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For Immediate Release

Illinois conference for small CUs sees record participation

Naperville, IL., August 5, 2009 – A record number of 100 participants from small credit unions throughout Illinois were in attendance for the Illinois Credit Union League's (ICUL) annual Small Asset Size (SAS) credit union conference that just wrapped up today.

The two-day, highly popular conference geared specifically toward credit unions under \$20 million provided a unique educational event that addressed challenges and concerns of credit unions in this particular asset group. Many topics centered on helping small credit unions compete in today's turbulent and constantly changing marketplace, and plenty of opportunities for networking.

After the kick-off of the event was provided by Dan Plauda, ICUL president/chief executive officer; Michael Fryzel, National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) Chairman, delivered a keynote address. Fryzel reviewed the issues that have surrounded his time in office, including keeping NCUA as an independent agency, the new consumer protection agency being proposed by the Obama Administration, and the corporate stabilization program, in which he anticipates a comment period will be conducted this fall with rules implemented in the spring of 2010.

"We are committed to implementing a strong corporate system and will take all ideas into consideration," stated Fryzel. "We have a strong and vibrant industry and our goal is to protect the funds of 90 million credit union members."

Fryzel concluded, "Illinois has an impressive selection of credit unions. All we ask is that you stick to your basic principles. Working cooperatively, there's nothing we can't achieve."

Main highlights from the first day of sessions also included a panel of speakers from the NCUA and Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation's IDFPR Division of Financial Institutions (DFI). They included Ron Jones, NCUA economic development specialist, Gerald Schultz, NCUA supervisory examiner, and David Anderson, DFI senior financial institution examiner.

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The panelists provided a wealth of information and insight about the Bank Secrecy Act (BSA) and common BSA violations, NCUA's programs for small credit unions, and a review of how small credit unions can work together with the IDFPF for the benefit of their members, as well as supplementary information about identity theft and red flags. Moderating the panel was Patrick Smith, ICUL director of strategic services, who also provided a presentation on strategies for net worth management.

After rounding out day one with a networking reception, the second day of the conference included a round of speakers from ICUL staff who presented key information on the benefits of strategic planning and creating a unique business plan by ICUL regional directors Joyce Jackson and Penni Gebke; as well as a discussion on developing basic credit union policies by Carol Bertoux, ICUL associate general counsel.

The conference finished out with an open forum and networking lunch. In addition to providing vital time for attendees to follow-up and further delve into information offered at the conference, other topics discussed included board member relations, marketing, shared branching and student outreach.

"The SAS continues to be a premier educational event for our small credit unions," said Plauda. "This is a core group in our state and we are very interested in providing them with all of the information and resources they need to be successful."

First time attendee Debra Behl, CEO of the \$6.4 million Blaw Knox Credit Union in downstate Mattoon said, "As a fairly new manager, attending this conference was very beneficial to developing policies at our credit union. I was also pleased with the amount of information received, which will benefit me as a manager. I look forward to coming back."

In Illinois, nearly 270 or 72 percent of ICUL's member credit unions hold \$20 million or less in assets. This year's conference was the eighth annual installment of the event. It was held at the ICU System Center in Naperville and sponsored by the ICU Foundation and CUNA Mutual Group.

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Note: The Illinois Credit Union League (ICUL) is the primary trade association for credit unions in Illinois, which provides members with information, legislation and education. Membership is open to any credit union operating in accordance with the Illinois Credit Union Act or the Federal Credit Union Act. There are 416 credit unions in Illinois with more than 2.7 million members.