

The Coady Award

Nomination Form

Credit Union / Caisse Populaire: Leading Edge Credit Union

Asset Size (as at December 31, 2014) \$92,004,112

of Members: 6,183 **of Branches:** 5 + corporate office

of Staff: 33 **Full-Time** 9 **Part-Time**

Contact Person: Randi Alexander **Title:** Marketing Specialist

Phone: 709-695-7607 **Email:** ralexander@lecu.ca

Describe (*using the attached information sheets*) the 2014 projects/programs that indicate your credit union's commitment to social responsibility and community involvement. Attach copies of any news articles, brochures, photos or other correspondence you feel may provide additional information relative to any specific project/program.

Date: February 23, 2015 **Signed:** _____

Return nominations by February 23, 2015, to:

Karen Hirtle
Co-ordinator, Corporate Services
Atlantic Central
PO Box 9200
Halifax, NS B3K 5N3
Email: CorporateServices@aclsm.ca

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Information to support the nomination of Leading Edge Credit Union / Caisse Populaire.

Note: Supporting documentation is attached to this submission.

Description of Project / Programs	Target Group(s)	Outcomes / Successes
<p><u>Education:</u></p> <p>Seminars: Several of Leading Edge Credit Union's (LECU) branches organized and led seminars on important topics such as fraud, TFSAs, and the importance of budgeting and credit management. The following sessions were presented to various groups throughout the areas in which LECU operates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fraud Awareness Seminars • Importance of Credit Management Seminar • Protecting our Elders from Financial Abuse • Tax Free Savings Accounts • Budgeting for Beginners 	<p>LECU's member and public sessions targeted various groups such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateway 50+ Club (Port aux Basques) • Public seniors session (Jeffrey's) • CN Pensioners Club (Port aux Basques) • Flat Bay Indian Band (St. George's) • Indian Cove Women's Circle (St. George's) • Career Class of E.A. Butler School (Jeffrey's) 	<p>LECU was pleased with the turnouts for these important educational sessions. Attendance at these sessions varied from just 10 individuals to 75 members of the community. We also were successful in obtaining new membership as well as one additional community account.</p>
<p>School Savings Program: Leading Edge Credit Union has developed a school savings initiative which encourages financial literacy amongst school-aged children. The program was significantly re-vamped in 2014 to improve the interactivity of the program and to make it more of a fun learning exercise for the children. An "LECU Store" was added and</p>	<p>This program targets elementary school-aged children from participating schools throughout our operating area. Our staff members visit the schools once per week to accept the children's deposits and deliver program educational materials.</p>	<p>As of year-end 2014, LECU had 79 children participating in the School Savings Program. These children benefit from their early exposure to financial education. LECU keeps the program fun for the children by introducing trivia questions to earn special prizes. The children really love to participate in these</p>

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<p>children were issued “LECU money” for every school savings deposit that they made. At the end of the school year, students can use their “LECU money” to purchase cool LECU merchandise. They love it!</p>		<p>activities. We have included some pictures and some parent and teacher testimonials in our supporting slideshow.</p>
<p><u>Environment:</u></p> <p>Green Space Initiative: LECU’s Port aux Basques branch adopted a green space along the town’s waterfront overlooking the Marine Atlantic terminal and docks. This area, which is very popular with residents and tourists who enjoy watching the ferries dock, had been lacking care for a number of years and was in need of a little TLC. This initiative brings improvement to the community’s recreational infrastructure for the betterment of all users.</p>	<p>LECU’s members, town residents, and the tourism community.</p>	<p>Several staff members of the local branch dedicated their time to improving the area by planting flowers and tidying up and maintaining the grounds. LECU also erected signage that shows our commitment to maintaining green space for the enjoyment of all users. We have included pictures in our supporting documentation.</p>
<p>Paper-saving Initiatives: Over the past several years, LECU has embarked on several key initiatives to reduce our paper consumption, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paperless board and committee meetings • corporate printing strategy • statement reduction initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Directors • All staff • Members 	<p>Since introducing paperless board and committee meetings, LECU has saved an estimated 4,400 pages per year. All board members have been supplied with iPads and board and committee packages are published electronically. In addition to paper savings, this also enhances security since all sensitive information can be password protected.</p> <p>Our corporate printing strategy was implemented to encourage all staff members to engage in responsible printing practices by reducing their</p>

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		<p>printing and printing double-sided and in black and white, where possible. This initiative has proven successful, resulting in a reduction in paper use and risks associated with hardcopy report storage. This is particularly important given the fact that most of our offices lack access to paper recycling programs.</p> <p>LECU has also moved to paperless member statements resulting in an estimated annual paper savings of over 100,000 pages.</p>
<p>Beach Clean-up: LECU’s Doyles branch donated funds to the Murray Beach Development Project as well as participated in the Beach Clean-up Day.</p>	<p>Codroy Valley residents and beach visitors</p>	<p>In addition to the cash donation of \$700, branch staff donated their time to the beach clean-up efforts resulting in a safe and enjoyable beach for all users.</p>
<p>Youth / Seniors:</p> <p>Youth Product Offering: LECU offers a special youth product to all members under the age of 18 years. This product grants youth with 20 free transactions per month.</p>	<p>Youth under 18 years of age</p>	<p>At year-end, LECU had 482 active youth accounts. This represents a total annual savings to youth of \$23,136, as our comparable account package would cost \$4.00 per month.</p>
<p>“VP for a Day” Program: In 2014, LECU’s corporate office developed a special program inviting high school students to collaborate on some of the challenges facing our credit union and design a plan to address those challenges from the perspective of a young person. Each</p>	<p>High school students from the career class at St. James Regional High School, Port aux Basques.</p>	<p>Interested youth were required to submit a video application for the program. Successful candidates were selected and “offered” VP positions based on their interests and skill sets. The five positions were: VP of Operations, VP of Finance,</p>

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<p>participating youth was given an “executive position” (vice-president) in the various key departments in our organization for one full work day. The students were given a brief introduction to the credit union movement and what it means to be a member. Key objectives were also set.</p>		<p>VP of Communications, VP of Marketing and VP of IT. After spending a full day working with LECU’s executive team, the participants presented their ideas and observations on the benefits of credit union membership and the challenges facing the system to the corporate staff. They also returned to their school to present to their classmates. LECU plans to maintain contact with these young people to develop follow-up programming and to determine interest in forming a credit union youth committee.</p>
<p>Youth Scholarships: LECU offers seven scholarships to graduating high school students within our area of operation. Each scholarship, valued at \$250, is open to any student, regardless if they are credit union members.</p>	<p>High school students entering post-secondary education.</p>	<p>These scholarships are happily administered by the schools. The candidates are selected by the schools based on demonstrated co-operative values and principles. LECU has great relationships with the schools and benefits from the visibility that these scholarships provide when awarded on the schools’ awards nights.</p>
<p>Seniors Product Offering: LECU offers a unique and competitive seniors account product which includes free debit transactions as well as discounts on premium account packages.</p>	<p>Members and potential members aged 59+</p>	<p>At year end 2014, LECU had 1206 members enrolled in the seniors account package. The savings enjoyed by this group totaled \$146,808. This represents a significant investment by LECU into our members’ pockets.</p>

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<p><u>Community Economic Development:</u></p> <p>“Race to the Sea”: The <i>Annual Lighthouse Relay Race, Race to the Sea</i> was designed to integrate fitness into the tourism sector in a fun and interactive way for the betterment of the local tourism economy. The Race begins at a picturesque lighthouse in Cape Anguille, and ends 120 kilometers later at the 143-year-old stone heritage structure, the Rose Blanche Lighthouse. The race route consists of 11 individual legs and it takes runners over a variety of terrains, including pavement, gravel, rail bed, and sandy beach. The Race travels through 14 communities and some of the most beautiful scenery in the province, incorporating the region’s four lighthouses along its path.</p> <p>The Race to the Sea is such a significant endeavour for LECU that it warranted a report of its own. Please refer to the attached report for more detail.</p>	<p>Members, residents, tourists, and running enthusiasts alike.</p>	<p>As demonstrated by the attached report, the economic impact of the Race on the local and regional economies is significant at an estimated \$40, 615 annually. Additionally, the volunteer hours invested by staff, board and community members into this initiative totals over 400 hours.</p> <p>The 2015 event is already gaining attention. The Facebook page is active with a significant amount of interest from new participants drawn by our promotional efforts.</p>
<p>Donations and Sponsorships: In 2013, LECU began a more intentional approach to Social Responsibility tracking. We identified a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to allow us to measure and track our social performance. The KPIs are detailed in the attached supporting documentation. One of the KPIs that were identified for tracking was donations and sponsorships. Each instance of a branch or corporate donation or sponsorship</p>	<p>Community-based organizations or initiatives of social importance.</p>	<p>In 2014, LECU proudly supported its communities through donations and sponsorships to community organizations in the amount of \$21,649. Some of these donations were as small as providing refreshments for a community meetings to as significant as providing a community with a new fire truck.</p>

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is recorded and reported on a quarterly basis.		
<p><u>Support to Non-Profit Organizations:</u></p> <p>Account Packages: LECU offers a special product to its not-for-profit and community organization members: the Community Account package. This package features 40 transactions per month at no cost to the organization.</p>	<p>All not-for-profits including recreational organizations, churches, development organizations, etc. Any organization with a not-for-profit status qualifies.</p>	<p>At year-end 2014, LECU had 227 community account holders. This adds up to an annual savings for these organizations of \$54,480. LECU feels that this represents a significant investment into the success and sustainability of important community organizations.</p>
<p>Soccer Programs: Leading up to the summer of 2014, LECU became aware that the recreation director of the town of Port aux Basques was attempting to organize a summer soccer program. The town was overwhelmed by the parent's and children's interest in the program. The organizers had one major concern, however; who would provide the funding to purchase the most important aspect of a soccer program: soccer balls? Leading Edge saw this problem as an opportunity to fill a community need and to contribute to the soccer programs in other communities, as well.</p>	<p>Community recreation programs within LECU's area of operation</p>	<p>LECU donated \$1972 worth of soccer balls to programs in Port aux Basques, Corner Brook, Jeffrey's and Doyles. Each ball was branded with LECU's logo. This provided the credit union with increased visibility while providing for an important recreational program for the children of members and potential members.</p>
<p>Doyles' Fire Truck Initiative: As is the case in many rural areas, the communities in the Codroy Valley struggle with having access to necessary and life-saving emergency services. In 2014, LECU's Doyles branch worked with the Codroy Valley Volunteer Fire Department</p>	<p>Codroy Valley Volunteer Fire Department and residents of the communities in which it serves.</p>	<p>LECU's donation of \$1,500 covered half the cost to purchase a reliable, used fire truck for the Codroy Valley. The community's residents, most of whom were already loyal credit union members, voiced their appreciation of the credit</p>

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<p>to address their main concern: an aging and unreliable fire truck. LECU was proud to assist the fire department with funding for a new vehicle to improve fire protection services for all residents of the Codroy Valley.</p>		<p>union's contribution. The fire truck now proudly displays LECU's logo on its side as a sign of appreciation for the contribution.</p>
<p>Hospital Foundation: Leading Edge Credit Union staff has been long-time supporters of the Charles L. Legrow Hospital Foundation. Several of our staff members hold board positions on the Foundation and we are always ready when called upon to donate or volunteer for Foundation initiatives. In 2014, one of the Foundation's most popular traditions, the "Tree of Love" found itself in need of a new tree. The "Tree of Love" is displayed in the lobby of the Charles L. Legrow hospital each year at Christmas and is decorated with ornaments purchased to honour the memory of loved ones.</p>	<p>The Charles L. Legrow Hospital Foundation and members of the community served by the healthcare centre.</p>	<p>The Port aux Basques branch of LECU was proud to purchase a replacement tree for the "Tree of Love" program. The donation totaled \$850. The Foundation offered its sincere thanks to LECU and the donation was acknowledged in the annual tree lighting ceremony.</p>
<p>Total hours donated to volunteer organizations by LECU staff: The organizations that benefit from the dedication of LECU's staff are too many to name. As with other social responsibility indicators, LECU also tracks the KPIs associated with employee volunteer time.</p>	<p>Community-based, not-for profit organizations and the individuals served by them.</p>	<p>As the KPI chart in the attached supporting document shows, Leading Edge staff members donated a total of 1,372 hours of their personal time in 2014. It's worth noting that LECU has just 33 full-time employees. The Co-operative principle <i>Concern for Community</i> is taken very seriously by LECU staff and board.</p>

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		<p>In addition to the personal time donated, LECU also authorized staff to volunteer during work hours. LECU staff volunteered a total of 217 hours during work time in 2014. This demonstrates the credit unions commitment to investing into the well-being of the communities that our members call home.</p>
<p><u>Other Special Initiatives:</u></p> <p>Co-op Development Initiative: In 2014, Leading Edge’s board of directors committed to supporting co-operative development through strengthening ties with existing co-ops and facilitating community enhancements through the development of new co-operatives. With this direction, LECU’s CEO worked with the board chair to begin discussions with key regional co-operatives with the goal of strengthening all co-operatives through the promotion of the co-operative difference. This aligns with the 6th Co-operative Principle, <i>Co-operation Among Co-operatives</i>.</p>	<p>Existing co-operatives and their members as well as potential new co-operative members. Also targeted were those who identified community needs which could be fulfilled by the co-operative model.</p>	<p>Although co-op development will be a key strategic direction for LECU in 2015, the CEO and the board chair laid some important groundwork in 2014. LECU participated in strategic discussion with a retail co-operative in the Baie Verte region and has committed to helping to facilitate that organizations five-year strategic plan.</p> <p>Additionally, the credit union has begun discussions with another retail co-op in the Stephenville area to determine what role it can play in member-service enhancements in the future.</p> <p>The final significant piece of co-op work that was performed in 2014 was the commencement of exploratory work surrounding the development of a co-operative childcare centre in Port aux Basques.</p>

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		<p>The intention of this initiative is to drive membership while enhancing the sustainability of all co-operatives thereby addressing important community needs and returning the benefits back to members. LECU strongly believes in the importance of the credit union system recognizing and supporting the seven co-operative principles.</p>
<p>Sears McArthur Bursary: The Codroy Valley region has a rich history in the credit union movement. The late Mr. Sears McArthur was an avid supporter of the credit union and was instrumental in its development in this region. Mr. McArthur's other passion was music, so upon his passing, LECU decided to honor his memory with an annual youth music bursary to be awarded at the Codroy Valley Folk Festival. Each year, the festival committee will select a deserving young musician to receive a bursary of \$250.</p>	<p>Individuals in the Codroy Valley youth music community.</p>	<p>LECU benefited from the visibility that granting this bursary provided. It also took the important opportunity to honor the memory of one of its founding members and someone who was widely respected in the Codroy Valley area. The members truly appreciated this gesture which celebrated a beloved community figure.</p>
<p>Dedication to Mr. Ronald Callahan: Another individual who was prominent in the development of the credit union-this time in the St. George's region-was the late Mr. Ronald Callahan. In fact, Mr. Callahan was so dedicated that, when the need arose for a credit union branch in St. George's, his company agreed to construct the building though the contract barely covered his own expenses. In 2014, LECU thought it was important to</p>	<p>The Callahan family and members of the St. George's branch of Leading Edge Credit Union.</p>	<p>LECU was pleased to honor the dedication shown by Mr. Callahan. The credit union movement is fueled by devoted members and it is important for members to see that their commitment and dedication does not go unrecognized. The members of LECU in St. George's are proud to see that one of their community leaders played a very important role in the construction of their</p>

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recognize the sacrifices made by Mr. Callahan; a plaque was affixed to the St. George's branch to honor Mr. Callahan's contribution to the success of the credit union in that community.		own community financial institution.