

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**Extra Credit Union gives \$15,000 in support to teachers, graduating seniors
Winners to be honored at annual luncheon June 21**

Warren, Mich. – June 8, 2016 – Budget cuts and the tightening of school funding make increasingly difficult for teachers to get creative in reaching students with various learning styles. Extra Credit Union is proud to help fill that gap with its Teacher Extra-curricular Activity Money (TEAM) Classroom Grant Program. The credit union awarded a total of \$10,000 to 10 local teachers this year.

And with the rising cost of college tuition, taking on debt at an early age is becoming more likely for many graduating high school seniors. Extra Credit Union also is working to reverse that trend with its annual Richard J. Spence Scholarship Program, recently awarding a total of \$5,000 to five seniors.

“We are proud to support our community in so many ways, but we are especially proud to support local education,” said Deidra Williams, President of Extra Credit Union. “Our school programs help to teach students of all ages how to be financially responsible and our scholarships help to support that. These seniors will be starting their lives with a little less debt, and we’re glad we could help them with that. And we have so many amazing teachers in our community who really go above and beyond, who use their own personal time and resources to make the school year a successful one for each and every one of their students, and we’re happy to aid them in the extra work they are doing to help their students reach their full potential.”

The teachers and students will be honored in a complimentary luncheon at Extra Credit Union, 6611 Chicago Road in Warren, from noon-1:30 p.m. on June 21. The media is welcome to attend.

More about scholarships

ECU’s Richard J. Spence Scholarship Program has been awarding students with additional college funding since 2005 in honor of the financial institution’s former president/CEO.

Scholarships are awarded to students who demonstrate an enthusiasm and commitment to learning, a deep understanding of the importance of financial literacy, and a clear, visionary path for their future. The program is open to any graduating high school senior who is an ECU member, and recipients are chosen by an ECU judging committee.

This year's scholarship winners are:

- Mario Hanna–Warren Mott High School, \$2,000
- Maya Davidson–Warren Mott High School, \$1,000
- Leann Abad–Warren Mott High School, \$1,000
- Maria Leone–Center Line High School, \$500
- Grace Glenn–L'Anse Creuse High School, \$500

More about classroom grants

Our Classroom Grant program is open to any school staff member, not just teachers. It can range from a cafeteria worker who wants to improve school meals, a janitor who wants to start a community service project, or a teacher who needs tablets for her room. The opportunities are endless. The grant offers additional funding for a special project or to meet a financial need for which a school budget may not allow.

Each year, we award \$10,000 in grants to educators who are members of our credit union. Each grant is up to \$2,000, which provides many creative opportunities to impact schools, classrooms, and ultimately, students.

Applications are released in the fall of each school year for a chance to be awarded up to \$2,000 for submitted projects. We review all applications and in January award a total of up to \$10,000 collectively to area schools.

Here is a full list of this year's recipients:

- Danielle Kelly and Kathryn DeLuca – L'Anse Creuse Middle School - \$1,600 to cover transportation to/from community service days, and T-shirts for participating students
- Melanie VanMaele – Lincoln Elementary School - \$800 to purchase six Acer Chromebooks to promote technology and learning in her classroom
- Deborah Prentiss – Rising Stars Academy - \$400 to purchase various sets of books to instill lifelong learning
- Christina Kozlowski – Siersma and Holden elementary schools - \$600 to purchase tablets for her Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) classes
- Karyn Kechechian – Wilkerson Elementary School - \$700 to replenish needed art supplies for the school
- Mary Beth Merlo – DeKeyser Elementary School - \$350 to cover transportation costs to a class trip to Oakland University
- Molly Peabody – Carlson Elementary, Early Childhood Education - \$1,425 to purchase Read It Once Again curriculum (more engaging, accessible and comprehensive to further enrich learning for low-income students)
- Amber Williamson and John Gomola – Sterling Heights High School - \$2,000 to purchase lab equipment
- Melissa Young – Angus Elementary School - \$625 to cover transportation costs and craft supplies for an intergenerational kindness and pen pal program
- Jaime Bellos – Center Line High School – \$1,500 to purchase a trailer and/or needed supplies for Tiny House Design and Build project (entails building tiny house on wheels for a local homeless veteran)

To learn more about Extra Credit Union's scholarships, grants, or other educational programs, please visit www.extracreditunion.org.

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Extra Credit Union (www.extracreditunion.org) was founded in 1954 by a group of educators with \$856 in assets. Today, with two full-service offices in Warren and Sterling Heights, Mich., Extra Credit Union (ECU) has more than 19,000 members with \$200 million in assets. Extra Credit Union works with the local community and educators to provide hands-on learning, financial fundamentals, and customized services to help students and educators make good financial decisions. In addition, ECU provides solution-based lending and credit education programs to open lending possibilities to people of all credit backgrounds in Macomb, Oakland, St. Clair and Wayne counties. Deidra M. Williams serves as President/CEO, leading the credit union in its mission.