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For Immediate Release

**Illinois League highlights PR, honors many
at annual Chapter Leaders Conference**

Naperville, IL., August 28, 2008 -- Nearly 100 chapter leaders from 24 of the Illinois Credit Union League's (ICUL) 26 chapters were in attendance at its annual Chapter Leaders Conference last week. With a theme of "Dreams & Legends", the conference was hosted by the Tri-County Chapter of Credit Unions and held at scenic Starved Rock State Park in Utica, Illinois.

As a result of feedback from the previous conference, this year's main program was entitled, "Stop the Presses: Raising the Profile of your Chapter's Good Works!" and focused on helping chapters maximize public relations resources to promote activities within their communities. In addition, significant networking time was dedicated to allowing chapter officials discuss the issue of public relations and what their next steps will be in garnering media attention for their own activities, as well as ICUL's initiatives.

"Chapters are integral to the Illinois Credit Union System," said Dan Plauda, ICUL president/chief executive officer. "This conference was the perfect opportunity for chapter officials from around the state to network and gather ideas on how to revitalize and enhance their chapter's effectiveness."

Several chapters were honored with Eagle Awards, which recognize chapters for quality programs they provided their member credit unions and communities. The award categories and their respective honorees included:

- **Best Community Involvement Program.** The winner was the Egyptian Chapter for its Dress for Success project, which helped 14 high school seniors prepare to enter the real world.
- **Best Special Event.** Winners included: the Central Illinois Chapter, which focused on strengthening political ties with local legislators and statewide candidates at its legislative night event; the Joseph S. DeRamus Chapter, which collected donations to purchase and donate Spinoza Bears to a local hospital to provide comfort and friendship to terminally ill children; and the Northwest Illinois Chapter, which was honored for two events: a "Green Raffle" for a Yamaha scooter with more than \$3,000 in proceeds benefiting the ICU Foundation and the Credit Union Political Action Council (CUPAC), and for distributing free emergency financial first aid kits at three local county fairs.

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Continuing with the chapter accolades, the following were also honored for their involvement in the 2007 Chapter Competition for CUPAC. For the second straight year, 100 percent of Illinois' chapters participated and raised more than \$140,000. The top winners included: the Southeast Chapter achieved first place for the first time with \$35,096 raised and has been one of the top three contributors over the past six years. The Southern Illinois Chapter took second place with a total of \$30,894 raised, after previously being the only chapter to consecutively achieve 1st place for nine years in a row. In third place was the George G. Burnett Chapter with \$14,858 raised, making it one of the top contributors for 16 of the 23 years the competition has been held. In addition, Kankakee Valley was the only other chapter to donate more than \$10,000 (with \$12,684). Thirteen other chapters each raised more than \$1,000.

Several individuals were also honored with Chapter Leader and Chapter Representative of the Year awards. The Chapter Leader Award acknowledges individuals who influence the future and inspire the membership as a whole. This year's recipient was Penni Gebke, ICUL Regional Director. The Chapter Representatives of the Year awards included: Karen Jurasek, iBelong Chapter Representative of the Year, Rockford Area Chapter; Jeri Hanson, Illinois Youth Involvement Council (IYIC) Chapter Representative of the Year, Danville Area Chapter; and Kim Hocking, ICU Foundation Chapter Representative of the Year, Southern Illinois Chapter.

In addition, 21 chapters donated baskets for a silent auction that was held during the course of the conference. A total of \$1,755 was raised. The proceeds were equally split and donated to the Illinois Credit Union Foundation, CUPAC, and the iBelong Campaign. Conference sponsors Members United Corporate FCU and ICUL Service Corp. also donated baskets for the raffle, as did the ICUL Education Department and Starved Rock.

Participants also had their choice of social events, including a scenic boat tour on the Illinois River or a wine tasting of several locally produced wines.

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Note: The Illinois Credit Union League is the primary trade association for credit unions in Illinois and provides members with informational, legislative and educational services. Membership is open to any credit union operating in accordance with the Illinois Credit Union Act or the Federal Credit Union Act. There are 434 credit unions in Illinois serving more than 2.7 million members.