



Contact: William Wille, ICUL
630-983-3216

Michael Wishnow, PCUA
717-234-3156, ext. 5213

January 23, 2008

For Immediate Release

ILLINOIS PARTNERS WITH PENNSYLVANIA FOR “iBELONG” CAMPAIGN

Naperville, IL. – The Illinois Credit Union League (ICUL) has signed a licensing agreement to use the Pennsylvania Credit Union Association’s (PCUA) “iBelong” media campaign to increase credit union awareness and help foster membership growth in Illinois.

Like many other states across the country, credit union executives in Illinois have cited declining membership as their number one challenge. In addition, Illinois consumers are uninformed about credit unions.

To that end, the Illinois Statewide Image Awareness Task Force has been meeting since the beginning of 2007 to develop a comprehensive program designed to increase awareness among Illinois consumers. Task force activities have included introducing the campaign concept at ICUL’s Annual Convention, presenting at ICUL’s Small Asset Size Conference, and hosting a Webinar.

After reviewing several other state campaigns and deliberating a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, the task force determined licensing PCUA’s iBelong campaign would save time, energy, and dollars to most effectively get Illinois’ new effort off the ground in 2008. Usage of the iBelong campaign will replace ICUL’s Illinois Cooperative Advertising Reaches Everyone (I-CARE) campaign.

“Pennsylvania developed a top notch campaign that we believe will play well here in Illinois,” said Carl Sorgatz, ICUL Chairman. “Between the research and all the elements that have been created, we feel this is an initiative our credit unions will get excited about and support.”

“We are pleased that the Illinois League has contracted to run iBelong in Illinois,” states Diana Roberts, PCUA Chair. “Our steering committee and outside experts did a lot of research in developing iBelong. The bottom line is that the credit union message is same, regardless of state boundaries, and we’d welcome additional League partners,” said Roberts.

In addition to the awareness issue, the task force investigated this new effort for several key reasons. These include declining membership among peak borrowers ages 25 – 44, and an overall aging credit union membership. In addition, according to the Credit Union National Association’s (CUNA) E-Scan, the average member age is 47 and the average non-member age is 41.8.

Thus, the goals of this new initiative include:

1. Eliminate misconceptions about credit unions;
2. Increase consumer interest in doing business with credit unions;
3. Enhance credit union image among lawmakers; and
4. Complement and lay the foundation for individual credit union marketing.

At its November meeting, the ICUL Board agreed to contribute \$500,000 to help fund and launch this advertising campaign in 2008. To secure the most effective, comprehensive media buy possible, the goal is to raise at least \$850,000 for the 2008 campaign, with the remainder coming from voluntary contributions. At this level, the task force will be able to fund two, three-week campaigns including billboard, radio, newsprint, and begin to incorporate cable television as part of its media strategy.

“With 100% participation from our affiliates across the state, we can begin to change the way Illinois consumers think about credit unions,” said John Bratsakis, ICUL Vice Chairman and chairman of the task force.

As an incentive for credit unions to contribute to the full suggested pledge amount for their asset category, credit unions will receive supplemental marketing materials that coordinate with the campaign, allowing credit unions to “piggy back” on the momentum of the campaign by adding their tagline and logo to run in their local media; preferred discounted media pricing; and listing in the iBelong Web site’s credit union search locator tools. As part of the licensing agreement, ICUL will utilize the existing iBelong Web site (www.iBelong.org) as one of the key drivers and primary measurement tools for the campaign.

###

Note: The Illinois Credit Union League 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 464 credit unions in Illinois with more than 2.7 million members.