Collaborative Spirit Alive and Well in Credit Union Movement

Credit unions in Cornerstone Credit Union League Region host executives from Brazil’s Sicredi for three-week internship

Thursday, Oct. 17, 2013 (FARMERS BRANCH, Texas) – Eight credit union executives from Sicredi, a leading financial cooperative group in Brazil, are in their first week of a three-week internship in the Cornerstone Credit Union League region that includes Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. The delegates are here to learn about the U.S. credit union system.

Governance, economic empowerment, technology, risk management, and social responsibility are among the areas of interest for the interns.

The group of eight mid- and upper-management staff was carefully chosen to participate in this customized and targeted learning experience – a key initiative of the World Council of Credit Unions international partnership program between Cornerstone and Sicredi.

“Credit unions were built on the foundation of cooperativeness and collaboration, and the partnership Cornerstone enjoys with Sicredi demonstrates our commitment as an international credit union movement to continually learn, grow and share,” says Cornerstone CEO Dick Ensweiler. “While our interns and host credit unions benefit from this internship, it is ultimately credit union members who reap the greatest benefit as the sharing of best practices ensures we are positioning ourselves to meet the financial services needs of our members.”

The credit unions hosting Sicredi delegates for the three-week internship include:

- A+ Federal Credit Union, Austin, Texas
- Amplify Federal Credit Union, Austin, Texas
- Arkansas Federal Credit Union, Little Rock, Ark.
- Communication Federal Credit Union, Oklahoma City, Okla.
- Texas Trust Credit Union, Mansfield, Texas
- Tinker Federal Credit Union, Oklahoma City, Okla.
- TruService Community Credit Union, Little Rock, Ark.
- University Federal Credit Union, Austin, Texas
- United Heritage Credit Union, Austin, Texas

Sicredi interns: Adao Caraciolo and Maroan Tohme will divide their time between the four Austin-based credit unions; Rosemari Zamarchi is interning at Arkansas FCU; Anderson Aguiar is interning at
Communication FCU; Marcio Junior Cappellari is interning at Tinker FCU; Maikel Zenkner and Luciane Werner are both interning at Texas Trust CU; and Karina da Silveira Gasper is interning at TruService Community CU.

“We have discovered that Sicredi is a pretty advanced credit union system,” notes Michael Kloiber, president and CEO of Tinker FCU. “We are learning as much from Marcio as he is learning from us.”

“Marcio is an IT manager with Sicredi and, interestingly, he’s been able to share a great deal of insight and experience as we are in the midst of a significant intranet project,” adds Kloiber.

Larry Shropshire, president and CEO of Communication FCU, says they too are learning from their intern, Anderson Aguiar.

“He brings a wealth of knowledge and a great appreciation for the credit union movement,” says Shropshire. “Our board and staff have been very engaged and are beginning to comprehend both the similarities and the differences between our two systems concerning membership engagement and service.”

Linda Jeffery, president and CEO of TruService Community CU, says they are also benefitting from the knowledge their intern, Karina da Silveira Gasper, has to offer.

“It has been very interesting to see the similarities in our credit union goals such as increasing youth accounts,” says Jeffery. “We are working together to ensure that we spend time on areas of specific interest to her as well as providing an overall view of our credit union and its operations and goals.”

The interns will be with their host credit union until Nov. 1.