen, and HP (Hewlett-Packard). She has managed product development and program management, created and implemented multi-channel sales and marketing strategies, and worked as a business and financial analyst. Mrs. Ciamillo is also a business owner, co-founding Joe's Italian Takeout in Shelby Township.

Mrs. Ciamillo graduated from Central Michigan University with a Master of Business Administration and from Oakland University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Management. She also holds a Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt certification and uses it to drive process improvement.

## Marc Alexander

Marc Alexander was appointed as an Associate Board Director in September 2022. He founded Lite Tuition in Mount Clemens in 2019 and serves as its President & CEO. He is also a published author, social entrepreneur, and motivational speaker. Mr. Alexander has previous professional experience in executive management and as a personal banker. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Kettering University in Flint.

Mr. Alexander has a passion for serving others and a personal mission to lead a successful life and help those he encounters to do the same. He has numerous professional affiliations, including a member of the Clinton Township Zoning Board of Appeals, Clinton Township Housing Commission board member, Prince Drewry Park Advisory Committee member, Lite Tuition Foundation board chair, and president-elect of the Utica Shelby Kiwanis Club.

## ANNUAL MEETING ELECTION NOTICE

### YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US AT OUR ANNUAL MEETING

This is a great opportunity for you to meet the Board of Directors and team members who serve you at FreeStar Financial Credit Union.

April 20, 2023 - 3 p.m. @ Zuccaro Banquets and Catering  
46601 Gratiot Avenue (south of 21 Mile Road),  
Chesterfield Township, MI 48051

Board of Directors members up for re-election:

- Raymond White Jr.
- Ashley Ciamillo

For more information on duties and responsibilities of these positions, please contact Drema Isaac at 586-466-7800 ext. 121.

### NOMINATION BY PETITION PROCEDURES

Any other members who wish to be included on the ballot must follow the steps below:

1. Submit a written request to Drema Isaac, President & CEO, for a nomination package. *Please note:* Completed packets and petitions must be received by March 1, 2023.
2. To be considered for nomination, you must collect the signatures of 1 percent of the credit union membership supporting your candidacy. As of November 30, 2022, the credit union had 22,271 members.
3. After gathering 222 signatures, forward the signatory document along with a candidacy notice and resume to:

FreeStar Financial Credit Union  
Board of Directors Nominating Committee  
P.O. Box 2800  
Mt. Clemens, MI 48046

### HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

January 16th  
MLK Jr. Day

February 20th  
Presidents Day

Drive-Thru open at Clinton Township. ATM with Teller Assist available at St. Clair Shores, Shelby Township and Richmond. Call Center also available.

### FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For the latest news, events and promotions.



FreeStarFinancial.com | 586.466.7800