



April - Financial Literacy Month



A special meeting of the Florida Financial Literacy Council was held March 25, 2009 in Tallahassee. The group was addressed by Florida CFO Alex Sink who also presented the Cabinet Resolution declaring April as Financial Literacy Month in Florida.

In her remarks, CFO Sink emphasized the need for financial education efforts now more than ever. "I don't think that two years ago when we began this council, we could have predicted the maelstrom of economic downturn facing Florida, the country, and the world," said CFO Sink. She commended the work the Florida Financial Literacy Council has done to raise awareness by organizing and participating in events to teach consumers about financial challenges, and also proposed ideas for increasing financial literacy efforts in the state, including making it a graduation requirement for high school seniors to complete one online course in financial literacy. She challenged educators and schools to have 100% of their senior class complete some type of financial education.

Sink noted that it is "important to education Floridians on money management." She applauded the efforts of the audience of working each day to educate citizens, raise awareness of financial literacy, present educational sessions, and stressing the importance of money management to young people.



Sink added that her office is developing a web-based tool, a one-stop shop for financial literacy resources, later this year. "Your work has made a difference, you have made a difference, and you will continue to make a difference", Sink added, "through your devotion to financial literacy."

Florida Coalition News

Florida Prosperity Partnership Receives Award

The Florida Prosperity Partnership was recognized by CFO Sink for their initiatives this past year. Established in the Fall 2008, the Coalition consists of twenty individual prosperity and asset-building campaigns across Florida that have existed from two to eight years. Three of the largest and most successful coalitions in the state were begun

by present co-conveners, and have operated for six years (Jacksonville) to eight years (Broward and Miami-Dade). The coalition is dedicated to building financial assets for low-to-moderate income residents and believes that “All citizens of Florida have equal access to asset building and asset preservation opportunities.” The members are dedicated to creating a unified, coordinated, and collaborative statewide effort to educate, train, and put money directly back into the hands of Florida citizens to increase the financial stability not only of individuals, but also the state as a whole.

The Florida Prosperity Partnership Coalition is chaired by **Janet Hamer**, Community Development Manager, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, Jacksonville. Co-Conveners and members of the Florida Jump\$tart board include **Dr. Michael Gutter**, University of Florida; **Karen Landry**, Executive Director, War on Poverty; and **George Owen**, Community Relations Executive, Regions Bank. Congratulations to the Florida Prosperity Partnership!



Dr. Brown Speaks to Florida Jump\$tart Partners at Semi-Annual Meeting

The Florida Jump\$tart Coalition held its semi-annual partner meeting on March 10, 2009, hosted by the University of Florida Osceola County IFAS Extension Office, Kissimmee. Dr. Scott Brown, Chief Economist with Raymond James, St. Petersburg presented an Economic Outlook with a focus on Florida. This informative session looked at the current indicators of our recession – accelerating job loss, decreasing consumer spending, decreasing value in homes and 401Ks, and others factors causing a chain reaction of global proportion. He feels we have yet to bottom out.



Jump\$tart Treasurer Tom Kane (L) with Chief Economist Dr. Scott Brown.

The federal government is using new tools such as monitoring of tax rates, stimulus packages, and monetary policy to turn the economy around. Brown cited three main tools being used to get us out of the current recession: 1) Federal policy (the move to buy bad debt and other policies); 2) Fiscal policy (increased government spending, aid to the states); and 3) Financial stabilization (methods to stabilize markets, stress test for banks, capital injections, foreclosure prevention).

He also discussed the fine line between consumer saving and spending. Florida Jump\$tart members encourage consumer saving, people do need to save more, yet we need consumer spending to ease the economy.



Brown forewarned that economic recovery may take awhile; this is a serious recession compounded by unemployment continuing to rise and individuals being unemployed for longer periods of time. Florida and other states with “hot real estate” markets were hit the hardest.

Rosanna Jacobsen and Ruth Gaines along with other members networked after the Florida Jump\$tart meeting on March 10.

Florida Saves Campaign

Laura Royer presented a recap of the successful Osceola Saves program and **John Olsen** described the America Saves brochure at the Partner Meeting on March 10. Both speakers encouraged everyone to participate in the 2010 Florida Saves campaign and to consider keeping a year-round savings focus. The campaign emphasizes the goal of saving or reducing debt on an individual basis and provides printed, web site, e-mail reminders, and other support for individuals and organizations. A new web site is coming soon.

Florida Jump\$tart Coalition Board



Florida Jump\$tart Coalition board members attending the March 10 meeting. Standing (L to R): Laura Royer, George Owen, Brenda Hubbard, John Olsen, Andy Williams, Tom Kane. Seated (L to R): Sarah Arteaga, Rosanna Jacobsen, Janet Hamer. Not pictured: Beth Bouchard, Jessica Cecere, Gloria Esteban, Cassandra Grayson, Michael Gutter, R Jai Howard, Karen Landry, Laine Powell, and Clinton Mueller.

Upcoming Events

April 2009

National Financial Literacy Month

What is your organization doing? Please send us your information to share with other partners.

April 1, 2009

National Jump\$tart Board, Partners and State Coalition Leaders' Fund Raising Dinner, State Leaders' Meeting, National Committee Meetings

Washington, DC

April 2, 2009

National Jump\$tart General Partners' Meeting and National Board Meeting

Washington, DC

April 20, 2009

The Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago and Visa Inc. will co-host the third annual **Financial Literacy and Education Summit**, the goal of which will be to examine best practices for addressing the economic challenges of the global community. Featured panelists include NBC's Jean Chatzky, as well as other international government, NGO, and private sector leaders. Register to watch the Summit webcast and stay informed about Summit speakers and schedule. [Register now.](#)

April 21, 2009

Teach a Child to Save Day

National and Florida Bankers Associations; registration starts Feb. 3 at <http://www.aba.com/ABAEF/TCTSReg.htm>

Friday, April 24, 10 a.m.

Florida Jump\$tart Coalition Board Meeting by conference call

Thursday, April 30, Noon – 3:30 p.m.

Financial Literacy Day on Capitol Hill

50 exhibitors will display their financial literacy programs and materials

Friday, June 12, 2009, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

“Got F’s?” Fun Day (“The Fundamentals of Finance, Football, and Firearm Accident Prevention”); Gould’s Park, Miami; Community Works Coalition, Inc.

News Briefs

Charles Schwab Foundation Announces Winners of Fall 2008 National Financial Literacy Challenge Scholarship Awards

(March 3, 2009) – The Charles Schwab Foundation is awarding \$1,000 scholarships to each of the 22 students who obtained scores of 100 percent on the fall 2008 National Financial Literacy Challenge. Between November 3 and December 12, 2008, more than 75,000 high school students across the U.S. took the voluntary online exam, an increase of 63 percent over the first Challenge administered in May 2008. The 35-question online test of personal finance knowledge and understanding was administered by the Department of the U.S. Treasury. Of the 75,000 students who took the exam, the average score was 52 percent, demonstrating that much more work is needed to prepare youth for their financial futures. In addition to providing scholarships to the 22 students who earned perfect scores (20 boys and 2 girls), the Foundation also is awarding \$1,000 to each school or organization that contributed to the financial education of the winners.

Interestingly, three perfect scorers hail from a single school, Buchholz High School in Gainesville. Buchholz also boasted the Challenge’s youngest perfect scorer, a 13-year-old seventh-grader enrolled in

Gainesville teacher Michele Brothers and her three winning students from Buchholz High School: From left to right, Kevin Huang, Alexander Shapiro and Huanzheng (Bob) Chen.



advanced placement classes. Buchholz's Academy of Finance Director Michele Brothers signed up 48 of her students to take the Challenge, and 46 scored in the top 25th percentile; 11 of those including the three perfect scorers were in the top one percent.

A long-time math teacher, Brothers has been teaching personal finance to students for the past two years. "When I taught math, I'd often hear students ask 'When are we ever going to use *that*?' " she said. "Students in my Personal Financial Planning class never ask me about the relevance of what they're learning; they know they'll be applying these concepts every day of their lives. As educators, we're always talking about the importance of teaching subjects across the curriculum," she added. "The current state of the economy clearly points out that we need to be talking about more than mathematics and English composition; we need to be teaching finance and personal responsibility across the curriculum, too."

Value of College Savings Plans Continue to Fall

(March 3, 2009) – The value of college savings plans fell 21 percent last year, a loss of \$23.4 billion, as the bear market left American families with less money for tuition and put pressure on schools to increase financial aid. Assets in the savings accounts, called 529 plans, declined to \$88.5 billion from \$111.9 billion at the end of 2007, according to data compiled by Financial Research Corp. and the College Savings Foundation. The drop was mostly driven by the selloff in stocks, which lost 38 percent as measured by the Standard & Poor's 500 Index. Students are being squeezed by rising tuitions and tougher loan requirements. The average tuition cost at a four-year public college rose 5.7 percent in the current academic year to \$14,333, while the expense for a private college rose 5.6 percent to \$34,132. The Florida College Investment Plan finished first among all direct-sold 529 savings plans in one-year and three-year investment performance for the period ended December 31, 2008, according to a study released by Savingforcollege.com LLC. – *Bloomberg*

Public Universities See Jump in Transfers as Economy Sours

(March 5, 2009) – Denise Corsini transferred in January from the University of Tampa to Rutgers University in her home state of New Jersey, saving as much as \$10,000 a year. Students across the U.S. are making similar choices as Corsini, who is saving on tuition, transportation, and meal costs by eating at home. State universities in Indiana, Texas and Florida are also seeing more transfer requests as families cut costs in the recession. At Florida Atlantic University, transfer applications so far have risen 37 percent from last year for the term beginning in June, and 22 percent for the September term. With the application deadline for the June term nearing, the school has 265 transfer applications from students at private colleges. That means the figure is poised to surpass the 277 who applied for last year's June session. Transfer applications for June from students at public schools outside Florida have already more than tripled last year's total of 101. While the increase in transfer applications at Central Florida University in Orlando is little changed from last year, at about 10 percent, there is more interest from students at private schools such as Rollins College in neighboring Winter Park, said Gordon Chavis, the associate vice president for undergraduate admissions. Tuition at Rollins is \$34,520 a year, compared with \$3,947 for in-state students at Central Florida. "It's a clear indication that people are concerned about the economy," Chavis said. "We are an inexpensive option." – *Bloomberg*

News from the National Coalition

National Jump\$tart Coalition® Awards

(March 24, 2009) – Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) has been named the 2009 “Federal Legislator of the Year” by the Jump\$tart Coalition® for Personal Financial Literacy. The award was presented at the annual awards dinner on April 1. The prestigious federal legislator award recognizes a member of Congress who has made substantial contributions to the promotion of financial literacy for students and young adults. Other awards presented during the event include the State Coalition of the Year, which this year was presented to Tennessee. The coveted Odom Award goes to Barbara M. O’Neil, Ph.D., with the Cooperative Extension at Rutgers University, for her long-time, “visionary” commitment to financial literacy. In addition, the national poster contest winner of the National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC) was presented to Leah Ellyson, an 11th grade student at North Marion High School in Farmington, West Virginia.

Financial Literacy Legislation Pending

There are currently two House Resolutions focused on the issue of Financial Literacy. The support for both are growing, and if you may want to encourage your member of Congress to sign on also.

H.RES.65, Title: Expressing the support of the House of Representatives for efforts to increase financial literacy in the United States and recognizing the work of John Hope Bryant to raise awareness about the importance of financial and economic literacy.

Sponsor: [Rep Watson, Diane E.](#) [CA-33] (introduced 1/14/2009)

Latest Major Action: 1/14/2009 Referred to House committee.

Status: Referred to the House Committee on Financial Services.

Current Florida supporters:

[Rep Hastings, Alcee L.](#) [FL-23] - 1/14/2009

[Rep Brown, Corrine](#) [FL-3] - 1/14/2009

H.R.1325, Title: To require financial literacy counseling for borrowers, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: [Rep Jackson-Lee, Sheila](#) [TX-18] (introduced 3/5/2009)

Latest Major Action: 3/5/2009 Referred to House committee.

Status: Referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor.

Florida Cosponsors:

[Rep Brown, Corrine](#) [FL-3] - 3/5/2009

[Rep Kosmas, Suzanne M.](#) [FL-24] - 3/5/2009

“Financial Fridays” from National Jump\$tart

Mar. 13

The **American Institute of Certified Public Accountants** (www.aicpa.org) is the national, professional association of CPAs, with approximately 350,000 members. The AICPA sets ethical and U.S. auditing standards for the profession and also develops and grades the Uniform CPA Examination.

The unified financial literacy initiative - *360 Degrees of Financial Literacy* - is based on the premise that financial education should be a lifelong endeavor. It provides a comprehensive approach to making informed



America Counts on CPAs®

financial decisions critical at various stages of life. The AICPA's award-winning financial literacy Web site, www.360financialliteracy.org provides consumers with free resources, including more than 1,000 articles, tools and FAQs, to help them make sound financial decisions. The site is entirely free from all advertising, sales, promotions, and branding.

The "Feed the Pig" campaign launched with the Ad Council urges Americans between the ages of 25 and 34 to improve their savings and make smart financial decisions. The campaign (www.feedthepig.org) provides basic steps to help young adults begin to take small steps toward saving and long-term financial security. Feed the Pig for Tweens, is a free financial literacy curriculum on saving for fourth to sixth graders. The coursework reinforces math skills with real-life applications, like tracking expenses and balancing a checkbook. Materials and the games are available on www.FeedthePig.org/Tweens. <http://tweens.feedthepig.org/tweens/>

Mar. 20

The **Federal Citizen Information Center (FCIC)** is a federal source for answers to questions about consumer problems and government services. Consumers can get the information they need in three ways: by calling toll-free 1 (800) FED-INFO; through printed publications; or through information posted on the FCIC family of Web sites: USA.gov, Pueblo.gsa.gov, Kids.gov, ConsumerAction.gov, GobiernoUSA.gov, and Consumidor.gov.

FCIC provides information to consumers on a variety of practical topics as well as current issues. The 2009 edition of the *Consumer Action Handbook* is one of the most helpful and popular consumer resources. This 177-page guide is designed to help citizens find the best and most direct source for assistance with their consumer problems and questions. The handbook offers tips on  **Federal Citizen Information Center** Pueblo, Colorado topics such as what to ask before you invest, protecting against online fraud and educating yourself on how to avoid home foreclosure. It also includes a sample complaint letter that consumers can use as a guide for their own letter, FAX, or e-mail. The handbook has thousands of names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses for Better Business Bureaus, corporate consumer contacts and state, county, and city government consumer protection offices. Consumers can access the handbook online at www.consumeraction.gov; a Spanish version is also available at www.consumidor.gov.

Mar. 27

To help young kids learn about the value of money **The Money Mammals** (www.themoneymammals.com) are here to help. Through our educational video content and Saving Money Is Fun Kids Club, we help kids learn to "Share & Save & Spend Smart Too!" Developed by an award-winning producer and educational consultant team, The Money Mammals are the first characters created specifically to teach kids the value of money.

Our "Saving Money Is Fun" DVD recently featured in the *Wall Street Journal* as a tool that teaches kids "saving savvy. The Money Mammals show children the joy of sharing, saving and spending smart... [and teach] simple concepts such as money transactions, saving allowance money, and sharing in the form of gifts through catchy songs and funny dialogue." The DVD comes with a companion teaching guide.



The Saving Money Is Fun Kids Club attracts parents and kids and encourages them to open accounts to start them on the right track towards a positive financial future. The overall goal of the club is to help credit unions build member loyalty early; retaining and attracting youth members while teaching them to share, save and spend smart.

The new “Joe’s Credit Union” game at (www.themoneymammals.com/cugame) shows young credit union members everything that goes on at a branch. It will be up on our site for a limited time. The Family Financial Fitness Package has everything your kids need to get them on the path to money smarts.

For archives of past Financial Fridays, see the Download tab at www.jumpstart.org.

News and Recent Events From Our Partners

Memories From the Great Depression

The following “letter to the editor” was written by Mrs. Margie Herp, 90-year-old grandmother of Jump\$tart board member, Andy Williams.

Every Tuesday was “Bank Day” in our elementary school. Each class had their own so-called banking system whereby one student each Tuesday was chosen to be banker. Each student brought their money to the banker who recorded it in his book and in our personal savings book. Usually it was a quarter, although since this was during the Great Depression, often times it was a dime, a nickel or even a penny. The amount didn’t matter. It was the importance of saving regularly. At the end of the year each student was given verification from the bank of his account balance.



My siblings and I were very lucky because our father stressed the importance of savings. At the end of each school year he would take each of our school-bank savings, and add to it whatever it took to buy one share of ARMCO Steel stock (his employer.) We got an early start in becoming familiar with the stock market as well as the banking system and the importance of saving regularly. Interestingly enough I believe all three of us held onto those early shares of stock until we were married, when they really came in handy!

CFO Sink: Don't be an "April Fool," Get Financially Literate

The first day of April may be a great day for practical jokes, but having a poor understanding of finances is no laughing matter. That’s why Florida’s Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink says April, which has been declared *Financial Literacy Month in Florida*, is a great time for Floridians to take control of their financial future.

“While many of us realize the importance of money management and budgeting in these tough times, one in four Floridians still do not adequately set money aside or plan for retirement, and still have more debt than savings,” said CFO Sink. “As our state struggles with a troubled economy and a foreclosure crisis, it is more important than ever for Floridians to take control of their families’ financial future.”

During Financial Literacy Month, CFO Sink’s Department of Financial Services is scheduled to provide a variety of financial education programs throughout the state on a variety of topics. In April, Floridians can learn about disaster preparedness, identify theft, and buying a first home, as well as programs under the CFO’s ongoing Safeguard our Seniors and Florida Housing Help initiatives.

Welcome New Partners

Community Works Coalition, Inc.

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Miami, Florida 33157
(305) 235-4848

John Bowen, Vice President

jbowen@cw-educate.org

Andre Coakley, President

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Financial Health and Fitness

2290 N. Ronald Reagan Blvd. Suite 140
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Angela Jones

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Financial Literacy Resources

New Interactive Guide Available– “Parents, Teens and Money”

During these uncertain economic times, teenagers too, may feel confused about their financial future and may not know where to turn for guidance. Chase Card Services and College Parents of America have partnered to develop “Parents, Teens and Money” – an interactive guide that is designed to help parents talk to their teenagers about critical personal finance issues. The guide contains activities and discussion topics that parents can use to help young adults better understand personal finances, such as:

- The importance of building a good credit history;
- How to use financial services responsibly; and
- Understanding the many different types of loans young people may need.

The guide serves as a teaching tool for parents determined to help their children avoid common pitfalls and covers topics from banking services to credit cards. Access the guide at either at www.chaseclearandsimple.com or www.collegeparents.org.

New Health Insurance Options for the Unemployed

In the past, laid-off employees who wanted to continue with their employer's group health insurance plan could do so with COBRA — but they had to pay 100 percent of the premium. The new stimulus package, however, provides some relief to the newly unemployed and their families. It includes a provision that subsidizes 65 percent of a laid-off worker's COBRA health insurance premium. The coverage applies to workers laid-off between Sept. 1, 2008 and Dec. 31, 2009 and lasts for nine months. The subsidy begins to phase out at annual income levels of \$125,000 for individuals and \$250,000 for couples. This new COBRA health care option gives the unemployed a less expensive health insurance option. – *Feedthepig.org*

Financial Literacy Research

Even the “Mass Affluent” Couldn't Pay Bills Following a Job Loss

(March 2, 2009) — Work is the linchpin holding together the dream as Americans have little to no financial cushion. Half of workers are just two paychecks away from not being able to pay their bills, according to *The 2009 MetLife Study of the American Dream*. A disturbing 50 percent of Americans say they are only one month – or only two paychecks – or less away from not being able to meet their financial obligations if they

were to lose their job, and more than half of these, 28 percent of the total respondents, couldn't survive financially for more than two weeks. Even the "mass affluent" – those making \$100,000-plus in income per year – aren't immune with more than one-quarter (29 percent) saying that they couldn't meet their financial obligations for more than one month following a job loss.

According to the study, the last twelve months have not only had a profound impact on Americans' financial stability, they have also had a dramatic effect on how Americans define and approach the dream. This year's study reveals that the American dream has been revised – not reversed – and is now buoyed by American pragmatism rather than consumerism. These large shifts would typically be expected to span decades. Yet, according to MetLife's research, the country has experienced major changes year-over-year that will likely have a lasting impact on how Americans achieve and sustain the dream.

Other key findings from *The 2009 MetLife Study of the American Dream* include:

- **Safety Net More Important than Ever:** Americans are placing a premium on protection and stability. Across generations, eight in ten say having a personal safety net will be more important this year than last. However, nearly three quarters (74 percent) of Americans admit to not having an adequate safety net. Currently, Americans count auto insurance (60 percent), health insurance (57 percent), life insurance (46 percent), homeowner's insurance (45 percent), a retirement savings plan such as a 401(k) (40 percent), and cash on hand for 3-6 months (35 percent) as the top six components of their safety net. Among Americans who do not feel they have adequate protection, nearly two-thirds (62 percent) desire cash on hand for 3-6 months as the product they would most like to have in their safety net.
- **Greater Demand for Guarantees:** Eight in ten (80 percent) of those surveyed report that they are now more concerned with guarantees and stability than they are with returns. Despite budgetary pressures, 68 percent of Americans say they are generally willing to pay more for financial and protection products if they come from a company they trust.
- **Americans Expect Long Haul:** Fully 84 percent of Americans believe the U.S. economy is heading in the wrong direction, up from 64 percent in November 2006, and more than nine in ten believe that it will take at least 12 months for the economy to recover. On a national level, nearly half (44 percent) of Americans expect the overall economy to be worse in 2009 than it was in 2008. Almost half (49 percent) of Americans believe that the creation of new jobs is the action that will do the most to jump-start the economy.
- **Dream Fueled by Optimism for Minority Populations:** Despite conventional wisdom, minority populations (African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans) are more optimistic than Caucasian Americans that the dream is still possible. Nearly nine in ten (89 percent) Hispanic Americans believe that they will achieve the American dream in their lifetime, as do 82 percent of African Americans and 83 percent of Asian Americans. Only two-thirds (66 percent) of Caucasians concur.

Volunteer Opportunities

The Community Works Coalition, Inc. is seeking volunteers, funds, and in-kind items to support their "Got F's Fun Day" event on June 12. They are expecting 500-plus children from the Miami-Dade Parks and Recreation Department Summer Camp Program to attend. In-kind donations include food, wrist bands, mini-calculators, posters, piggy banks, and sports items.



They also plan to deliver a financial education workshop. For more information, please contact John Bowen at (305) 235-4848, jbowen@cwc-educate.org.

Do you need assistance with a project or outreach effort? Let us know.

Florida Jump\$tart Coalition® for Personal Financial Literacy, Inc.



Inquiries or articles may be sent to:

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This newsletter is published monthly by the Florida Jump\$tart Coalition® for Personal Financial Literacy, Inc. and is sent to active partners. Previous issues of the newsletter can be found on the Web site.

Please contact us if you believe that you are receiving this newsletter by mistake, are a current Partner that has not been receiving the newsletter, or wish to update your contact information. Any additional concerns or questions should be directed to FLJumpstart@ficpa.org.

This newsletter is one of our primary communication tools. We invite Partners to submit articles, photos, or news briefs about your innovative ideas, research, activities and events. Financial education is rapidly growing in Florida. We need your help to stay on top of trends and information. Please submit your information to FLJumpstart@ficpa.org.

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