

Report Card

WINTER 2024

Share the Savings with
Family and Co-Workers

Tips to Guard
Against Fraud

Credit Card Shopping?
Don't Settle for Average



Jose Alan G.
Elementary School Teacher
Member Since 2007



CEO'S MESSAGE

“Approach the new year with the resolve to find the opportunities hidden in each new day.”

— **Michael Josephson**, founder of the Joseph and Edna Josephson Institute of Ethics.

A new year brings new opportunities to improve your financial well-being. Chances are, you may have new goals, too, like saving for emergencies and the future. Other goals may be longer-term: becoming a homeowner, buying a car, paying down debt or developing a financial plan.

If you have concerns about your finances, know you are not alone. Financial pressure has taken its toll on most Americans. A recent survey shows that 77% of consumers are stressed about money — whether it's having enough to pay the bills, saving for retirement, or managing debt.* If you need guidance, your Credit Union is here to help.

Partnering With You on Your Financial Journey

One of the ways to destress and gain fresh perspective about managing your finances is to have a plan in place. We offer personalized guidance from our financial professionals who will discuss your hopes and dreams — and the best way to work toward them. And if you've had some setbacks, we offer solutions to get you back on track, including one-on-one guidance from GreenPath Financial Wellness. A GreenPath financial counselor can help you develop strategies to pay down debt, improve your credit score, manage student loan payments, or prepare for homeownership. We also launched a new Financial Wellness Center on our website, providing tools and advice to help you make the most of your money.

Invite Co-Workers and Family Members to Join

Our financial strength is a direct result of your advocacy and support. And because you're a Member, your family is eligible to join and enjoy the low-to-no fees on products and free professional financial guidance whenever they need it. Your fellow school employees can take advantage of products and services designed specifically for them, like a high-rate savings account for the summer when they may not be working, 0% APR classroom supplies or uniform loans, or guidance for supplementing their pension plan to build a secure retirement.

For almost nine decades, we've been helping Members like you fund life's biggest journeys, achievements, and proudest moments.

We appreciate you being a part of the Credit Union family. Thank you for your loyalty and sharing the Credit Union with others.

Best regards,

Bill Cheney | Chief Executive Officer

*Source: Mind Over Money Survey

TIPS TO GUARD

According to the Federal Trade Commission, consumer losses for 2022 soared to \$8.8 billion, an increase of 30% from 2021. And fraud is hitting all demographics. For instance, a growing trend shows Gen Z adults (20-29) are getting scammed more often than older adults. Cryptocurrency scams led the pack in fraudulent activity, costing consumers over \$3.8 billion.

Here are some top scams to steer clear of.



Impersonation Scams

Impersonation scams rely on impersonating practically anybody you can think of, friends, family, financial institutions, the IRS, sheriff's department, charities.

They'll often spoof familiar phone numbers, so you'll assume they're coming from a legitimate source. While the scams vary, they rely on creating a sense of urgency to get you to hand over sensitive financial data or money.

How to protect yourself:

- Verify independently the companies or individuals trying to contact you are who they say they are.
- Never give out passwords or other personal information to anyone.
- Delete emails or SMS texts instructing you to click hyperlinks.
- Don't trust unexpected calls about fraudulent activity. Contact the fraud department listed on a company's website for more information.

No legitimate business or government agency will text, email, call or contact you via social media to demand payment for something, whatever that something may be.



Cryptocurrency Scams

Cryptocurrency is digital currency consumers buy as an investment or to purchase things. Cryptocurrency doesn't require financial institutions to verify transactions, so fraudsters use it to steal money or financial information.

A top scam is pressuring you to invest in a new type of crypto where you can make a lot of money before you have time to determine if it's legitimate or not. Another scam is to use phishing or other fraudulent methods to access a user's crypto or digital wallet and credentials.



IT Repair Scams

Tech scammers try to convince you your computer needs repairs or it's infected with some kind of virus. They may contact you via emails, phone calls, texts and even pop-up messages. They'll then try to get you to pay for the services with gift cards, or credit or debit cards.

How to protect yourself:

- Know that legitimate tech companies will never contact you about problems with your computer.
- Never provide personal information like user names and passwords.
- If you suspect something is wrong with your computer, update your security software and run a scan.
- Don't install remote access software such as TeamViewer or AnyDesk. Fraudsters use it to access your devices and data.

AGAINST FRAUD



Romance Scams

Scammers rely on the promise of true love to separate you from your hard-earned money. They create phony profiles on apps and dating sites. Their lies vary, often using excuses of why they can't meet in person. The next step is asking for money for some type of emergency and then providing ways to send it, including wiring money or sending gift cards.

How to protect yourself:

- Never send money to someone you've never met.
- Do a reverse image search of the person's profile picture to see if the details match to someone else.
- Search job titles and details that may be associated with scams, such as U.S. Army scams.



Gift Card Scams

Like other scams, crooks rely on urgency to get you to respond to their varied requests.

The scammer will ask you to buy gift cards at major merchants or Google or Apple. Then they'll ask for the gift card numbers and PINs. When you do this, they can access the funds, even if you have the cards in your possession. They may even ask you to deposit a check for them greater than the amount requested and ask you to pay back the difference on a gift card.

How to protect yourself:

- The IRS or other entities would never use gift cards as payment.
- Report the scam to the gift card issuer and ask for your money back. Some may help, some may not, but it's always worth asking.

Financial Workshops

Please visit: schoolsfirstfcu.org/workshops to learn more and register.

Homebuying Essentials

Check our website for workshop times.

JAN. 18 Irvine, Natomas, Riverside/Riverwalk

JAN. 23 Ladera Heights, La Habra

JAN. 25 Moreno Valley, Laguna Niguel

JAN. 27 Lancaster

JAN. 30 Huntington Beach

FEB. 1 Santa Ana, Fruitridge

FEB. 5 Torrance

FEB. 6 Anaheim Hills

FEB. 8 Riverside University

FEB. 12 Menifee

FEB. 13 Cerritos, Ranch Cucamonga

FEB. 15 Cypress, Tustin

FEB. 22 Orange

FEB. 27 Redlands, Fountain Valley

FEB. 29 Anaheim

MARCH 5 Chino Valley

MARCH 7 Mission Viejo RSM, Tustin Branch

MARCH 12 Crocker Village, Fountain Valley

MARCH 14 Placentia

MARCH 19 Norco

MARCH 21 Pico Rivera

MARCH 23 Tustin

MARCH 26 Long Beach Lakewood

MARCH 28 San Diego Mission Valley

Virtual Workshops

Wednesdays 6 – 7 p.m.
(through Nov. 15)

Real Member, Real Savings



Jose Alan G.
Member since 2007

As a child, Jose Alan never really connected with his teachers. That changed in high school, where he met some with similar backgrounds as his own. They became his mentors, and ultimately shaped his decision to become an educator. During his teaching rotation, Jose Alan fell in love with the dual language program, and became a second-grade dual immersion language teacher.

“One of the most rewarding aspects of my job is seeing my students and their parents enjoy the diverse elements of the class,” Jose Alan said. “In their free time, my students and their families share photos and stories connecting with the lessons.”

Jose Alan appreciates the personalized service he receives at SchoolsFirst FCU, like the time he visited a local branch to get \$2 bills for his class to celebrate the Lunar New Year. The branch delivered and Jose Alan gave each of his students a \$2 bill, in a red envelope — the ultimate good luck charm.

He became a Member in 2007, and got a few personal loans and an auto loan to purchase his first car. Jose Alan values his Membership because it has saved him money and helps him feel more confident about his financial decisions. For Jose Alan, Membership provides a sense of exclusivity, offering benefits that give him advantages as a school employee.

New Appointment Tools at Your Service

When you want to apply for a loan, discuss insurance options or see if you're on track to reach your retirement goals, our new, convenient appointment and wait-time tools make it easier to meet with us.

You can make an appointment on our website without logging in, or through Online or Mobile Banking:

- Make appointments that fit your schedule.
- Check wait times before you visit a branch.
- Join the branch line virtually and wait where you're comfortable.

For some services, you can also choose how you meet — in person, by phone or virtually. The new tools are easy to use and flexible so you can schedule a meeting time and method that works best for you.

We can't wait to meet with you. Schedule your appointment or join the line:



Save More with Share Certificates

Share the Benefits With Family and Co-Workers

In a rising rate environment, a bright spot is the ability to grow your savings faster. One way to do this is by opening a share certificate. It's a safe way to maximize your savings. Our share certificates offer competitive rates and a variety of terms — from as little as 30 days to five years — allowing you the ability to earn more on your money. This makes them ideal for saving toward a goal. Save for anything — a new car or home, or an emergency fund.

And we can help your family and co-workers earn more too.¹ When they join the Credit Union, they can open an account for just \$500. They're safe and are insured for up to \$250,000 through the National Credit Union Administration or NCUA. If Members have more than \$250,000 in an account, several options are available for additional share insurance coverage.

Open a high-yield share certificate with the Credit Union you trust:

Check out rates today on our website.

Keep the Savings Growing

Online

Log in to our website to get started.

CALL (800) 462-8328

Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Saturday, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.



Credit Card Shopping? Don't Settle for Average

If you have an average credit card, you're probably used to 28% APR,² high fees and steep penalties. And that can end up costing you a lot of money.

You're better than average. Your credit cards should be too.

With a SchoolsFirst FCU Mastercard®, you get:

- An interest rate well below the national average.²
- No annual fee and no balance transfer or cash advance fees.³
- Rewards options for cash back, travel and more.⁴

Learn more at schoolsfirstfcu.org/betterthanaverage.



We're Here For You

Go Online
schoolsfirstfcu.org

Call Us
(800) 462-8328
Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Saturday, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Emergency After-Hours Card Support
(800) 462-8328 (toll-free in the U.S.)

Available 365 days a year,
5 a.m. – 10 p.m.

TellerPhone
(800) 540-4546

Download Mobile Banking
Available in the App Store and Google Play.

ATM Locations
Visit our website or Mobile Banking app for a complete listing of more than 30,000 fee-free ATMs.



Branch Locations
Visit schoolsfirstfcu.org/branches to find a branch or ATM near you.

Holiday Notice

In observance of these holidays, our branches, in-store branches, service centers and Member Contact Center will be closed.

Monday, Jan. 1
Monday, Jan. 15
Monday, Feb. 19

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Presidents' Day



Insured by NCUA.

Subject to credit approval. Programs subject to change. 1. Minimum \$500 to open a share certificate. Rates are effective as of 11/20/2023 and are subject to change without notice. Early withdrawal/account closure subject to penalty. 2. Source: Forbes Advisor Weekly Credit Card Rates Report <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/creditcards/credit-card-statistics/>. 3. SchoolsFirst FCU's credit card program features a range of variable interest rates based on a variety of factors, including the applicant's credit rating. As of Aug. 3, 2023, Inspire Mastercard rates range from 13.75% - 17.90% APR; Rewards Mastercard rates range from 15.00% - 17.90% APR; and School Employee Mastercard rates range from 11.75% - 17.90% APR. Rates are subject to change, are variable and subject to increase after account opening. Foreign transaction fee: 2% of the transaction amount in U.S. dollars for School Employee Mastercard and Inspire Mastercard, includes internet transactions made when you are in the United States, but the merchant processes the transaction in a foreign country. No foreign transaction fee for the Rewards Mastercard. Visit schoolsfirstfcu.org/creditcard to see disclosures for School Employee Mastercard, Inspire Mastercard and Rewards Mastercard. 4. Rewards options available for Rewards Mastercard and School Employee Mastercard.