



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 22, 2025

LAFCU awards \$10K to essay contest winners to support debt reduction

LANSING, Mich. — LAFCU is helping Michiganders take meaningful steps toward a more secure financial future. On July 17, the credit union awarded \$10,000 to four winners of its 2025 Pathway to Financial Transformation Essay Contest during a check presentation held at LAFCU’s Lansing headquarters.

The annual contest encourages individuals across Michigan to examine their financial habits, develop actionable plans for reducing debt, and map out long-term strategies for financial stability. Open to both LAFCU members and non-members, the contest welcomed applicants regardless of membership status. Each winner received \$2,500 based on their one-page essay outlining how they would use the funds to support their personal financial goals.



LAFCU team members pose with 2025 Pathway to Financial Transformation Essay Contest winner DaVasha Lobbins and her young son. Lobbins, along with Alisha Alexander, Anthony Dugarte, and a fourth anonymous recipient, were awarded a total of \$10,000 based on their one-page essays about their financial situations and plans for a stronger financial future.



LAFCU’s 2025 Pathway to Financial Transformation Essay Contest winner DaVasha Lobbins poses with her son and Shelia Scott, LAFCU community financial education and business development officer, after receiving her \$2,500 award for an essay about her journey as a first-generation college graduate and homeowner.

“Financial transformation isn’t just about paying down debt—it’s about gaining the knowledge, confidence, and discipline to make lasting change,” said Shelia Scott, LAFCU community financial education and business development officer. “Through this contest, we’re helping people turn reflection into action and create a roadmap for a healthier financial future.

This year’s winners are Alisha Alexander of East Lansing; Anthony Dugarte of Fenton; DaVasha Lobbins of Lansing; and a fourth recipient who chose to remain anonymous. Their essays reflected personal stories of

perseverance — from one single mother striving to pay down debt to create a better future for her and her son, to another single mother determined to become a homeowner early in life and teach her child financial stability, to an aspiring medical professional navigating the financial challenges of advanced training. Each shared a thoughtful, hopeful vision for achieving lasting financial stability.

“Winning this grant has given me a real sense of hope and a chance to reset,” said DaVasha Lobbins. “I feel motivated and no longer stuck — like I finally have the opportunity to move forward from my previous situation. I’m truly grateful to LAFCU for making this possible.”

The Pathway to Financial Transformation Essay Contest will return in spring 2026, offering another chance for individuals to earn a grant that provides immediate debt relief and supports their financial goals. Beyond grant money, LAFCU offers Pathway to Financial Transformation, which is a free, eight-month personal finance course designed to empower participants with the tools and knowledge to take control of their financial future. Enrollment for the next Pathway to Financial Transformation program cohort will open in August. Learn more at www.lafcu.com/pathway.

About LAFCU

Founded in 1936, LAFCU (pronounced laugh-cue) is a not-for-profit, member-owned credit union open to all who live, work, worship or attend school in Michigan, and to Michigan businesses. LAFCU serves more than 74,000 members and holds over \$1 billion in assets. With a particular focus on serving people of modest means, LAFCU is committed to enhancing its members' financial well-being and creating long-lasting positive change across generations. Awarded the prestigious Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Community Service Award, LAFCU is known for its people-helping-people mission, which has led to award-winning financial literacy programs for all ages. Twice honored as a national ‘Best Credit Union to Work For’ and recognized globally for its diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, LAFCU stands out for its commitment to creating an inclusive workplace. Learn more at www.lafcu.com.

###