



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LAFCU wins statewide Innovation Award, again

Credit union also recognized for social responsibility community service



MCUL President/CEO Patty Corkery, at left, presents the trade association's 2022 Innovation Award to LAFCU representatives Britney Weber and Kelli Ellsworth Etchison.

LANSING, Mich. — For the fourth time in 7 years, LAFCU has been chosen as the winner of the Innovation Award from the Michigan Credit Union League, the state's credit union trade association. The award was received for LAFCU's Love & Equality Art Initiative, which uses Michigan art to help heal the community after the tumultuous events of 2020.

The Michigan credit union's virtual children's reading program, Listen & Learn, placed second for the Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Community

Service Award, which recognizes credit union efforts to strengthen and improve the community through outreach beyond personal finance education.

"We are always looking for new ways to meet the challenges of an ever-evolving world," said Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, chief marketing officer and chief diversity officer. "We value an innovative and community-minded culture so we can be our members' 'Credit Union for Life.'

"We're grateful for the outpouring of support for both programs — from the



LAFCU's Act with Love & Equality Art Initiative includes projecting graphic depictions of healing words on buildings during community events as positive, public reminders about what is important in daily life.

talented Michigan residents who created the artwork for the art initiative to the myriad businesses and organizations that helped provide creative content for the reading program.”

Members of the LAFCU marketing team accepted the awards at the Michigan Credit Union League annual convention, June 10, in Detroit.

The LAFCU Love & Equality Art Initiative uses graphic depictions of 10 healing words by Michigan artists as public reminders for what is important in daily life. An estimated 1.5 million people in Michigan saw at least one of the 10 art pieces during 2021. The 10 words

are Love, Humanity, Change, Peace, Kind, Empathy, Unity, One, Hope and Heal.

LAFCU shared the artwork across the state via billboards and LAFCU’s digital channels. Other organizations provided grassroots support that extended the exposure. An early supporter was Eaton Theatre in Charlotte, which continues to show the artwork before major attractions.

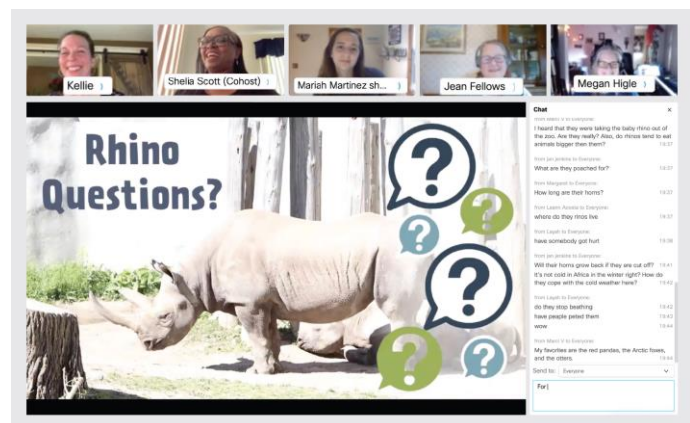


Then Williamston High School Senior Isabella Spagnuolo explains why she chose to depict the word Humanity for LAFCU’s Act with Love & Equality Art Initiative at a celebration recognizing the winning artists: “I wanted to symbolize the importance for caring and helping one another.” She’s now pursuing a fine arts degree at University of Michigan.

“The initiative reflects on LAFCU as a leader,” said theatre owner Leann Owen. “It shows they are not ‘just’ a business, but one that has planted its roots in the community and is willing to put in the hard work to contribute to an enriched life for residents.”

The art can be viewed at www.lafcu.com/loveandequality.

LAFCU Listen & Learn Program is a virtual reading initiative borne when the pandemic prevented the credit union from delivering in-person financial literacy presentations at schools. LAFCU partners with libraries, businesses, organizations and individuals to present live, virtual events that encourage engaged reading through topical themes and expanded learning activities, such as music, art and dance.



LAFCU Listen & Learn Program offers live, virtual events and children’s book readings on YouTube and via recorded phone messages.

The recorded live events as well as readings of children's book are available on LAFCU's YouTube Channel, <https://bit.ly/LAFCU-L-L>. Book readings are also accessible via the telephone.

Other LAFCU programs earning MCUL Innovation Awards the past seven years are:

- LAFCU Incredibles – An employee group that became internal cheerleaders as LAFCU pushed the envelope in providing superior member service.
- LAFCU-Perry community partnership – A financial literacy program in the schools that led to locating an interactive teller machine (ITM) in a grocery store to fill a financial services need.
- “Down to the Letter” marketing campaign – Advertisements that used the visual of a team constructing 6-foot-tall promotional letters to represent LAFCU’s 80-year history of building strength and integrity.

About LAFCU

Chartered in 1936, LAFCU is a not-for-profit financial cooperative open for membership to anyone who lives, works, worships or attends school in Michigan and to businesses and other entities located in Michigan. The credit union serves 72,000 members and holds over \$970 million in assets. It was named a Best Credit Union to Work For in 2020. LAFCU offers a comprehensive range of financial products and services as well as an expanding complement of financial technology solutions. Members enjoy benefits such as low fees, low interest rates on loans, high yields on savings, discounts, knowledgeable employees and nationwide access to fee-free ATMs. A recipient of the national Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Community Service Award for credit unions, LAFCU enriches the communities it serves by supporting many organizations and causes. To learn more about LAFCU, call 800.748.0228 or visit www.lafcu.com.

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