



Cooperatives: Building a Better World Through Credit Unions

Jeff Hardin, CUDE

Lauren Whaley, CUDE



CAROLINAS
CREDIT UNION
FOUNDATION



Our Journey Today

- **Cooperative Principles and the credit union difference**
- **Our values shared through cooperative and credit union history**
- **ALICE and development issues**
- **Making an impact in our back yard and across the globe!**
- **Small Group Discussion – solving your community’s challenges**
- **Strategic Philanthropy**
- **The role of the Carolinas CU Foundation and how you fit in**

What is a co-op?

*a business owned and democratically controlled
by the members who use its services*

Members who use the cooperative **own** their co-op because they finance it in a variety of ways.

Members democratically **control** their cooperative by exercising the voting rights that come with membership.

Members **benefit** from the cooperative based on their use of the co-op.

THE UNIVERSAL **COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES**



**Voluntary and
Open Membership**

1



**Democratic
Member Control**

2



**Member Economic
Participation**

3



**Autonomy and
Independence**

4



**Education, Training
and Information**

5



**Cooperation Among
Cooperatives**

6



**Concern for
Community**

7

The 8th Principle for credit unions

SEPTEMBER 2019

CUNA Board of Directors (now America's Credit Unions) voted in favor of a resolution to clearly and prominently establish diversity, equity and inclusion as the 8th cooperative principle of America's credit unions.

“Still, there is more to diversity and inclusion than financial access for members. We need to hold each other accountable for equality, equity, and opportunity for members, volunteers, and credit union professionals. It must be everywhere from the grassroots of our communities to the top of our credit unions or we will not fully serve our purpose.”

MAURICE R. SMITH

*Retired CEO of Local Government Federal Credit Union in Raleigh, N.C.
and former CUNA Board chairman*

The 8 Cooperative Principles

What do we stand for?



**FINANCIAL
WELL-BEING OF
ALL PEOPLE**

P1: Voluntary and Open Membership



**THE BELIEF THAT
MONEY DOES NOT
EQUAL POWER**

P2: Democratic Member Control



**RECIPROCATING
TRUST**

P3: Member Economic Participation



TRANSPARENCY

P4: Autonomy and Independence



**DEVELOPING
WELL-INFORMED
CITIZENS**

P5: Education, Training and Information



UNITY

P6: Cooperation Among Cooperatives



**FOR, AND WITH,
OUR COMMUNITIES**

P7: Concern for Community



**EMPOWERING
THROUGH EMPATHY**

P8: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



The purpose of the credit union movement

Credit unions have the ability to leverage their difference to solve for members issues in a way other financial institutions can't or won't.



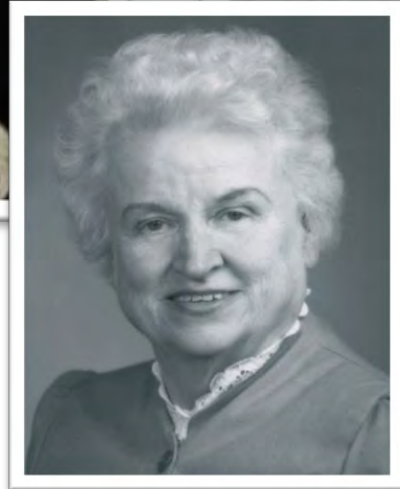
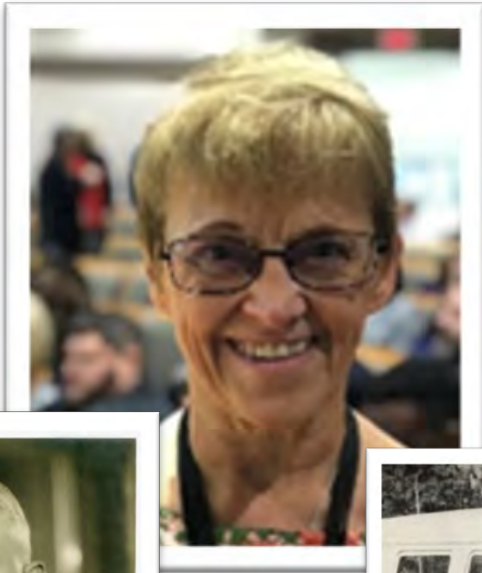
The Credit Union Difference

| CREDIT UNIONS | | BANKS |
|---|------------|---|
| Not-for-profit cooperative owned by members | STRUCTURE | For-profit corporations owned by stockholders |
| Returned to members in the form of better rates, fewer/lower fees and services like free ATMs | EARNINGS | Returned to stockholders in the form of dividends |
| Board of Directors are members and elected by members | GOVERNANCE | Board of Directors elected by stockholders, may not be customers |
| Deposits insured up to \$250K by the NCUA | INSURANCE | Deposits insured up to \$250K by the FDIC |
| Pays property, sales and payroll taxes; Exempt from business income tax | TAXES | Pays property, sales and employment taxes; Not exempt from business income tax* |

*Our values told through
our history*



Credit unions address economic inequity.



Credit union leaders act on social and economic need.



Credit unions create financial opportunity.

It's amazing how
safe your money
is when nobody's
looking to make
a profit from it.

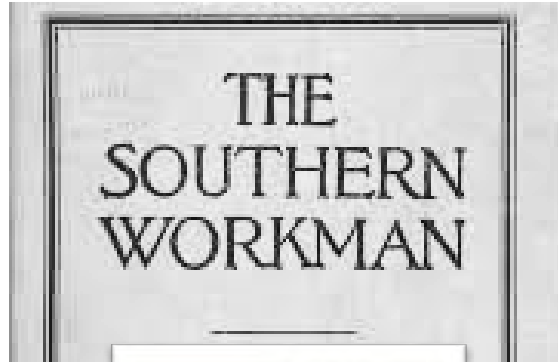


Credit unions are not for profit but for service.

PROGRESS OF THE PIEDMONT UNION

While all four unions in the county did well during the year, it may be of interest to note the progress of the Piedmont Union, the strongest of the four, as is shown by its monthly statement for December 31, 1919:—

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Number of members | 82 |
| " " depositors | 6 |
| Payment on shares | \$934.78 |
| Deposits | \$205.15 |
| Loans outstanding | \$663.25 |
| Number of borrowers | 10 |
| Borrowed from banks | \$100.00 |
| Cash in banks | \$675.93 |
| Total resources | \$1847.83 |



Credit unions are a vehicle for social empowerment.



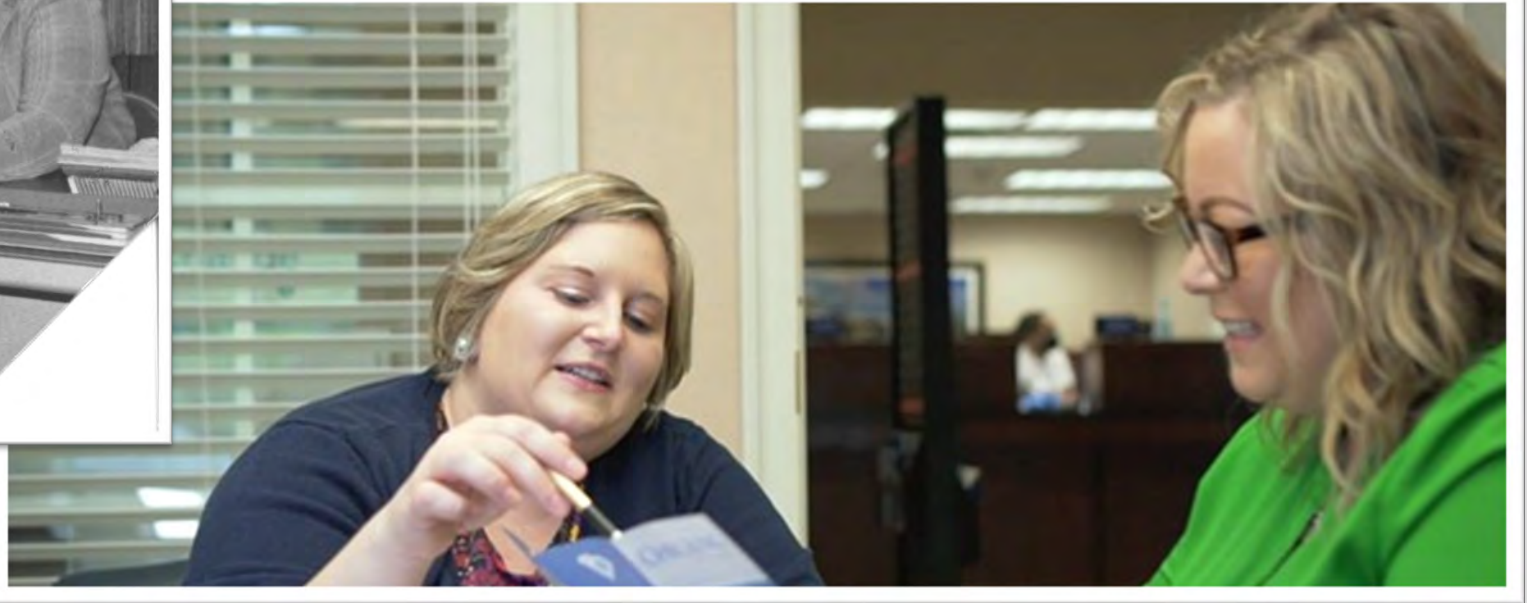
Credit unions create systems of support to
elevate our movement.



Credit unions have always had to fight for their right to exist and serve members.



Credit unions work tirelessly to ensure our cooperative standing remains intact.



Empathy has been credit unions' superpower since day one.



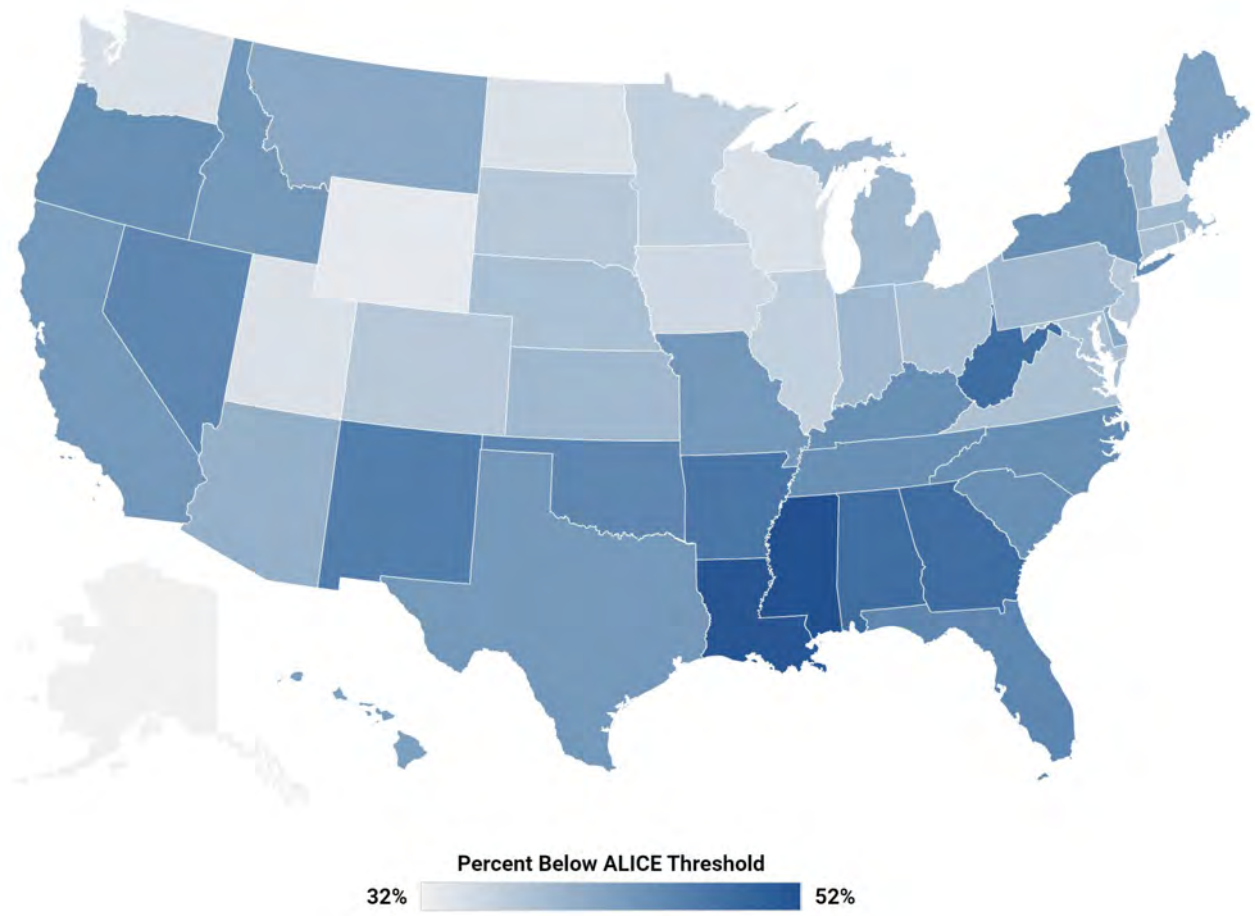
Credit unions improve the financial health of employees, members, and their community.



Credit unions are committed to creating stronger communities.

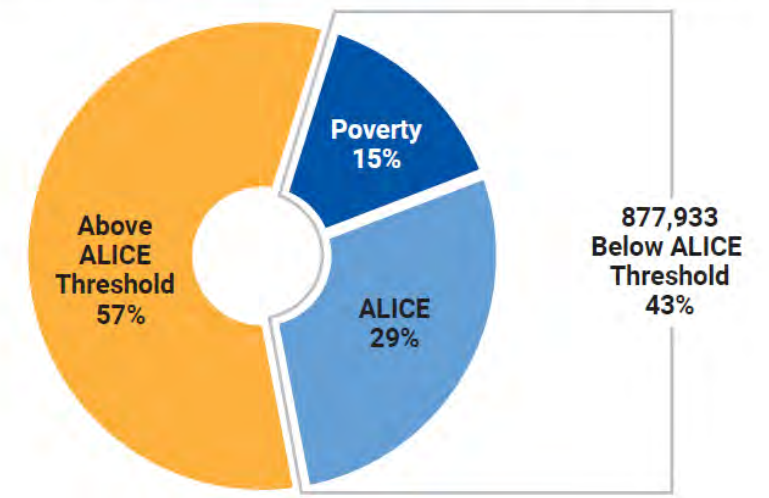


ALICE Households

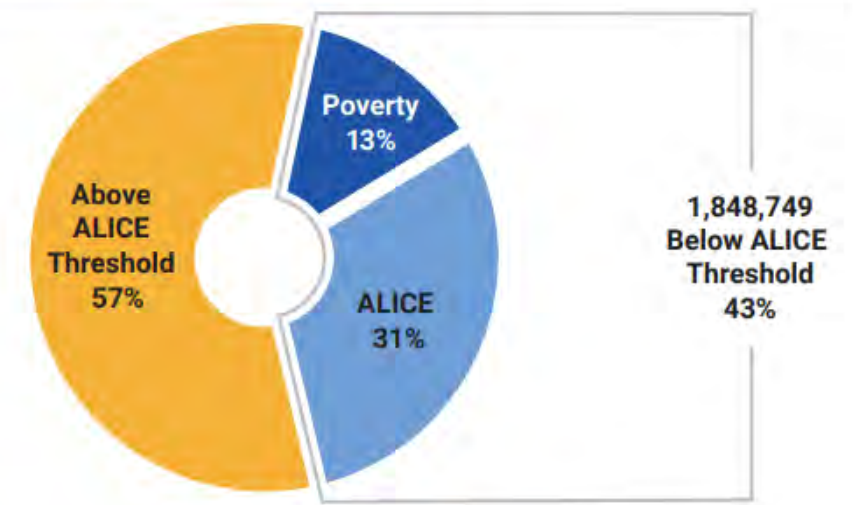


www.unitedforalice.org

Total Households in South Carolina= 2,037,203

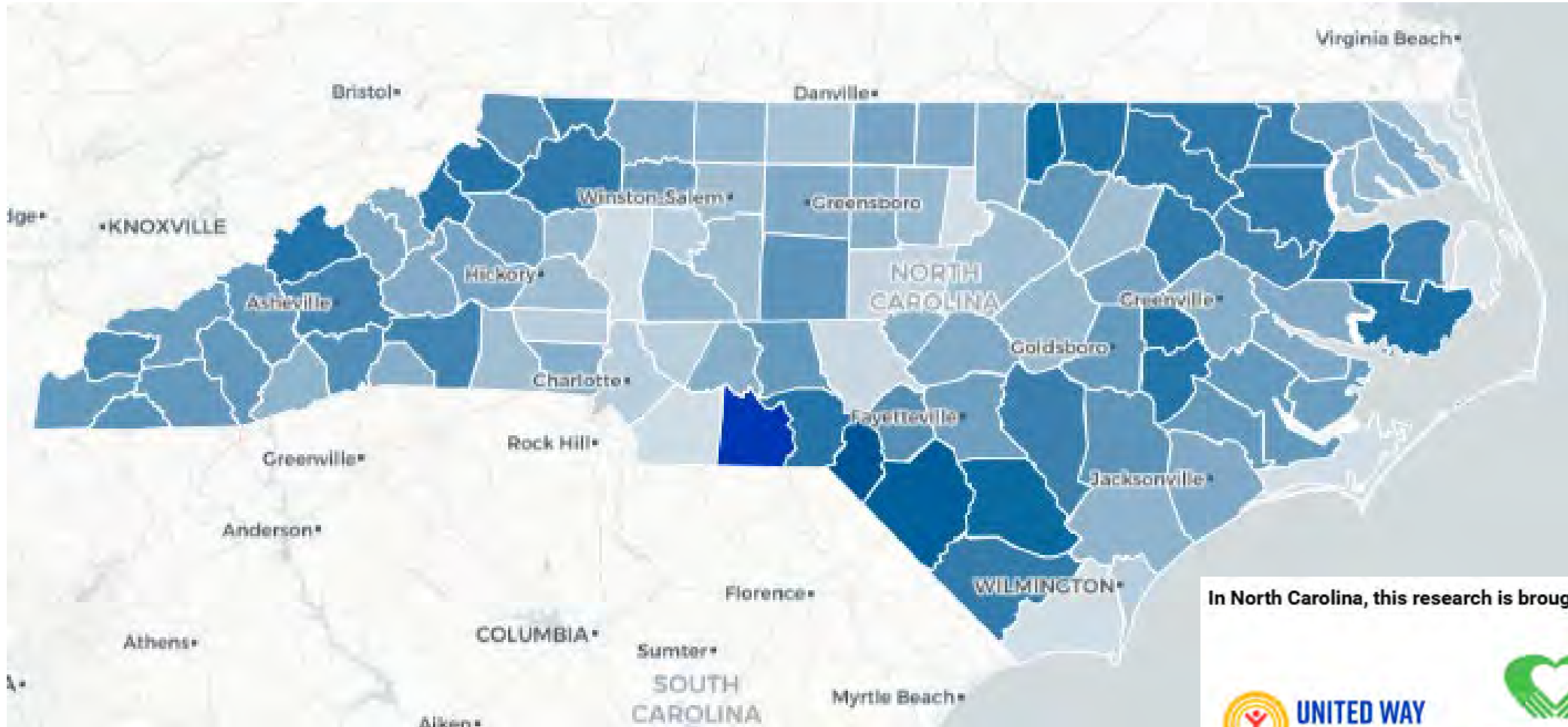


Total Households in North Carolina= 4.3 Million





ALICE Households in NC

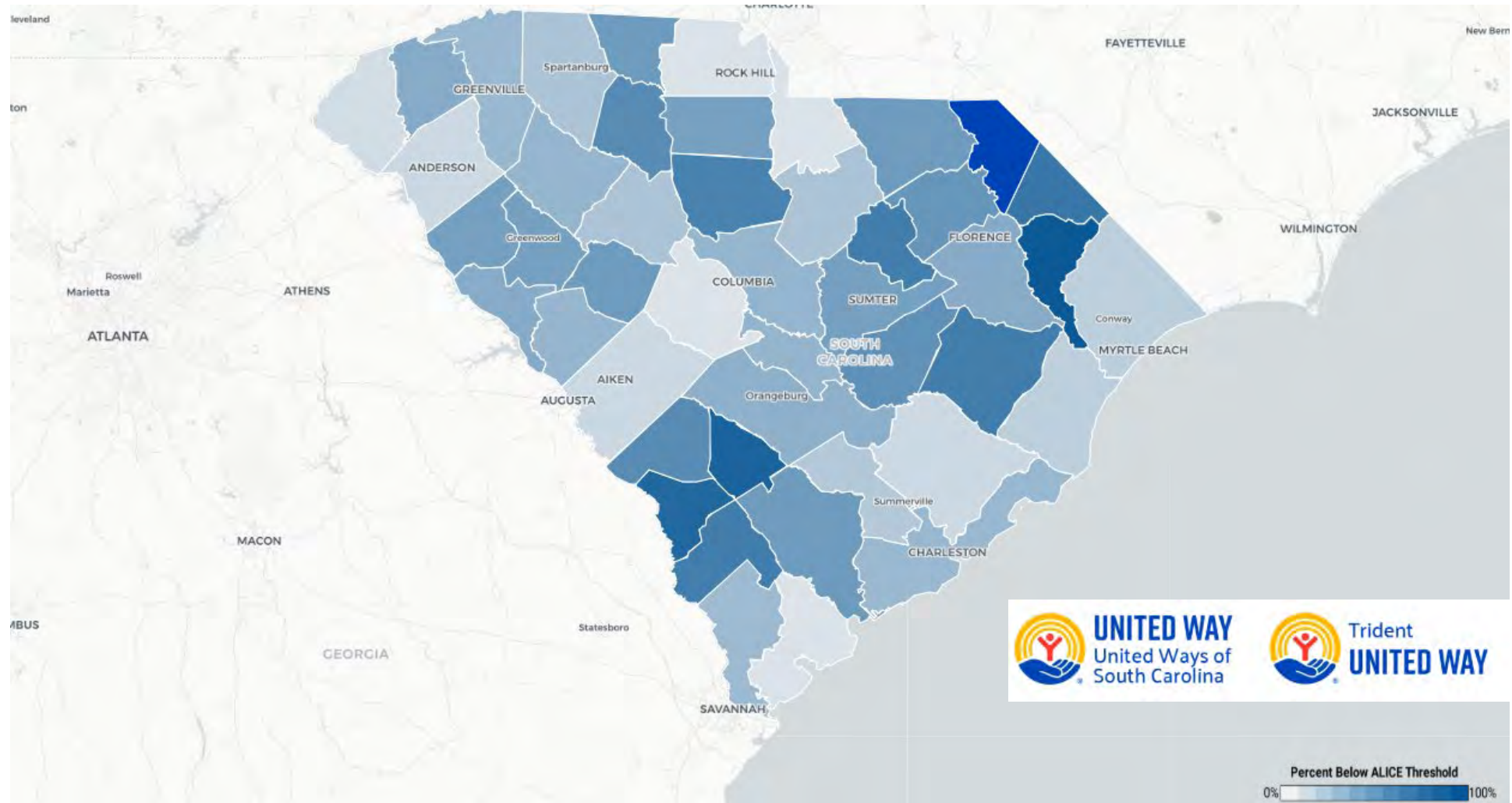


In North Carolina, this research is brought to you by:



www.unitedforalice.org

ALICE Households in SC



Percent Below ALICE Threshold
0% 100%

ALICE Households

- County reports
- Legislative tracts
- By zip code or census tract
- Survival budgets by county
- Internet access
- Labor force data
- Demographic breakdowns
 - race/ethnicity, age of householder, and household composition

www.unitedforalice.org



Development Issues



Source



**Credit Union Development
Education Program**

Inspiring change through
credit unions since 1982

Low Income & Wealth

- Savings
- Credit



Poor Living Conditions

- Health
- Environment
- Hunger
- Transportation
- Housing
- Technology



Development Trap

Lack of Opportunity

- Diversity
- Inclusion
- Employment



Lack of Education

- Education



Source



Credit Union Development Education Program
Inspiring change through credit unions since 1982



What is our global credit union movement doing to address these development issues?

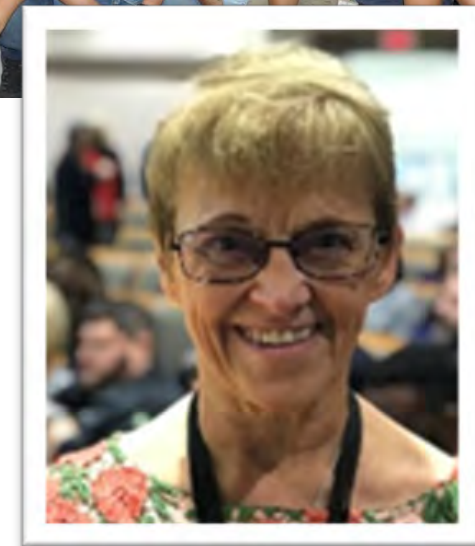


Credit

Credit provides convenience to consumers and is often required to make major purchases. Improper use can negatively impact a borrower's credit worthiness and limit future opportunities.

CUES Philippines – World Council of Credit Unions

- Lois Kitsch hired – USAID Project
- No liquidity, run-down infrastructure, unhappy members, low savings rates
- 1998 campaign to collect loans to charge off loans past due
- Micro-finance program - Savings and Credit with Education (SCWE)
 - Highly performing and profitable loans to women.
 - 50,000 women were participating





Hunger

Hunger is not limited to developing countries or those living in poverty. People around the world live with malnourishment, food insecurity, and greater issues related to hunger that can be devastating to communities.

In the US, 47 million people, including 14 million children, experience food insecurity annually.

Coastal CU Foundation Mobile Market

“Pay what you can” model

2025 Impact

- Produce: 30,984.70 lbs.
- Protein: 59,762.00 lbs.
- Shelf stable goods: 1814.25 lbs.
- Number Fresh Food Servings: 242,895
- Miles traveled:
 - (Coastal Trailer) 12,638
 - (all units) 29,232



TCP Credit Union Blessing Box

- Located at the credit union's office in **Rural Hall, NC**
- It serves as a 24/7 accessible resource where community members can take what they need or leave what they can to support neighbors in need
- Non-perishable food, hygiene products, and basic daily resources





Education

Addressing education is essential to resolving many of the other development issues. Quality education provides knowledge and resources that can improve people's lives.

Inclusion

Inclusion addresses representation at the highest and most visible levels. We must ensure that diverse, disadvantaged, and marginalized populations have a “voice” or “seat at the table” within our power structures.



Latino Community CU – Living the Mission

Chartered Feb 2000/1st branch June 26,2000

Over 139k members/\$1 billion in assets /80% 5-year growth rate

Members from 137 different countries

- 65% previously unbanked
- 75% low income
- 70% 1st time home buyers
- 35% established 1st credit
- 97% People of color (Latino borrowers)

Over 30,000 members have participation in financial education workshops

Latino Community CU – Financial Workshops

Run a series of workshops in all 15 branches and strategic partnerships throughout NC (Spring & Fall)

5-part workshop:

Budgeting

Building credit

How to buy a car

How to buy a house

Education & retirement



Need to have completed 4 of the 5 workshops to graduate

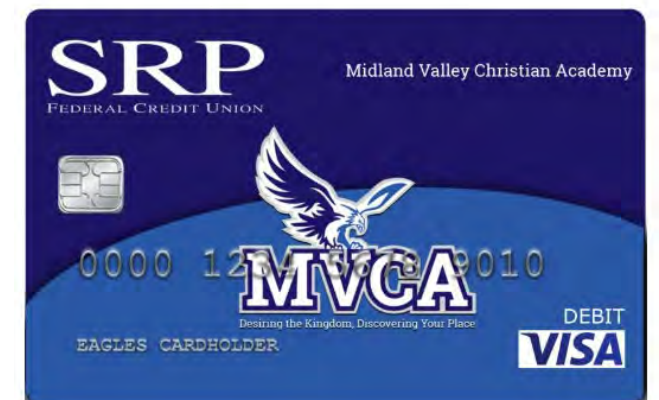
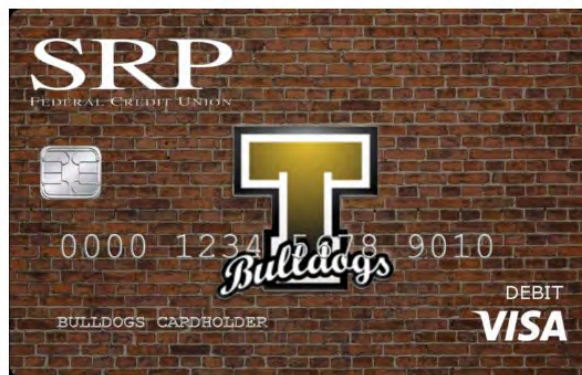
Latino Community CU – Financial Literacy

Workshop graduates have twice the average savings (\$3394 vs. \$1,810), checking accounts (69% vs. 38%), Mortgages (6% vs. 3%), & Direct deposit (36% vs. 18%)



SRP – Affinity Cards

Each time a member uses their card for a purchase, SRP donates funds to the school displayed on the card. Since the program's inception in 2018, more than \$2 million has been donated to 46 schools across eight counties!





Savings

People can't rely on credit alone to solve all issues. A habit of saving will provide financial security and peace of mind when it comes to emergency expenses. Longer-term savings allows people to build wealth and plan for retirement.

SECU – Salary Advance Loan

- Avoids the predatory nature of payday loans
- Maximum loan amount of \$500 per pay period
- No loan advance or origination fees
- With each loan advance, a percentage of the advanced amount is deposited into a Salary Advance Cash Account to help one save

| Cash Account balance | Loan APR ^{4,5} | Cash Account deposit |
|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Less than \$500 | 15.75% | 5% of loan advance |
| \$500 or more | 9.25% | None |



SRP – Retirement Experience

An experiential learning program that helps individuals think about what kind of retirement they want and then how to design a roadmap to get there.

“The feedback from our members has been overwhelmingly positive, and the level of engagement was truly inspiring. During the event, our members participated enthusiastically and enjoyed the interactive format that required teamwork. It was a joy to see everyone so involved and actively contributing to the discussions. Many expressed their excitement about sharing what they learned with their family members, extending the impact of the event beyond just those who attended.” Tawanaca Williams, CUDE, CCUFC, Financial Services Engagement Developer



Allegacy – National Foundation Grant

- Partnership with Crossnore Communities for Children's Youth Independent Living program, which provides essential life skills for youth aging out of foster care
- Allegacy offers a comprehensive program promoting financial independence

FINANCIAL WORKSHOPS

1:1 FINANCIAL COACHING

12-WEEK SAVINGS CHALLENGE





Housing

Humans have a basic need for shelter. Inadequate or unstable living conditions can have significant impact on people's ability to overcome many of the other development issues.



SPC – Downpayment Assistance Fund

- Zero-percent interest forgivable Down Payment Assistance loans are available for first-time homebuyers as a bridge to home ownership.
- Qualified applicants may receive up to \$5,000 for down payment and/or closing costs.

SPCCARES

FOUNDATION





Project Storm Break – Worldwide Foundation

- Flooding displaced 150,000 people in the region
- Schools became shelters
- Six schools received the support to ensure hundreds of children's basic safety needs are met



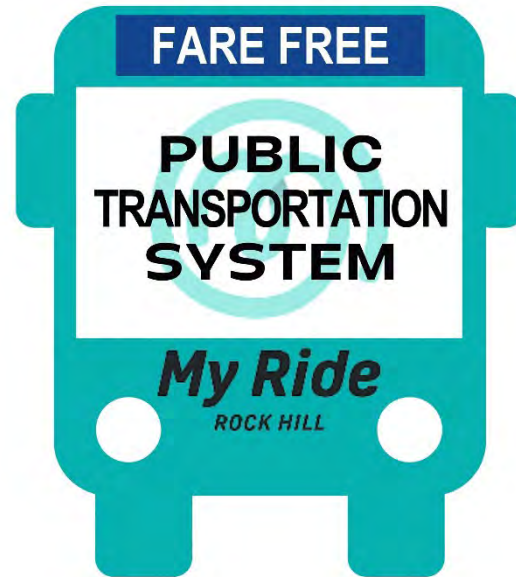


Transportation

Simply put, transportation provides access. Without transportation, individuals may not be able to maintain employment and families may not be able to access resources such as schools and food pantries.

Family Trust FCU – Free Community Bus

- The City of Rock Hill launched My Ride Rock Hill in 2019, a city-operated, fare-free, all-electric and zero-emission transit system.





Environment

We rely on our environment for air, food, and other critical needs. While climate change is a threat, there is no shortage of challenges that require us to consider the impact and sustainability of our actions.

Volunteer Cleanup Initiatives

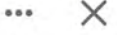
- **SAFE – Sumter’s Love Where You Live Cleanup Day**
- **REV - Marsh Cleanup at the RiverDogs Stadium**



facebook



SAFE Federal Credit Union



Apr 22 · 🌐

Sumter County is looking a little cleaner now thanks to our dedicated SAFE Family! Our crew of 32 volunteered on Saturday to take part in Sumter's Love Where You Live Cleanup Day. Despite the heat, we had a great time working together to beautify Wesmark Boulevard. We're proud to contribute to keeping our community clean and vibrant!



Sponsor – A – Highway

- Truliant supports professional and volunteer litter removal via sponsored signs along major interstates, including **I-85**, **I-77**, **I-485**, and **I-81** in North Carolina and Virginia.
- Helped remove over 17 tons of litter along 936 miles of N.C. highways.



Truliant – Operations Center

- A major adaptive re-use project, 880 solar panels installed.



CIVIC – Headquarters

- Partnered with NC-based Bee Downtown
- House two honeybee hives at their headquarters. Each hive is home to approximately 40,000 bees
- Supports NC's \$78 billion agricultural economy
- Pollinates just under two thousand acres





Health

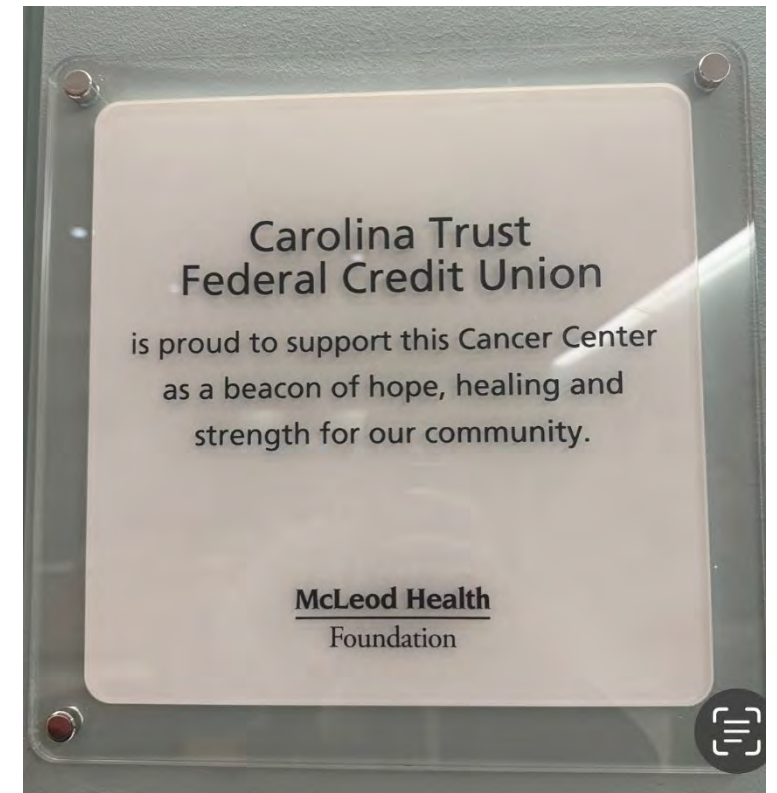
Ensuring healthy lives and promoting the well-being of people of all ages is foundational to human development.

**Diversity &
Equity**

Diversity is expressed in many forms and must be embraced throughout all business and social structures. Equity can be achieved by combating discrimination and creating processes and cultures that promote equity.


Carolina Trust – Cancer Center

- \$100,000 donation to the McLeod Health Center for Cancer Treatment and Research




Project Blossom – African Cooperative Development Foundation

- ACCOSCA (African Trade Association for Savings and Credit Cooperatives) - works with SACCOs to build strong institutions while building the financial stability of families and communities
- Sanitary poverty program for girls in Africa




According to UNICEF, 1 in 10 schoolgirls in Africa miss classes or drop out completely due to their period and substitute pads or tampons for less safe and less absorbent materials such as rags, newspaper, or bark.

[DONATE](#) 

Your support makes a world of difference.

Breaking barriers, unleashing potential





Group Discussion: Your Community's Pain Points

What development issue is facing your membership's community?

What are some ideas on how your credit union could address the issue?

Development Issues



Source



**Credit Union Development
Education Program**

Inspiring change through
credit unions since 1982

Development Issues Workshop Speakers



Charlotte



Sponsored by:



UNITED WAY
North Carolina



Ongoing Professional Development

- FiCEP – April 10 registration close
- CUs Together Employee Conference - April 23-25, 2026
- Development Issues Workshop – May 6, 2026
- League Annual Meeting - Foundation Wine Pull Fundraiser
- CU FinHealth - September 22-23, 2026
- Principles and Philosophy Conference – October 20-22, 2026
- MACCU Fall Conference - October 22-23, 2026

Grant & Award Deadlines

- Vizo Financial Empowerment Grants – Open from Feb 1 to May 1
- CUDE/ICUDE Scholarships – Open from June 1 to August 15
- Credit Union Awards Program - August 20, 2026
- Hero Awards - September 24, 2026

- Tech & Capital Improvement Grants* – Open from June 1 to October 1
- P&P Scholarships* – Application Deadline September 4



People Helping People

