



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Aug. 22, 2017

Contact: Jan Jenkins, Publicom  
517.487.3700, janj@publicom.com

## LAFCU awards scholarships to 3 women returning to school for family, career

LANSING, Mich. — The 2017 LAFCU Women Helping Educate Every Lady, or W.H.E.E.L., Scholarships have been awarded to three women who see education as the direct path to a new career and a more financially secure future for their families.

The winners are Emily Martin, St. Johns; Sheri Haviland, Lansing; and Rita Ashcroft, DeWitt. Each received a \$1,000 scholarship to attend Lansing Community College (LCC) beginning this fall.



LAFCU scholarship selection committee members Emily White, Alyssa Sliger and Lindsay Walters; Dan McKean with the LCC Foundation; and W.H.E.E.L. scholarship recipients Rita Ashcroft, Sheri Haviland and Emily Martin.

“The W.H.E.E.L. program supports women who are taking the initiative to return to school as nontraditional students to meet life goals,” said Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, LAFCU senior vice president of marketing. “Emily, Sheri and Rita want more for themselves and their children. They want to achieve their dreams, and we are recognizing them because they are incredibly inspiring role models.”

LAFCU created the W.H.E.E.L. program to encourage women to pursue the education needed to enter or re-enter the workforce or to advance their careers. The scholarships support the credit union’s long-standing ‘people helping people’ mission.

**Sheri Haviland**, a married mother of three, has spent her adult life caring for others, including her parents who have required extensive assistance during illnesses. With her youngest child beginning first grade, Haviland realized now is the time to pursue her education. She earned a GED diploma early in 2017 – 21 years after dropping out of high school – and will

pursue an associate degree in business. Besides earning a college degree, Haviland wants her children to see that no matter what life throws at you, it's possible to achieve life goals.

After earning a bachelor's degree in 2002, scholarship winner **Rita Ashcroft** held a variety of positions before becoming a stay-at-home mom. When her children began school, her passion for fitness prompted her to become a Certified Personal Trainer, which in turn led to her next goal, a nursing career. Ashcroft attends LCC, has a 4.0 GPA and plans to apply to the Michigan State University College of Nursing for 2018. She looks forward to the gratification of serving others as a nurse and helping her husband provide for their family.

**Emily Martin**, a single mother of a toddler, has earned an associate degree and plans to begin work on a bachelor's degree in financial institutions to qualify her for greater career opportunities. She's inspired by her daughter and wants to model personal and professional success for her. Martin also sees education as a way to be a better partner to her fiancée in achieving their joint goals.

Each applicant submitted a one-page essay about returning to school, which was used to determine the winners. Eligible applications had to live or work in LAFCU's service area, which includes the counties of Barry, Calhoun, Clinton, Eaton, Gratiot, Ingham, Ionia, Jackson, Livingston, Montcalm and Shiawassee.

### **About LAFCU**

Chartered in 1936, LAFCU is proud to be mid-Michigan's credit union, serving the counties of Barry, Calhoun, Clinton, Eaton, Gratiot, Ingham, Ionia, Jackson, Livingston, Montcalm and Shiawassee. A recipient of the Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Award, LAFCU takes pride in bringing value to the financial lives of its members, neighbors, families and community. Offering a comprehensive range of personal and business financial products, LAFCU provides services that include checking and savings accounts, auto and mortgage lending, business accounts and business lending. LAFCU serves nearly 60,000 members, holds more than \$600 million in assets, and maintains nine locations throughout Greater Lansing and Shiawassee County. Anyone who lives, works, worships or attends school in its designated counties is eligible to join. Members enjoy benefits, such as lower interest rates on loans, higher yields on savings, insurance discounts, preferred seating for LAFCU-sponsored events, and access to 28,000 surcharge-free ATMs through the CO-OP ATM network. LAFCU supports and enriches mid-Michigan by donating funds and employee volunteer hours to many organizations and causes. To learn more about LAFCU, please call 517.622.6600 or find us online:

- Website: [www.lafcu.com](http://www.lafcu.com)
- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/LAFCU](http://www.facebook.com/LAFCU)

- **Twitter: [@LAFCULansing](#)**

# # #