

# InTouch



Spring 2025 | A quarterly publication of Keesler Federal Credit Union



Preparing  
for a Successful  
Homebuying Season

Annual Membership  
Meeting Recap

FROM YOUR

# Board Chair

As the days get warmer and longer, we are reminded that spring is all about growth and optimism. This also holds true for your credit union. If you joined us for the 2025 Hybrid Annual Membership Meeting on March 27, you learned about our strong financial performance last year, continued strategic expansion, and exciting plans for the year ahead. The meeting also featured an important presentation about how to protect yourself from scammers and cybercriminals who continue targeting the financial services industry. The next day, random drawings awarded 42 tablets and big-screen TVs, plus more than 700 \$50 deposits to members who registered online for the meeting. This issue includes a recap of our financials, key statistics, information from the fraud presentation, and links to the annual report and video on our website.

There's great news on the merger front, too. We recently received word that the National Credit Union Association (NCUA) has deemed that our proposal to merge with Jefferson Financial Federal Credit Union (JFFCU) meets all regulatory requirements, is financially sound, and serves the best interests of all members. This allows the merger process to continue to the next step - a vote of JFFCU members that will take place at a special meeting planned for May 21. The membership expansion resulting from this merger will enable Keesler Federal to serve you even better by offering more competitive rates, value-driven financial solutions, innovative givebacks, and an expanded branch network.

If you or your dependent is pursuing higher education, applications are now being accepted for the Lisa J. Stubbs Memorial Scholarship Essay Contest. Please see the article inside for details about submitting your entry.

Thank you again for choosing Keesler Federal as your trusted financial partner. We are proud to have the opportunity to help you achieve your goals and dreams and are here to assist you in any way possible.

Yours in service,



James Hollingsworth



James Hollingsworth  
Chairman,  
Board of Directors



## Get in the Swing at Keesler Federal Park

Another exciting season of MiLB professional baseball is underway with the Biloxi Shuckers, and Keesler Federal members can enjoy **great savings on all the action with discounted game tickets**. The link for tickets can be found in the Online and Mobile Banking Quick Links menu. Reserved seat tickets priced at \$18 are available to members for \$11, and Dugout Box tickets for \$20 are available for only \$13. And remember to follow us on Facebook and Instagram for #TicketTuesday giveaways!



**KeeslerFederal**  
**MISSISSIPPI**  
**GULF COAST MARATHON**

Keesler Federal is proud to now be the **presenting sponsor of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Marathon!** This year's 10th anniversary milestone event takes place on December 13 and 14 and is sure to be a race weekend to remember. Whether you're interested in running the 5K, 13.1, or going the full 26.2, Keesler Federal members receive a 20% discount on registration fees for Mississippi races.

To enter the marathon, visit:

<https://runsignup.com/Race/Register?racelid=99913&coupon=KFCU20>



# Keesler Federal 2024 Key Performance Highlights



New Loans  
**\$1,186,865,034**



Net Income  
**\$41M**



Net Worth Ratio  
**13.5%**



Return On Assets  
**1.00%**



New Members  
**27,000**



Total Assets  
**\$4,204,936,636**



## 2024 Accomplishments and Recognitions



America's Best Regional  
Credit Unions  
**Newsweek**  
Second consecutive year,  
only credit union in Mississippi



Viewers' Choice Awards  
Best Credit Union  
Best Mortgage Provider  
**WXXV-TV**



Best Places to Work in IT  
**Computerworld**



Best of Coastal Mississippi  
Best Credit Union  
**Sun Herald**



Favorite Credit Union  
**Edge of the Lake**



Keesler Federal Park  
Unveiled in Biloxi  
Home of The Biloxi  
Shuckers



Best Of Pearl River County  
**Picayune Item**



Official Credit Union of the New Orleans Saints, New  
Orleans Pelicans, and Southern Miss Athletics



2024 Total Member Givebacks  
**\$6.6+ Million**

**\$4,366,027**  
Credit Card Reward  
Givebacks

**\$1,737,880**  
Checking Reward  
Givebacks

**\$153,799**  
Monthly Member  
Givebacks

**\$212,436**  
New Orleans Pelicans  
Ticket Giveaways

**\$108,274**  
Mississippi Aquarium  
Givebacks

**\$62,430**  
New Orleans Saints  
Ticket Giveaways

## Community Impact



Local Groups  
**\$248,157**



Youth Care  
**\$51,100**



Homes & Meals  
**\$12,500**



Recovery  
**\$15,375**



Abilities Matter  
**\$14,000**



Bit of Joy  
**\$48,000**



Education  
**\$585,795**



Saluting Service  
**\$200,725**



Medical  
**\$14,000**

Thanks to the loyalty of members like you, 2024 was an exceptionally strong year for the credit union. Serving our membership and giving back to the communities we call home is our reason for being, and we hope you are as proud of these accomplishments as we are. To view the complete annual report, video, and more, visit [kfcu.org/annual-meeting](https://kfcu.org/annual-meeting).



## APR vs. APY: What Is the Real Difference?

When managing your finances, whether borrowing money or growing your savings, it's important to understand the difference between APR and APY. These two terms sound similar but mean very different things depending on whether you're **paying interest or earning it**.

**APR = Annual Percentage Rate.** This is the rate you'll pay if you borrow money, like with a loan, mortgage, or credit card. It tells you how much interest you'll owe over the course of a year. When comparing loans, a lower APR is better, because it means you'll pay less in interest overall.

**APY = Annual Percentage Yield.** This is the rate you will earn in a year when putting money into a savings account, CD, or investment product. APY factors in compound interest—interest that builds on itself. So, when comparing savings or investment options, a higher APY is better, because **your money grows faster**.

### The Key Difference: Compounding

Both APR and APY are based on interest rates, but **here's the big difference:**

- APR does not include compounding.
- APY does.

If interest is only compounded once per year, APR and APY will look the same. But when interest compounds more often—monthly, quarterly, or

even daily—APY increases because you're earning interest not just on your original deposit but **also on the interest** that's already been added.

For example, let's say you deposit \$100 in an account that earns 5% interest annually:

- After one year, you'd have **\$105**.
- In year two, that 5% is applied to \$105, giving you **\$110.25**.
- By year three, your balance will grow to **\$115.76**.

That's compound interest at work—earning interest on your interest. If the account only paid simple interest (just 5% on your original \$100), you'd only have \$115 after three years.

### Bottom Line

- APR is important when you're borrowing—**lower is better**.
- APY is key when you're saving or investing—**higher is better**.
- Compounding makes a big difference over time, so always check whether an interest rate is presented **as APR or APY** before deciding.

Understanding this difference can help you make smarter financial choices, and **Keesler Federal is here to help**.

## Service Anniversaries

Keesler Federal team members exemplify the credit union philosophy through their dedication and long tenures. Their commitment to making a difference in members' lives is reciprocated by Keesler Federal's impact on their own lives. This mutual dedication often leads to lifelong careers with us.

We proudly recognize team members for their service in 5-year increments (3-year increments in the UK). Here are those celebrating service anniversaries in the fourth quarter of 2025:

### 25 Years of Service

Deitra Walker, Centralized Funding Manager  
Almetrius Brown, Branch Manager  
Stefanie Taylor, Member Records Clerk II

### 20 Years of Service

Heike Willis, Mortgage Inbound Call Specialist  
Tricia Frey, Branch Manager III  
Alma Cuff, Teller Supervisor

### 15 Years of Service

Joycelyn Seidule, Internal Auditor II

### 10 Years of Service

Vershall Marshall, Systems Analyst I  
Cori Mcnair, Systems Analyst II  
Anthony Abella, Community Development Officer  
Chantyl Sullivan, MCC Team Lead  
Shavonne Williams, Workforce Engagement Manager  
Brittany Powell, Senior Technical Product Manager  
Leslie Prestenbach, Floating Assistant Branch Manager I

### 5 Years of Service

Kim Nguyen, Sr. Enterprise Risk & Controls Advisor  
Candi Crutchfield, Branch Manager I  
Rickey Shows, Floating Financial Service Rep I  
Tiffany Maimone, Digital Development Strategist  
Julie Jones, Construction Loan Processor  
Priscilla Stockstill, Mortgage Servicing Investor Reporting Manager  
Hope Davenport, Mortgage Loan Closer  
Andrew Gurley, Home Equity Loan Officer  
Tammika Burkhalter, Financial Service Rep I  
Monica Powell, Financial Service Rep I  
Ryan Lundy, Financial Service Rep II  
Dyla Taylor, Staff Development Specialist I



# Protecting Your Finances: The Top 6 Financial Fraud Risks in 2025

Helping members stay safe from financial fraud is a top priority. The information below was presented during the 2025 Hybrid Annual Membership Meeting.

**Stefanie Moran**  
Director of Integrated Security & Resilience

**Marion Hood**  
Financial Crimes Risk Officer

## **Fraud Risk #1: Impersonation Scams (or Multi-Factor Authentication Code Theft)**

Scammers may pose as your financial institution and attempt to gain access to your accounts. Remember, legitimate institutions will never request your MFA code or password. If someone asks, hang up and call your bank directly.

## **Fraud Risk #2: Money Mule Scams**

Moving money for others can have legal consequences even if you are unaware that the funds are stolen. If asked to move money, stop and report it.

## **Fraud Risk #3: Artificial Intelligence Scams**

AI helps criminals create more convincing email and text scams or deep-fake audio/video mimicking trusted sources. Never act on emergency requests for funds without verifying with your loved one directly. Inspect messages for misspellings, suspicious addresses and URLs.



## **Fraud Risk #4: Investment Fraud**

Research all investments – if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

## **Fraud Risk #5: Tech Support Scams**

Don't click on pop ups about infected computers or respond to messages from "tech support." These are usually attempts to install ransomware. Never allow remote access to your device or pay for unsolicited technical help.

## **Fraud Risk #6: Phone Number Spoofing Scams**

Criminals can spoof incoming caller ID numbers to appear as if they're from a known entity. Don't share personal data, account or card information, or passwords over an unsolicited inbound call. Hang up and call the institution directly to ensure the request is genuine.

**Keesler Federal Credit Union is here to help. Stay vigilant, trust your instincts, and verify before acting. Report suspicious activity immediately by calling (888) 533-7537.**



## Preparing for a Successful Homebuying Season

Spring is generally regarded as the beginning of homebuying season, and that's exciting news if you're in the market to buy your first place, trade up to a bigger house, downsize, or find that perfect vacation home. Listings for available homes become more plentiful as the season progresses because summer is traditionally the peak time for families to move. And, of course, more inventory means more competitive pricing. So, if you are looking for a new place to hang your hat, peruse these tips to get ready for the hunt.

### Understand the real estate climate.

The post-pandemic years have been a rollercoaster for buyers with fewer homes on the market, rising mortgage rates, and record-high selling prices nationwide. However, home sales have stagnated a bit recently as people delay buying in hopes that rates will go down. Although we are unlikely to see mortgage rates in the 2-4% range again (at least for a while), that doesn't mean you have to put your plans on hold. Consider options that could work in your favor such as a rate buy-down, an adjustable-rate mortgage, or even a future refinance. Remember, real estate is a long game and despite fluctuations in the economy, the housing market has always bounced back. The median home value today is nearly double what it was in 2007.

### Know your credit score and more.

Make sure your financial house is in order. This will enable you to come up with a realistic budget of how much you can afford. Credit score monitoring through Keesler Federal's online banking and mobile app is a free tool that provides valuable insight into your current financial position. Not only is your TransUnion Vantage 3.0 credit score updated daily, but you can also track payment history, credit usage, credit age, and other information that factors into the loan approval process. Ideally, keeping your credit usage under 30% and having a debt-to-income ratio of no more than 28-36% will help your application rise to the top.

### Get prequalified, then shop.

Prequalification takes the guesswork out of the home-buying process because you'll already know the maximum you can spend (not that you should necessarily go that high). It also increases your negotiating power as a buyer. Don't sleep on requesting concessions, like credits for compensating your buyer's agent, necessary repairs, closing costs, or rate buydowns. Insider tip: Concessions don't always show up in final sale prices, so the market can appear stronger than it is. Use this knowledge to your advantage.

### Look for appreciation potential.

Get ahead of the game by seeking out properties with serious upside. Focus on areas with population and job growth. Explore "up and coming" neighborhoods as those homes tend to appreciate faster than ones in established hot spots that are priced at a premium. Also, consider the potential for upgrades that can yield a return on investment and passive income, such as building an ADU (accessory dwelling unit). Bonus: Many builders are sitting on spec inventory so it may be possible to score a deal on a brand-new home along with concessions. Although the upfront cost may be higher, you may be surprised to discover that new construction homes can appreciate in value faster than resale properties, especially during the early stages of building a new community.

**Bottom line, don't waste time. Keesler Federal is your go-to source for mortgage loans. Lock in your interest rate by May 30 and get .5% off your mortgage\*.**

Membership & credit eligibility required. Rate discount applies to applications and pre-qualifications with home under contract before May 30. Qualifying loan products: conventional loans (purchase & refinance), first time homebuyer advantage, one-time close construction loans & non-conforming loans. Excludes FHA, VA, USDA, land loans, HELOCs & construction loans with 2-time close option. Equal Housing Lender. NMLS #408911. Mortgages available in AL, FL, LA & MS.





# Annual Lisa J. Stubbs Memorial Scholarship

Here's your chance to win \$1,000 towards your education! Keesler Federal will award scholarships to six dependent and four adult college students for winning entries in this year's essay contest.

## ALL APPLICANTS

- The contest is open to Keesler Federal members in good standing who will be full-time college students in the upcoming school year. Employees and officials of Keesler Federal and their dependents are not eligible to compete in the scholarship contest.
- Applicants must submit an entry of 500 words or less that is typed in the space provided through the online application.
- School classification for the upcoming school year will be college freshman, sophomore, junior, senior or graduate student.

## ADULT APPLICANTS

- Adult students must not be dependents of their parents and must be at least 21 years old and a member in good standing with Keesler Federal.
- Your entry should include your name, address, phone number, major, school name and school classification for the upcoming year.

## DEPENDENT APPLICANTS

- Dependent applicants and at least one parent must be members in good standing with Keesler Federal.
- Your entry should include your name, address, phone number, major, school name and school classification for the upcoming year and your parent/guardian's name.

The 2025 essay topic:  
"What is one invention you wish existed today?"

All applications must be submitted online no later than 11:59 pm CST on Friday, May 30, 2025. Printed applications will not be accepted. Visit [kfcu.org/scholarship](http://kfcu.org/scholarship) to apply.

In 1992, the scholarship program was dedicated to Lisa J. Stubbs, a Keesler Federal employee of over 8 years. While employed full time at the credit union, Lisa attended night classes, working toward her degree. Lisa died at the age of 25 after a lifelong struggle with cystic fibrosis. Since Lisa's courage and determination were an inspiration to all who knew her, the scholarship program was renamed in her honor in hopes that her spirit of achievement would inspire others to reach new heights.



## In the Community

### 2025 Shuckers x Dream Program Softball Game

In partnership with the Bacot Foundation of South Mississippi and the Biloxi Shuckers, Keesler Federal Park welcomed dozens of eager Dream Program athletes on April 9 for a lively competition with the Coast's favorite professional baseball players.

### Pet Adoption Day with Northshore Humane Society

Many happily-ever-afters were made as the Mandeville West Causeway Branch hosted an adorable assortment of adoptable pets and potential new families during the Spring into Love reduced-fee adoption event on April 12.







(In the Community, con't)

## Mobile Boat Show

A friendly and helpful crew of Keesler Federal employees was on site for this popular annual weekend event, March 14 -16, making it smooth sailing for attendees to get aboard the vessels of their dreams!

Approachability • Authenticity • Commitment • Empathy

## Quarterly AACE Champions



Stephanie Cain  
Branch Manager  
Long Beach Branch

Keesler Federal encourages team members to create an extraordinary culture by exhibiting our core values of approachability, authenticity, commitment and empathy in their day-to-day interactions with one another and our members. Each quarter, select team members, nominated by their peers, are recognized for exemplifying these values.



Kimberly Calawor  
Retail Support  
Specialist II  
Retail Support



Irene Field  
FSR II  
Larcher Branch



Devlin Pond  
Member Contact Center  
Manager  
Member Contact Center



Crystal Rushing  
FSR II  
Wiggins Branch



## MOVING SOON? AVOID THESE COMMON (AND COSTLY) MISTAKES

Planning a move soon? You're in good company. According to Zillow, June is the most popular month to move, with many families and individuals packing up during the summer to take advantage of better weather and school breaks.

Moving comes with more than just boxes and change-of-address forms – it can also be a major budget-breaker. The average cost of a local move is about \$1,250, while a long-distance move can run upwards of \$5,000, according to Forbes.

**Ahead of summer's biggest moving month, here are some common pitfalls to avoid.**

### 1. Underestimating the Total Moving Costs

It's easy to focus only on the cost of the moving truck or professional movers, however, there is a lot more to factor in. Think: packing supplies, utility deposits, cleaning fees, gas, meals on the go, and potential hotel stays. It adds up quickly.

*Tip: Build a moving budget before you do anything else. Include a buffer for unexpected costs – it will save you stress down the road.*

### 2. Not Gathering Multiple Quotes

Hiring movers? Don't go with the first quote you receive. Prices can vary widely depending on timing, services, and distance.

*Tip: Round up at least three estimates and ask about discounts – some companies offer deals for students, military members, or off-peak days.*

### 3. Forgetting to Cancel or Transfer Services

Overlapping services (like cable, internet, or utilities) can cost you double if you're not careful. Forgetting to cancel gym memberships or local subscriptions can leave you paying for things you no longer use.

*Tip: Make a checklist of every service tied to your current address, and schedule transfers or cancellations at least two weeks in advance.*

### 4. Skipping the Decluttering Process

The more stuff you move, the more it costs. Plus, hauling boxes of things you don't use just makes unpacking that much harder.

*Tip: If you have not used it in the last year, donate it, sell it, or toss it. You will save on moving supplies and labor – and your future self will thank you.*

### 5. Not Accounting for Post-Move Expenses

It is easy to think the spending stops once the moving truck pulls away. Setting up your new home often comes with additional costs, like new furniture, cleaning supplies, and restocking your pantry or refrigerator.

*Tip: Set aside a portion of your budget specifically for post-move purchases. Even just a few hundred dollars can help you settle in comfortably without resorting to credit cards.*

## Need Help Creating a Budget?

Your financial institution has partnered with GreenPath Financial Wellness, a trusted national nonprofit, to offer free financial counseling and tools to help you manage life's big transitions – including moving. Whether you need help building a budget, managing debt, or planning for your next step, GreenPath is here for you.

### The Path to Financial Wellness Starts Here

MY.GREENPATH.COM

GreenPath's NFCC-certified experts offer free financial counseling, online education, and a debt management program designed to help you save time and money. Call today.



CREATE  
A BUDGET



SAVE  
MORE



PAY OFF  
DEBT



IMPROVE  
CREDIT



BUY A  
HOUSE



PLAN FOR  
FUTURE

Connect with a Counselor Today 877-337-3399

**GreenPath.**  
financial wellness



# It's time to get moving!

Get your mortgage  
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only available until May 30.



Apply  
online



Call 1-888-533-7537, ext. 8720  
to schedule a consultation

Membership & credit eligibility required. Rate discount applies to applications and pre-qualifications with home under contract before May 30. Qualifying loan products: conventional loans (purchase & refinance), first time homebuyer advantage, one-time close construction loans & non-conforming loans. Excludes FHA, VA, USDA, land loans, HELOCs & construction loans with 2-time close option. Equal Housing Lender. NMLS #408911. Mortgages available in AL, FL, LA & MS.



P.O. Box 7001, Biloxi, MS 39534-7001

