

BOARD BANTER

CUNA'S DIRECTORS' NEWSLETTER

GROWING A SUCCESSFUL MEMBERSHIP

CEASER MOORE

Chairman

Plus4 Credit Union

Houston, Texas

By Sharyn Alden

For seasoned board members or those just joining the board, financial education momentum can continue or screech to a halt. What makes the difference between paving the way to member success and getting sidelined?

“The key to a financially successful membership is to stay rooted in reality,” says Ceaser Moore, chairman of \$144 million 24,000-member, Plus4 Credit Union. “The reality may be that a number of members may not understand what financial tools are available to them or how to use them. And it can mean finding new ways to serve the underserved population of your community. All of these things are crucial for members’ financial success.”

One of the mainstays of Plus4’s culture of continuing financial education is to keep members up to date on financial services. “Our board has prioritized the need for financial education for all our members,” says Moore. The topic of financial education is included in each quarterly newsletter and at several annual meetings. Several mini-sessions on topics like buying a home, understanding credit reports and financial planning have also been offered to members.

Moore points out that while Plus4 serves all demographics, the credit union's current emphasis is on serving the underserved. "The Hispanic community is a rapidly growing sector of the underserved community," he points out. In response to the growing need for financial services for this population group, the credit union established Plus4's CUSO, First Class Financial Services, Inc. (FCFS).

"FCFS provides alternative financial solutions with a fixed-check cashing location and a check-cashing unit," explains Moore. Another current goal of the credit union, in conjunction with FCFS, is to provide financial education classes for the community through the NEFE program. "Helping members flourish requires adapting to a changing membership," adds Moore.

"For many people who have not had a credit union relationship, FCFS will be the first step towards becoming financially successful Plus4 members."

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