

# The Chalk BOARD

July 2011

## CORNER

CHAIRPERSON'S



Those who attended our annual meeting in April learned that William K. Brothers, our President and CEO, was retiring. Bill Brothers first came to STCU Credit Union in 2004 as the treasurer and chief financial officer at a time when the credit union needed someone with a strong financial background. Bill stepped in and became our President and CEO in 2009 after Mr. Fishlock retired.

Bill started in the banking business at Cohasset Bank and moved up through the financial world, and we benefited from the many years of experience that he brought to the credit union.

The Board of Directors, Staff and members wish Mr. Brothers a happy retirement. Bill and his wife Marcia have moved back to the old south shore area of Massachusetts.

On June 9, 2011, Michael Ostrowski took the reins as your new President and CEO. Mr. Ostrowski is a Ludlow resident. He graduated from Ludlow High School, has a Bachelor's Degree from Springfield College, and a Master's Degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. The board is confident that his extensive financial background will assist STCU Credit Union to move forward into the next century.



As your credit union continues growing and thriving, we need vision and leadership. Mr. Ostrowski's experience in management, marketing, sales, public speaking, and motivating leadership will keep us moving in the right direction. Under his leadership, we will continue to grow and seek new ways to better assist YOU, the member.

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben S. Bernanke told attendees at the March 2011 Independent Community Bankers of America's convention, "Local communities, ranging from small towns to urban neighborhoods, are the foundation of the U.S. economy and communities need community banks to help them grow and prosper." Sadly, many of the community banks that Mr. Bernanke spoke of are actually being taken over by larger financial corporations.

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## Go Green, Stay on Track

Trying to go green? STCU is a great place to start! We offer a variety of services that allow employees and members to cut back on the paper used to conduct transactions. Debit cards are not only convenient, they save paper needed for checks and gas needed to drive to ATMs or branches. Direct Deposit saves time and resources, not to mention late payment fees, while online bill pay will save both paper and the cost of a stamp!

We also offer the convenience of e-Statements, sending your CU statement to your email inbox instead of your mailbox. In addition to eliminating the need for paper, this means no more waiting for the mail, no more storing paper statements and added protection against identity theft.

We can also help you stay on track with eAlerts, a convenient service that allows us to electronically notify you about account transactions that you want to know about, such as a deposit, withdrawal, or when your account balance drops below a preselected amount.

Visit [www.stcu.com](http://www.stcu.com) to find out more about how STCU can help you see green!

# Tornado Recovery

As a committed member of the Springfield community, STCU wants to offer assistance to our members affected by the tornadoes that touched down in our area on June 1, 2011.

- Let us know if your home was damaged during the storm. We want to work with you and your insurance company to speed up the claim process and get you the funds you need to repair your home.
- If you need additional funds, we are offering the following loan special until July 30th, 2011:
  - Unsecured loans up to \$15,000 for up to five years with rates as low as 7.99% for qualified borrowers/homeowners.\*
- Please call us if your income has been affected by the storm and you are having difficulty making timely loan payments. We may have options that can benefit you.
- We have been collecting funds from our staff and members to provide assistance to those who have been affected. Please let us know if you wish to apply for these funds.

By working together, we can speed up the recovery process. STCU Credit Union is here for you, our members. Please do not hesitate to call if we can be of assistance.

\* The rate listed is based on our A+ credit grade. Your actual rate may be higher depending on your individual credit score. We do business in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act.



## Why your credit union is the best bet for loans

If you're thinking of borrowing to buy a home, a car, equipment for your business, or just about anything else, getting the money may seem to be a small part of the decision. It shouldn't be. Tighter credit standards are a fact of life following the recession, and you may find that banks, which once welcomed your business, have taken away the red carpet.

That's not the case at STCU. Because of our Credit Union, we tend to be more willing to lend than other financial institutions are. Our interest rates on loans to individuals and small businesses are often lower, too. In fact, did you know...

- Unlike commercial banks, we're owned by members, like you, who share a common bond. That means our focus is on serving you well, not on maximizing profit for investors.
- Just like a bank, we take deposits, and then lend the money out to qualified borrowers who pay it back so it can be loaned out again. As a tax-exempt nonprofit, we can often lend this money at lower rates than most commercial banks can.
- Members have the confidence of knowing that their deposits (actually shares of ownership in our credit union) are insured by the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund, a government-backed fund similar to FDIC for banks, and the Massachusetts Credit Union Share Insurance Corporation, a state-backed fund.
- We don't waste money on zillion-dollar pay packages for senior executives. In fact, our board of directors is composed of elected volunteers.
- We go the extra mile to help keep families and businesses in our community thriving. For instance, credit union lending to small businesses increased nationally by 15% last year, while business lending by banks shrank by 11%.\*

Whether you have a purchase in mind or just want a financial reserve to use as needed, we'll be glad to review your borrowing options and help you choose the one that's best. Just call us or stop by. Whether you can see it or not, the red carpet is always out for you.

\* Mark D. Cummins, "Allowing more credit union loans would boost economy," <http://finance-commerce.com>, 3/15/11

**NEW on [www.STCU.com](http://www.STCU.com)**

**Home & Family  
Finance**

**RESOURCE CENTER**

**Your one-stop financial information center!**

# Get a Short Mortgage

Same great house... just a shorter mortgage

Rates as low as

**3.50%** APR\*



## Are home equity loans still a good deal?

Although most of New England wasn't as hard hit as other areas by the slump in home prices, tales of being underwater on home-related debt (owing more than the property's worth) may have made you wary of taking your equity for granted. But if you have a big expense coming up—college tuition, say, or a remodeling project—low home equity interest rates can look mighty attractive.

Should you consider applying for an equity loan or credit line? Here at STCU, we suggest including these three factors as part of your decision:

1. **Whether you itemize deductions.** Deductibility of home equity interest is a big benefit, since no other consumer debt is tax-advantaged. But if you're likely to take the standard deduction instead of itemizing, you'd lose this advantage.
2. **How disciplined you are with debt.** It's great to start off with a low interest rate, but are you disciplined enough to keep making sizable payments if that rate rises? Equity credit lines have a variable rate, and you can keep deferring payoff by repaying only a minimum each month. By contrast, most equity loans have fixed rates and fixed payments, so you know when your debt will be repaid. A rule of thumb: For a one-time expense that you can pay down on a fixed schedule, choose a loan; lean toward a credit line to finance ongoing expenses, but be prepared for higher rates.
3. **How much money you want.** You'll need enough available equity to serve as collateral. Available equity is a percentage of the estimated market value of your home (check Zillow.com for a ballpark idea), minus the amount you owe on your mortgage. Typically, the more of your equity you borrow, the higher your interest rate will be.

To find out more about whether an equity loan or line would be right for you, stop by and talk it over with us. We have other low-cost borrowing options, too—so one way or another, there's a good chance we can lend the cash you need.

## 2011 Anthony J. Serafino Scholarships Awarded

Fourteen students applied for the 2011 Anthony J. Serafino Scholarship Award in the amount of \$1,000 being granted by STCU Credit Union. The six winners are:

- **Marissa Douglas**  
Springfield Central High School
- **Meaghan Foley**  
Agawam High School
- **Sommer Mahoney**  
Wilbraham & Monson Academy
- **Mark Manolakis**  
Minnechaug High School
- **Courtney Rivest**  
Agawam High School
- **Fernando Sanchez**  
Sabis Charter School

Winners received a letter of receipt at our annual meeting that was held on April 5, 2011 at the John Boyle O'Reilly Club.

In addition, Sommer Mahoney of Wilbraham & Monson Academy was nominated for the Massachusetts Credit Union League 2011 Pioneer Valley Chapter Scholarship award and won an additional \$1,500 scholarship from the league. We wish all the students well with their educational endeavors.

## Auto Dealer of the Month

Congratulations to this quarter's Auto Dealers of the Month!

April: Nicky D's

May: Auto Sales Center

June: TBD



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Fortunately, your credit union shares a similar philosophy to the old savings banks – “focus on the customer.” Our staff at the credit union is here to assist you. Yes, STCU has people that will sit with you, review your financial needs and help find the services that are truly in your best interest.

Your credit union will provide you with better service than the community banks and the larger financial corporations. Mr. Ostrowski is committed to providing the services that you want, such as online and mobile banking. We want you to feel good about encouraging your friends, family and colleagues to join STCU Credit Union.

Please make sure you stop in and meet Mr. Ostrowski when you are at the main office.

## Norman Halls

Chairperson

## STCU BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND CEO

Norman Halls

Chairperson

Sidney Snegg

Vice Chairperson

Kenneth Ketchum

Assistant Treasurer

John McDowell

Clerk

Lynn Boscher

Director

Awilda Chaban-Colon

Director

Matthew Dowd

Director

Roland Joyal

Director

Ruby Kelly

Director

Peter Lappin

Director

Daniel Moriarty

Director

Michael Ostrowski

President/CEO

E-MAIL:

Board Chairman: [chairman@stcu.com](mailto:chairman@stcu.com)

Board of Directors: [board@stcu.com](mailto:board@stcu.com)

CEO Michael Ostrowski: [mostrowski@stcu.com](mailto:mostrowski@stcu.com)

### Main Branch:

145 Industry Avenue, Springfield, MA 01104

453 East Main Street, Westfield, MA 01085

1-413-732-9812 TOLL-FREE 1-877-732-9812

FAX: 1-413-737-7635

LOAN DEPARTMENT FAX: 1-413-886-0156

Website: [www.stcu.com](http://www.stcu.com)

Easy Bank: 1-413-827-8000

Outside of Hampden County Toll-Free: 1-800-264-0600

Lost/Stolen ATM/Debit Card: 1-413-732-9812

Lost/Stolen Credit Card: 1-877-875-8078

Lost/Stolen Debit Card after hours: 1-800-472-3272

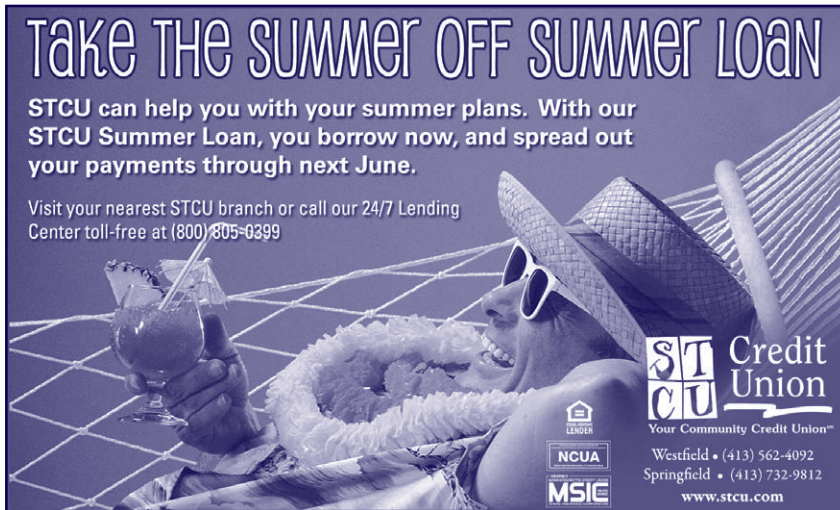
24/7 Lending Call Center: 1-800-805-0399

The Chalk Board is a quarterly newsletter publication for the benefit of STCU members.

## A Special Thanks

The incumbent Directors, Jack, Ruby, Awilda and Matt wish to thank our loyal and faithful staff and members for the support and strong turnout at the annual meeting on April 5. We appreciate it, and will continue to work together and welcome our new Directors to the team as we continue to move on a positive path.

Also, our two new board members, Lynn Boscher and Peter Lappin, would like to say thank you for your votes. They look forward to serving on your board of directors.



**TAKE THE SUMMER OFF SUMMER LOAN**

STCU can help you with your summer plans. With our STCU Summer Loan, you borrow now, and spread out your payments through next June.

Visit your nearest STCU branch or call our 24/7 Lending Center toll-free at (800) 805-0399

**STCU Credit Union**  
Your Community Credit Union™  
Westfield • (413) 562-4092  
Springfield • (413) 732-9812  
[www.stcu.com](http://www.stcu.com)

LENDER  
NCUA  
MSIC

## HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Labor Day – Monday, September 5

Columbus Day – Monday, October 10



This credit union is federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration



### STCU'S MISSION STATEMENT

*“Assist our members in reaching their financial goals by providing superior products and services in a personalized manner.”*