

The News-Herald

The Voice of Downriver

Business

BIZ BUZZ: Around the business community

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By The News-Herald Staff

Farrand named

communications VP

Craig Farrand, a former newspaperman and communications consultant, has been named vice president of communications for Education First Credit Union.

The announcement was made Oct. 15 by President/Chief Executive Officer Teri Creighton.

Farrand was hired as director of communications and marketing in October 2007, after serving as a consultant for the credit union through its name change and expansion of operations that year.

Since 1974, the financial institution had been known as Downriver School Employees Credit Union. On Oct. 1, 2007, the name was changed to Education First Credit Union "to better reflect the nature of our membership, rather than the boundaries of our service area," Creighton said.

The third member of the credit union's executive team is John Zemmin, executive vice president of operations.

In addition to its main office in Southgate, the credit union has a branch office in Brownstown Township on Gibraltar Road, and a branch office inside the Board of Education Building on Grosse Ile. It currently is in negotiations to lease a building from the Taylor School District to open a branch office in that district.

Education First Credit Union also operates 22 elementary and middle school-based, student-run credit unions under its Learn2Earn program. These programs encourage savings by children in grades K-8. At the high school level, the credit union operates five student-run district branch offices that service not only teen members, but also faculty within and around those sites: Carlson High School, Huron High School, Grosse Ile High School, Woodhaven High School and Airport High School.

Farrand, 56, is a lifelong Downriver resident who currently resides in Brownstown. He is a 1970 graduate of Allen Park High school and served in the Army from 1971-73. He then attended Henry Ford Community College, the University of Michigan and Wayne State University, where he earned a bachelor's degree.

From 1978-92, Farrand worked as a reporter, editor and managing editor of the former Mellus Newspapers and current News-Herald Newspapers. From 1992-94, he was editor of the Community Crier in Plymouth, working in the emerging field of desktop publishing. He founded Synergy Communications on July 4, 1994.

For the past five years, he also has been an ad-junct professor of journalism at the University of Detroit Mercy.

Credit union unveils

new program

Education First Credit Union also has unveiled a new “Community Membership” program that will result in real dollars being donated to classrooms, schools and districts throughout the area.

All it takes is for eligible school employees and parents to join the credit union, enroll in the pro-gram, pick the schools they want to receive the dona-tions — and then do their banking with the credit union.

The Community Membership program is part of Education First Credit Union’s aggressive fall membership drive, which has included presentations to school administrators, school staffs, booster clubs and parents’ groups, starting in late August and continuing throughout September.

As part of its “new way of doing business,” Education First also has instituted “Concierge Service” for all members.

This service gives each member a personal representative who can provide any service, deal with any issue and answer any question.

No more call transfers, no more phone tag, no more frustration.

In addition, every person who joins the credit union will be greeted by a “New Member Advocate,” who will walk each member through the enrollment process.

Nominate for Corp! Magazine’s ‘Best of’ Awards

There’s still time to nominate your favorite Michigan business for Corp! magazine’s annual “Best of Michigan Business” Awards issue.

Last year, more than 1,000 nominations were submitted and nearly 300 businesses were selected and featured in Corp!, Michigan’s largest business magazine.

Nominations are due by Nov. 7.

Several options for nominating your best business are available. Nominations can be submitted online at <http://www.corpmagazine.com>.

Nominations also can be sent by:

☒ Fax: 1-586-393-8810

☒ E-mail: sconstan-tine@corpmagazine.com

☒ Mail: Corp! Magazine, 27700 Hoover Road, Suite 200, Warren, MI 48093

Several business cate-gory nominations are be-ing solicited, including health care provider, health insurance, banks and credit unions, law firms, small business (in two categories by revenue between \$1 million and \$10 million, and between \$10 million and \$50 million), and family business.

Other categories include firms specializing in staffing, accounting, insurance, real estate, technology, marketing and public rela-tions, media, manufacturing, sports and entertainment, retailing, grocery, restaurants, engineering and architectural and construction.

A special report about the “Best of Michigan Business” winners will be printed in the Janu-ary/February 2009 issue of Corp! magazine.

Energy reform means

new job opportunities

A major new energy reform law is enhancing Consumers Energy's efforts to help young people become aware of career opportunities in the utility field.

The new law will allow Consumers Energy to fully implement its "Growing Forward" strategy, which calls for investing \$6.4 billion in Michigan over the next five years, including investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy, environmental and customer service enhancements, and new power generation.

With significant workforce transition expected in the next decade, Consumers Energy is alerting students in college and high school to career opportunities, as well as raising energy awareness with middle and elementary school students.

This month Consumers Energy recruiters are visiting Michigan colleges and universities including Kettering University, Lawrence Technological University, Michigan State University, Wayne State University, Western Michigan University, Delta College, Jackson Community College and Lansing Community College.

Utility employees are increasing student awareness through energy efficiency and career opportunity presentations at middle schools and high schools throughout Michigan.

For more information about careers at Consumers Energy, visit www.consumersenergy.com/careers.

Baker College

names director

Baker College of Allen Park has named Tamara Gerber as director of its occupational therapy assistant associate degree program, which is in the initial stage of development. She is responsible for oversight of all aspects of the program, including development, evaluation, securing and maintaining accreditation, strategic planning, and student recruitment, advising and retention.

Gerber joins Baker College of Allen Park from Baker's Flint campus, where she was an instructor in the pre-occupational therapy program. She has more than 25 years of clinical and supervisory experience in a variety of areas, including rehabilitation, developmental disabilities and mental health.

"Tamara was the ideal candidate to develop our occupational therapy program as we move forward toward accreditation," said Aaron Maike, Baker College of Allen Park president. "We are delighted that she has joined our team."

Gerber, an Ypsilanti resident, holds a bachelor's degree in occupational therapy and a master's degree in sociology, both from Eastern Michigan University. She is currently a sociology Ph.D. applicant at Wayne State University.

Gerber is a member of the American Occupational Therapy Association, the Michigan Occupational Therapy Association, the Huron Valley Chapter of the Michigan Occupational Therapy Association and the Michigan Sociological Association.

The largest private college in Michigan, Baker College is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. It is a nonprofit higher education institution, serving more than 36,000 students on 12 campuses and in four satellite locations.

Baker grants certificates and associate's, bachelor's and master's degrees in business, health sciences, education and human services, and various technical fields, as well as a doctorate of business administration.

For more information about Baker College, check out our Web site at www.baker.edu.

E-mail candidates for future Biz Buzzes to kziomek@heritage.com.

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- 2) Be polite.
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