

Membership Matters



From the Desk of Our President & CEO



Dion L. Williams
President & CEO

Mid-year reflections and what's ahead

I hope this message finds you well and enjoying your summer. I like to use the mid-year newsletter to reflect on the last six months of the year and provide a look ahead to the future.

One of my many joys at PACU is interacting directly with members. In the first quarter of the year, we held a Member Appreciation Day at each branch location. These events were well-attended as we enjoyed good food, fellowship and thoughtful questions and feedback. The economy was a popular topic of discussion. Your questions were well-understood considering rising interest rates and unease in the banking sector. I am pleased to tell you today as I did at these events: **PACU remains safe and sound.** More than ample liquidity sources are in place. Our net worth ratio (often referred to as our "rainy day" fund) reflects a well-capitalized credit union, well above the regulatory requirement of 7.00%. Loan demand remains steady and loan quality continues to be excellent.

Plus, it warrants repeating that your deposits remain secure as they are insured by the NCUA Share Insurance Fund. Like the FDIC on the banking side, deposits are insured up to at least \$250,000 and backed by the full faith and credit of the United States government. If you would like assistance in account structure to maximize your coverage, go to PACU.com/Appointment for one-on-one assistance at a branch, by phone or Zoom call.

As a credit union, we do look to give back to our member-owners in multiple ways. This summer, be on the lookout for more certificate specials and additional changes to our Simple+ Checking product to increase member dividends.

In looking ahead to 2024, we are giving back to our members in another way as we upgrade our core system. More information will be forthcoming at year-end, but we are extremely excited to upgrade our system to facilitate the future growth of PACU and its impact of expanding and customizing our product and service offerings.

Also, as we look ahead, 2024 is a year of celebration. It marks the 75th Anniversary of Piedmont Advantage Credit Union.

You've heard it before. There is a credit union difference! PACU continues to focus on what we have done for 74 years and counting, our member-owners. It's a people business and we exist to serve you. It is our fiduciary duty to put the member-owners of PACU first. That is the simple, but powerful concept, that helps us weather the economic storms and serve you before, during and after!

Share Certificate
7-Month
5.00%^{APY*}

**\$500 Minimum Deposit to Open
Limited-Time Offer**

Federally insured by NCUA

Open to new and existing members.

Go to PACU.com/7month today to apply online or schedule an appointment for application assistance or to learn more.

*Annual Percentage Yield (APY). Stated APY of 5.00% requires a minimum balance of \$500 and assumes principal and dividends remain in certificate account until maturity. Early withdrawal of dividends will reduce earnings. Penalty may be imposed for early withdrawal of principal. Fees could reduce earnings. Limited-time offer beginning June 6, 2023, and may be modified or discontinued at any time.



Congratulations to the Eden branch

Flying Colors Charity Fun Run draws support for a good cause

The PACU Foundation's inaugural Flying Colors Charity Fun Run raised more than \$4,000 from 15 generous corporate sponsors and individual donors and 57 runners and walkers of all ages across the Triad region of North Carolina. The event was held on Saturday, May 6, at the Oak Ridge Town Park in Oak Ridge, N.C.



According to the PACU Foundation's Fundraising Chair Megan Brooks, who is pictured left, the Foundation's goal was for Flying Colors to create a spring fair atmosphere for families and friends to come together for fun for a good cause, which is to advance charitable giving to support access to financial literacy, education and training and disaster and emergency assistance for

residents overcoming financial hardship throughout the Triad and Charlotte communities.

Triad and Charlotte communities include the counties of Davie, Forsyth, Guilford, Iredell, Mecklenburg and Rockingham.

"The day was perfect with 18 volunteers from Piedmont Advantage Credit Union coming together to showcase the PACU Foundation's purpose and community impact while creating a positive experience for all who attended. I couldn't be prouder and more appreciative of my credit union colleagues for their support and dedication," Megan said.

When Megan isn't volunteering as the Foundation's fundraising chair, she is our curriculum development specialist in our Learning Department.

"I'm also grateful to all of our event sponsors and donors," she added. Presenting sponsors were Piedmont Advantage Credit Union, Hilb Group and Aven Angel Photography.

Flying Color attendees ran and walked, and some with their canine companions, an untimed one-mile course with scenic views and the option to be doused with harmless dyed cornstarch several times throughout the event. During and after each of the four runs held throughout the day, they played games, ate locally-prepared food and homemade baked goods and enjoyed all of the festivities and fellowship associated with a spring fair, like a bouncy obstacle course and face painting.

Since forming in 2020, the PACU Foundation has gifted \$45,000 to area charities. To contribute and learn more about the Foundation, go to PACUFoundation.org or scan this QR Code.



PACU Foundation recently awarded the Eden branch with the Difference Maker Award for their ongoing engagement and support of PACU Foundation initiatives.

Difference Maker Award is presented by the PACU Foundation Board of Directors to those who, through extraordinary volunteer efforts, significantly enhance community awareness and support of the PACU Foundation and its mission.

"The Eden branch consistently has 100 percent branch participation during staff fundraisers, enthusiastically participates during community initiatives, and actively encourages organizations in their community to apply for Foundation funding," said PACU Foundation President Jean Golden-Rumer.

"We thank the staff at the Eden branch for their enthusiasm and determination to help others. Together, they are a difference maker," she added.

Pictured above, left to right, are Piedmont Advantage's President & CEO Dion Williams; Eden branch staff members Stephanie Rubio, Robin Dean, Stephanie Roberson and Margie Finney; and PACU Foundation officers Jean Golden-Rumer and Jeanette Stark

Photos by Aven Angel Photography



Annual Membership Meeting

Piedmont Advantage's Board of Directors announces our 74th Annual Membership Meeting will be held on September 26, 2023, at 6 p.m. at Maple Chase Golf Course, 5475 Germanton Road, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Go to PACU.com/AnnualMeeting to complete registration form to confirm your attendance.

The Board further announces the following Board members will serve on the 2023 Nominating Committee:

- Brian Myers, Chairman
- Mark Linville
- George Price

The committee nominates at least one candidate for each vacancy created by directors whose terms expire in 2023. This year, the nominees are as follows:

- Tom Mekis
- Diana Santos-Johnson
- Mark Saunders

Brief bios on the nominees are below.

Members seeking nominations to the Board of Directors must notify the Nominating Committee by letter **before Friday, August 25, 2023.**

Send letters to:

Tracy Gilmore
Nominating Committee
Piedmont Advantage Credit Union
3530 Advantage Way
Winston-Salem, NC 27103

Nominations can be made by petition, which requires signatures of at least 2.00% of the total membership.

2023 Nominees to Serve as Board of Directors



Tom Mekis has extensive experience in general aviation, including aircraft sales, management, charter and maintenance. He is currently Head of Asset Management at Global Jet Capital and serves as Chairman on the Planning Board for the Village of Clemmons, North Carolina.

A graduate of Oklahoma State University in Marketing, Tom is also a former Vice

President of Landmark Aviation and Piedmont Hawthorne Aviation. He has served on the PACU Board for nearly 16 years and has held numerous leadership positions with the organization, including member of the Supervisory Committee, Secretary of the Board and Chairman of the Board since 2021.



Mark Saunders is an award-winning real estate and property management expert and writer, coach and entrepreneur. He has more than 17 years of real estate experience in the Winston-Salem market.

Mark is the Founder and CEO of Saunders Realty LLC and the Real Estate Brokers Academy, a successful

membership organization for real estate and property management professionals, who want to gain valuable technological skills needed to excel in their respective fields. He is also the author of the North Carolina Property Management Update Course for the North Carolina Real Estate Commission and a Commission-approved real estate instructor.

Mark earned his bachelor's degree in Marketing, Business and Real Estate from Appalachian State University.



Diana Santos-Johnson earned a Juris Doctorate from the North Carolina Central University School of Law and is currently an Associate with Waldrep Wall Babcock & Bailey, PLLC. She is a former Staff Attorney for Legal Aid of North Carolina and the Land Loss Prevention Project, an organization that provides legal support and assistance to financially distressed North Carolina farmers and landowners.

A current Supervisory Committee Chair and PACU Foundation Board Member, Diana has served on our Board since 2022 when she was appointed by the Board to serve an expired term.

Diana has a BA in Spanish and Literature from Wake Forest University and served on several other boards in Winston-Salem, including Smart Start of Forsyth County and Hispanic League.

2023 HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Holidays	Date Observed
Independence Day	07.04.2023
Labor Day	09.04.2023
Columbus Day	10.09.2023
Veterans Day	11.10.2023
Thanksgiving	11.23.2023
Day After Thanksgiving	11.24.2023
Christmas Day	12.25.2023

Board of Directors

The Piedmont Advantage Board of Directors represents the history and tradition of the Credit Union as well as a commitment to the members and communities we serve. Directors are volunteers and serve without compensation; so their time, talent and knowledge are shared with the Credit Union as a labor of love.

Tom Mekis, Chairman
Steve Gilliland, Vice Chairman
Mark Saunders, Secretary
Mark Linville, Treasurer

Darren Cranfill, Director
Justine Lerch, Director
Brian Myers, Director
George Price, Director
Diana Santos-Johnson, Director

Ramon Hoots, Director Emeritus
John Reece, Director Emeritus
Gene Sharp, Director Emeritus
Jim Taylor, Chairman Emeritus

Supervisory Committee

The Supervisory Committee ensures the Board safeguards assets and management complies with the organization's established policies. Committee members also are volunteers.

Diana Santos-Johnson, Chair
Toni Douglas

AJ Eaker
Mara O'Neil



Home Equity and More

While there are many advantages to buying a home, a big one is the ability to build equity. In simple terms, home equity is the difference between the current value of your home and the amount you still owe on your mortgage.

Your equity starts building from the day you make a down payment on your home and it grows as you continue to make your monthly mortgage payments. It also will rise if the assessed value of your home increases, or if you make improvements that raise your home's value. **If the time is right for you to make home improvements, we have several options for you, like a Home Equity Loan or Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC).**

- **Home Equity Loan** offers a lump sum of money with a fixed Annual Percentage Rate (APR) and terms up to 20 years for loans \$25,000 and higher.
- **HELOC** offers access to cash on an as-needed basis for 10 years with a variable APR tied to Prime Rate with payments and interest based on monthly balance.

We also offer an **Unsecured Home Improvement Loan**, which is a fixed-rate personal loan that is not secured by your home and tied to the bid associated with the home improvement. Loan funds are paid directly to those performing the home improvement work.

Schedule an appointment today to talk to us about your home equity, or if you're interested in applying for a Home Equity Loan, HELOC or Unsecured Home Improvement Loan.

To schedule appointment in-person, by phone or virtually, go to [PACU.com/Appointment](https://www.pacu.com/Appointment).

Being well-informed is the best way to avoid falling victim to scammers. Here are our top four tips to stop scammers in their tracks.



- 1. Unexpected contact.** You're contacted out of the blue by phone, text or email from someone claiming to be a PACU employee and you're asked to give your Social Security Number, account password, account number or other personal information. **DON'T GIVE IT!** Ask for the caller's name and phone number to call back, then call us immediately, 800.433.7228.
- 2. Urgency.** Scammers like to create a sense of urgency and use pressure tactics to get you to act immediately. They may even threaten to call the police if you don't pay immediately. **TRUST YOUR GUT AND DON'T GIVE IN!** Ask for the caller's name and phone number to call back, then call us immediately, 800.433.7228.
- 3. Overpayment trap.** Beware of receiving an official or certified check with instructions to keep a percentage after you've purchased an item. **AGAIN, DON'T DO IT** and call us, 800.433.7228, to validate the check for you. It may be counterfeit.
- 4. Unsure.** If the story doesn't make sense, it's likely a scammer; so when in doubt, call us, 800.433.7228!