



# North Side News

## North Side Community Federal Credit Union

1011 W. Lawrence

Chicago IL 60640

☎ 773-769-5800

Fax: 773-769-6800

### Bank By Phone

773-769-2800

E-Mail: NOSIDEFCU@aol.com

*North Side Community Federal Credit Union is a non-profit financial institution*

*Volume XVII No. I*

*January-March 2006*

## WANT TO SAVE OVER \$250 THIS TAX SEASON?

With tax season just around the corner, we want to let all of our members know that, for the third year in a row, we will be offering our completely **free** tax preparation service here at the credit union through our partnership with the Center for Economic Progress's Tax Counseling Project!

Unlike other free tax preparation locations, there is no waiting in line when you get your taxes done at North Side-- simply call ahead to schedule your appointment. Your return is completed by professionally trained tax volunteers, and your appointment will take no more than an hour. You can choose to file electronically or by paper—either way, it's free! We can also do prior year returns for the previous 3 years.

So what's the catch? Why do we offer this service for free when other places charge hundreds of dollars? The simple answer is that it's a part of our mission of providing affordable, alternative financial resources for the community. Many people are unaware that the popular "rapid refund" services of commercial tax preparers are in fact high-interest loans, in the same predatory category as payday loans. Interest rates for rapid refund loans range from 25% to 200%, although the APR is rarely stated. Instead, it is expressed as a large fee for receiving your money early. What's worse--if the tax preparer makes an error or you don't end up getting the entire refund, you still have to repay the loan! By the time you pay the \$30 for the application fee, the \$110 for the finance & other bank fees, plus the \$110 for the basic tax return, you've spent \$250 to get your *own* refund money!\* **Why not just file your taxes for free electronically at the credit union and get your money within 10 days?**

Last year, we completed nearly 300 returns, with a total of over \$300,000 in federal refunds paid to community members who took advantage of the service. We would love to double those numbers this year, and with our new convenient evening hours, we believe we will!

The service is available every Monday evening from 5:30 to 8:30, January 30<sup>th</sup> through April 10<sup>th</sup>. It is open to individuals with annual incomes up to \$35,000 and families with annual incomes up to \$50,000. Call early for your preferred appointment time! We hope to see you at tax time!

**To schedule your appointment, call Cecilia at 773-769-5800 x.226.**

Thanks to the Center for Economic Progress for their wonderful work.

\*Prices averaged from H&R Block and midpoints of Jackson Hewitt for Head of Household filer with 2 kids, \$1,500 refund.

### New Loan Rates

- Personal Loans -16.5%
- Auto Loans - 5.75%-11.5%
- 1st Mortgage Loans - 5.75%
- Home Equity Loans - 5.75%
- Education Loans -14%
- Short Term Loans -10.5 %
- Share Secured Loans -5.75%
- Community Org. Loans - 7.5%
- Visa Loans -11.8% - 15.9%

### HOURS

Closed Monday

Tuesday/Wednesday 8am-3 pm

Thursday/Friday 12pm-7pm

Saturday 8:30am-1pm

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James P. Masini, President

Kelly Mizeur Vice President

Clifford Scott-Rudnick,

Vice President

Jennifer Pritchard, Secretary

Curt Roeschley, Treasurer

Sandra Arellano

Betty Cameron

Ayo Maat

Jamiko Rose

Khamphoui Singvongsa

Angela Turley, Director Emeritus

Roger Krause, Director Emeritus

### STAFF

Ed Jacob, Manager

Maria Montoya, Loan Officer

Cecilia Salinas, Marketing Manager

Constance Dabney, Teller

Erika Gustafson, Financial Literacy

Joanna Hong, AmeriCorps\*VISTA



### From the Manager

You may remember last January's newsletter, when I wrote about our disappointing 2004 financial results. Unfortunately, we continued to struggle with loan delinquencies during 2005, and had to charge off a large number of loans late this year. While again a painful exercise, it should help clean up our balance sheet and position us for a better 2006. A good number of the smaller loans that we charged-off were to new members who did not make even one payment on the loan before it became delinquent. As a result, we have tightened up our loan underwriting, especially on the Payday Alternative Loan. We also need to do a better job orienting new members to North Side, and reminding some of our long-term members how we operate as a financial cooperative. When you take out a loan, you are not borrowing from some large, anonymous institution, but from your neighbors, your co-owners. We have some ideas on how to do this, and will give you more information in an upcoming newsletter and at our annual meeting in March. Thanks for your continued support of North Side over the past year.



The next meeting of your credit union Board of Directors will be held on Tuesday, January 24th at 7:15 p.m. at the credit union office, 1011 W. Lawrence. All interested members are welcome to attend.

## Childcare Now Available During Financial Workshops!

### FREE CLASS! FREE FOOD! FREE CHILDCARE!

Thanks to the generous donation of space by Christopher House, we will be able to offer free childcare during our January session of **Your Money & Your Life!** Classes will be held in the evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Christopher House Uptown location at 4701 N. Wintrop, just around the corner from the credit union. The schedule is as follows:



January 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>

January 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>

January 24<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>

Registration is required. To register for **Your Money & Your Life**, please call Erika at 773-769-5800 x.224.

## Volunteer Opportunity: Help Run Our Free Tax Service!

North Side Community Federal Credit Union will again be partnering with the Center for Economic Progress, a Chicago-based non-profit organization, to offer our free tax service. Our program is part of the Center's Tax Counseling Project, which has grown in only ten years into the nation's largest free statewide tax preparation service for working families and individuals. The huge success of the Tax Counseling Project would not be possible without the hard work of its dedicated volunteers. In the "members helping members" spirit we would like to extend an invitation to all of our credit union members to volunteer to help make our tax preparation site a success this year. If selected to volunteer for this project at the credit union, you will receive free professional training from the Tax Counseling Project. Volunteer hours will be Monday evenings from 5:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. between January 30<sup>th</sup> and April 10<sup>th</sup>. If interested, please call Erika at 773-769-5800 x.224.

# HAPPY NEW YEAR

