

FirstOntario

CREDIT UNION

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 13, 2010

Hamilton, ON – FirstOntario Credit Union honoured for ground-breaking Community Assistance Program with the 2010 National Credit Union Innovation Award.

On May 5th, hundreds of Canada's Credit Union leaders, board members and employees gathered in Winnipeg for Credit Union Central of Canada's Annual General Meeting. The meeting culminated in the annual gala and awards ceremony that recognized some of the outstanding efforts made by leading Credit Unions from across Canada.

FirstOntario Credit Union was highlighted for the creation of their ground-breaking Community Assistance Program and awarded with the prestigious National Credit Union Innovation Award. This award highlights the role of an individual credit union in creating breakthrough solutions that serve as a model for others.

"Receiving such an important award for our Community Assistance Program is exhilarating", said Kelly McGiffin, FirstOntario President and C.E.O. "FirstOntario introduced this program to our communities in April of 2009 and to be recognized by Credit Union Central of Canada for our effort is honestly a great feeling."

"The downturn in the economy hit everyone hard and was particularly devastating to the communities we serve", said Mr. McGiffin. "FirstOntario, like all credit unions, is a strong advocate for the well-being of our communities and we could not simply stand by and watch as more and more of our Members came to us after being laid off. The Community Assistance Program was our response to this epidemic. We made sure our communities were aware that while they might be out of work, they are not out of options. This program goes beyond providing financial options. We work closely with those who have experienced a layoff to help them take control of their circumstances by providing free job hunting resources, putting them in touch with work-life and wellness services and helping them get back into the work force. To receive such an important award is very high praise and truly appreciated. We wish to thank everyone for their support and recognition of this vital program."

In business since 1939, FirstOntario Credit Union serves over 71,000 Members and offers a full suite of banking products including daily banking, mortgages, lines of credit, loans and investments. FirstOntario has over \$2.2 billion in funds under management and currently has 17 branches serving 11 communities within the Hamilton, Halton, Niagara and Haldimand/Norfolk regions. Membership is open to everyone. FirstOntario is a proud advocate of the people and communities we serve and supports many important community organizations such as the Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation, Co-operative Young Leaders (CYL) and Living Rock.

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