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LAFCU earns national ‘Best of Show’ marketing award

Michigan credit union’s programs wins 5 awards; all programs created to benefit and strengthen communities LAFCU serves

LANSING, Mich. — LAFCU has been recognized by Credit Union National Association, a national credit union trade association, for three programs that won five awards — including Best of Show, Best of Category and an Excellence Award — in the association’s annual marketing competition.

The Diamond Awards contest recognizes excellence in marketing and business development in the credit union industry. Judges evaluated this year’s nearly 1,200 entries based on strategy, design, production, creative concept, copy, communication and results.

“Diamond Awards are the gold standard of achievement in credit union marketing and business development,” said Marella Nardotti, Diamond Awards chair, Fairfax, Virginia. “Inventiveness in effectively achieving and exceeding objectives is what these awards honor.”

The LAFCU programs and awards earned are:

- Act with Love & Equality Art Initiative
 - Diamond Best of Show, the contest’s highest honor
 - Best of Category: Color — For Brilliant Use of Art
 - Diamond Award: Cutting Edge Category



Accepting the national marketing awards on behalf of LAFCU are marketing team members, from left, Shelia Scott, Kellie Swiger and Zac Williams.

- Internal communications campaign for the credit union’s DEI Program.
 - Excellence in Marketing & Business Development Award, Multifaceted Category
- Listen & Learn Program
 - Diamond Award: Ongoing Program Category

“It’s especially notable that the three programs recognized exemplify the credit union philosophy of ‘People Helping People,’” said Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, chief marketing officer and chief diversity officer. “They were created out of a need to benefit and strengthen the communities LAFCU serves, and that’s a responsibility we believe LAFCU has as a credit union serving nearly 70,000 members across the state.”

LAFCU earned all awards in the subcategory of credit unions with assets of \$500 million or greater.

Members of the LAFCU marketing team accepted the awards March 11 at the trade association’s annual Marketing & Business Council Conference in Los Angeles.

About the programs:

LAFCU Act with Love & Equality Art Initiative, created in response to the tumultuous events of 2020, provides positive, public reminders about what is important in daily life. It showcases graphic depictions of 10 healing words created by Michigan residents. The artwork has been shared across the state via billboards, media stories, digital channels and grassroots support from businesses, schools and community groups.



Lansing Lugnuts shared the winning artwork of LAFCU’s Act with Love & Equality Art Initiative during its home games in 2021.



Projecting the Michigan-made graphic depictions of healing words on the Lansing Center during 2021 Silver Bells in the City, Lansing, is one way LAFCU’s Act with Love & Equality Art Initiative has provided positive, public reminders about what is important in daily life.



CEO Patrick Spyke, bottom right, lightheartedly claims extraordinary plant growth compared to growth shown in “flowerpot shots” shared by other employees. This interactive component of LAFCU’s DEI communication campaign was a reminder that fostering a culture of inclusion takes intention just like nurturing a plant.

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. The live, virtual events encourage engaged reading through topical themes and expanded learning, such as music, art and dance. The recorded live events as well as readings of children’s book are available on LAFCU’s YouTube Channel. Book readings are also accessible via the telephone.

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 more than 70,000 members and holds \$949 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,

The internal communications campaign for LAFCU’s enhanced diversity, equity and inclusion program introduced the program’s mission, logo, tagline and core principles. The four-week program delivered key messages via weekly emails with videos and giveaways that supported the messages and created anticipation, fun and employee buzz.

Ellsworth Etchison said, “The education, giveaways and interactive portions of this

communication campaign will have a lasting quality that keeps the tenets of our DEI Program front and center with our team. With this education, we hope staff will more easily understand the implicit bias that’s sewn into our DNA, and adjust accordingly — personally and professionally — for the betterment of LAFCU, its members, staff and community.”



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

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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