

InTouch

A quarterly publication of Reesler Federal Credit Union | Winter 2023

**Simple Financial
Resolutions**

**Digital Wallets
Demystified**





**James
Hollingsworth**
Chairman,
Board of Directors

Happy 2023 from your Keesler Federal family! The post-holiday season is a perfect time to reflect on accomplishments and lessons from the previous year and establish new goals. Remember, Keesler Federal is here to help you achieve objectives that are important to you. This InTouch includes some simple financial resolutions to start your year right. And, if you are seeking ways to maximize savings, we offer exceptional opportunities such as our high-yield HIMMA Plus account and limited-time special rates on share certificates. You can learn more about both by visiting our website at kfcu.org.

I am delighted to announce the return of the in-person Annual Membership Meeting after three years of virtual meetings due to the pandemic. Nothing compares to the energy and excitement at these face-to-face gatherings when we can interact directly with you, our valued members. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us for an informative evening, Thursday, March 23, at 7pm at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum in Biloxi, for our 75th Annual Membership Meeting. I look forward to seeing you there.

Last year, to commemorate our historic 75th anniversary, Member Giveback drawings were expanded from 36 to 75 winners each month. Well, here's some great news – that increase is now permanent! This means you have more chances to win amazing cash prizes ranging from \$100 to \$3,000 simply for banking with Keesler Federal. Our commitment to giving back to you is stronger than ever and I am proud to share that in 2022, the credit union gave back more than \$10,000,000 to our membership through a combination of these monthly drawings, credit card rewards, Kasasa rewards and our partnership with the Mississippi Aquarium. Givebacks like these are among the most significant benefits of being part of a not-for-profit, member-owned financial cooperative like Keesler Federal Credit Union.

As always, thank you for your membership. It is truly a privilege to serve your financial needs and we wish you a year filled with happiness, health and prosperity. .

Yours in service,

James Hollingsworth



Insurance Options for Your Peace of Mind

Making sure you have adequate protection for the things that matter to you—your health, the wellbeing of your family, big ticket investments like your home or car—is an important part of a sound financial plan. As a Keesler Federal member, you have access to an array of affordable insurance options that can provide peace of mind against life's uncertainties.

Keesler Federal has partnered with TruStage and Franklin Madison, two trusted names in the insurance industry and leaders in providing quality insurance plans to credit union members. Both offer access to comprehensive insurance solutions that can be tailored to meet your specific needs. Even if you currently have insurance from another source, it's wise to periodically review your existing policies and comparison shop to ensure you have the best coverages available.

TruStage

Auto – the TruStage auto insurance program offers discounted rates for credit union members, online services and 24/7 claims service.

Home – TruStage offers top-quality homeowners, condo and renter's insurance to protect your dwelling and belongings, along with convenient online and 24/7 claims service.

Life – Protect those who matter most to you with the financial security that comes from having an affordable whole or term life insurance policy.

Franklin Madison

Hospital Accident Plan – Receive defined cash benefits paid directly to you when a covered accident lands you in the hospital for intensive care, hospital confinement or emergency room treatment.

Recuperative Care Plan – Receive defined cash benefits paid directly to you for post-hospital care, household expenses and any other needs when hospitalized with a covered illness/accident.

For free quotes or more information, visit kfcu.org/services/insurance.

Doing Good in the Neighborhood

Bit of Joy

Giving back within the communities we call home happens all year round at Keesler Federal and the holidays are a natural time to spread extra cheer to those around us. The Bit of Joy holiday gift card initiative, which debuted in 2017, kicked off the year at Thanksgiving. This annual tradition distributes gift cards to all 800+ Keesler Federal team members who, in turn, “pay it forward” in any way they wish. The program empowers employees to give to whomever they choose—a person in need, a charitable organization, a service provider—and enjoy the feeling of fulfillment that comes from that action. For 2022, the gift card amount was increased from \$50 to \$75, as another way to commemorate the credit union’s 75th anniversary. Since its inception, Bit of Joy has become one of the most beloved and eagerly anticipated Keesler Federal traditions among our team.



Combat Wounded Veterans of South Mississippi



Salvation Army



CASA/CAC Toy Drive

This year, Keesler Federal collected and distributed toys for children in several local CASA (Court Appointed Special Advisor) and CAC (Children's Advocacy Center) organizations in our service areas. These organizations work to protect and represent the best interests of at-risk children in emergency and foster care situations to ensure safety, justice and healing from abuse and trauma. Along with member donations to toy drive bins set up in branches, Keesler Federal funded the purchase of additional toys and gifts, which were personally delivered to each organization by the credit union's regional community development officers.

Community Giving

Keesler Federal CEO, Andy Swoger, presented proceeds from the 11th annual Eagles Under the Oaks golf tournament to the Combat Wounded Veterans of South Mississippi and made a donation to Salvation Army's 2022 Red Kettle Campaign.



Toy drives benefiting CASA and the Children's Advocacy Centers



A Commitment to Member Service

Extraordinary Employees.
Extraordinary Credit Union.

Keesler Federal team members believe in the credit union philosophy, and it shows in their tenure. Our team members are dedicated to making a difference in the lives of members, and in turn, Keesler Federal has made a difference in their lives. This may explain why so many people begin and end their careers with Keesler Federal.

Keesler Federal team members are recognized for service in 5-year increments (3-year in the UK). We are proud to recognize the following team members who have service anniversaries during the fourth quarter of 2022:

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Nell Schmidt, *Corporate Event Planner*
Donna McMurphy, *Indirect Loan Underwriter II*

15 YEARS OF SERVICE

Allison Gallant, *Teller Supervisor*
Theresa Ahmann, *Business Origination Specialist I*
Drew Foretich, *Sr. Director - IT Infrastructure*
Sandy Giramonti, *Collections Rep II*

10 YEARS OF SERVICE

Teresa Ergen, *Branch Manager II*
Natalie Hawkins, *Consumer Loan UW II*
Corrine Marreel, *Sr. Digital Relationship Specialist*
Trisha Cochran, *Floating FSR I*
Jeff Waggle, *Purchasing & Supply Manager*

5 YEARS OF SERVICE

Morgan Holloway, *Branch Manager II*
Katie Morgan, *Bank Secrecy Specialist I*
Michael Nichols, *Development Team Lead*
Michelle Riggins, *Accounting Specialist II*
Shelly Simmons, *Financial Service Rep I*
Andrial Burkett, *Teller Service Rep III*
Daniel Griffin, *Systems Analyst I*
Thomas Quinn, *Director - Mortgage Sales*
Sade Stanton, *Financial Service Rep II*

Get Rewarded in 2023

Here's a New Year's resolution for you: cash in on the valuable rewards you've earned with Keesler Federal's Visa rewards credit card. The points you receive from purchases throughout the year build up quickly. And if you "exercised" your card frequently during the holidays like most people, your rewards balance could be quite impressive by now.

Ready to take advantage of this great benefit? It's simple! You can check your balance and redeem points by logging in to your account through online banking or the mobile app. Go to the **Account Services menu**

and select the **Credit Card Rewards** option to begin the process.

Remember, every time you make a purchase with your credit card you'll earn CUREwards points*. As points add up, you can redeem them for:

Cash Back (Visa Signature only)– Redeem your points in \$50 increments (2,500 points = \$50) and have the funds deposited to your Keesler Federal share account or apply it to your credit card balance.

Gift Cards – Use your points to purchase restaurant, gas, retail or other gift cards.

Travel – Use your points toward flights, vacation packages and more. Plus, earn up to three (3) bonus rewards for every dollar spent in net purchases of new travel booked through curewards.com.

Merchandise – Use your points for computers, jewelry and so much more. Plus, you'll earn extra points when you shop in-store or online at select local, regional, and national merchants within the CUREwards Mall.

*Actual bonus reward amount will vary depending on the product purchased. Travel must be purchased at www.CUREwards.com. Please see your rewards site for additional important details.

Honoring Our Local Heroes

Every year, Keesler Federal asks local fire, law enforcement and EMT response agencies in our service areas to select someone from their organization to recognize for outstanding service. In 2022, the eighth year of Keesler Federal's First Responder of the Year awards, we honored 65 deserving professionals for their selfless commitment to protecting the communities they serve. This program originally began as a Mississippi Gulf Coast initiative and has since grown to include the Jackson Metro area, Louisiana and Alabama. Award recipients were presented with a commemorative glass trophy and \$100 gift card and were also recognized on Keesler Federal's social media channels.

Here are just a few of our 2022 First Responder of the Year award recipients. Please join us in saluting these brave individuals, as well as all first responders.

Jeffrey Saucier
Lieutenant



2022 First Responder of the Year
Gulfport Fire Department

Barry Hoda
Security Police Officer



2022 First Responder of the Year
NASA Protective Services

Joshua Rife
Police Officer



2022 First Responder of the Year
Biloxi Police Department

Justin Poulos
Trooper



2022 First Responder of the Year
Mississippi Highway Patrol

Charles Dewberry
Police Officer



2022 First Responder of the Year
Mobile Police Department

Will Lewis
Logistics Chief



2022 First Responder of the Year
Petal Fire Department

Toby Woodard
EMT



2022 First Responder of the Year
Acadian Ambulance

Karlin Givens
Narcotics/DUI Supervisor



2022 First Responder of the Year
Madison Police Department

Logan Rhodes
Patrol Sergeant



2022 First Responder of the Year
Stone County Sheriff's Department

David Cleland
Lead Firefighter



2022 First Responder of the Year
Keesler AFB Fire Department



4 Set 'Em and Forget 'Em Tips for a Financially Fit Year

New Year's resolutions are a mixed bag for many of us. On one hand: personal betterment! On the other hand: methodical auditing of our refrigerator, checking account, and various vices. On the cusp of a fresh calendar year, we feel compelled to immediately transform our lives, but—as is the case with most good things—change takes time, especially when it comes to financial goals. And in the aftermath of steep holiday spending, our goalposts can feel far away.

If you want a few financial resolutions that you can achieve early into the new year, here are some suggestions:

Automate Your Savings

Life is expensive. Vacations, home renovations, and emergency fund accounts (which 26% of Americans report not having) take money. Setting aside savings is a crucial step towards your financial security and affording the things

you want. There are multiple pathways to save, from automating contributions to an investment portfolio to downloading an app that bundles spare change on each transaction you make. If you want to avoid market fluctuations and go the straightforward route, set up an automatic direct deposit that funnels a percentage of your paycheck into a designated savings account.

Enroll in a 401(k)

Speaking of savings, enroll in your employer's 401(k) plan if it is not automatically done for you. Unlike some company benefits, you can enroll in a 401(k) plan anytime during the year. The sooner you can begin growing your retirement savings, the better. What you contribute is up to you, and many employers will match your contributions up to a certain percentage. If you earn income but don't receive employer benefits, you can open a Traditional or Roth IRA as an alternative .

Trim Subscriptions

The average American estimates their monthly subscriptions at about \$86 but actually spend closer to \$219 according to a 2022 survey conducted by C+R Research. The start of a new year is a good time to take inventory of your streaming networks, music subscriptions, smartphone apps, etc., that might be drawing away from your overall savings goals.

Check Your Credit Report

You can get a free report once a year from the three major consumer reporting companies: Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. This allows you to resolve errors or instances of identity theft—red flags you do not want creditors looking at when they are evaluating your application for loans and credit cards. With the exception of Experian, you will have to pay a fee to see your credit score.

There is often a way around this, as more than 170 financial institutions and 10 of the top credit card issuers provide free access to your FICO score (the most commonly used type of credit score).

Ask for Help

Need a little nudge when it comes to keeping your financial resolutions?

Our partner GreenPath provides caring Financial Wellness Experts to assist in starting your year strong! GreenPath works with thousands of people each month to pay off debt, improve credit and lead a financially healthy life.

Ring in the New Year and then give them a ring!

**The call is free and confidential:
877-337-3399.**





Digital Wallets 101

Digital wallet usage has grown rapidly in recent years, morphing from a techy novelty to commonplace necessity. The biggest increase came during the pandemic, which spurred many changes in consumer habits. Today, the ease of paying for transactions with your mobile device—whether a smartphone, watch or tablet—has made terms like contactless payment, tap to pay, or even “just Venmo me later” part of our everyday lexicon. For those who haven’t yet adopted digital wallet technology, here are some basic—but essential—FAQs to help get you started.

What is a digital wallet?

Digital wallets are financial transaction applications that run on mobile devices. They securely store payment information and passwords, virtually eliminating the need to always carry around multiple physical credit or debit cards. Many also store gift cards, loyalty cards, event tickets, airline boarding passes and more. Setting up a digital wallet on your mobile device is a handy backup if you forget or lose your physical wallet.

How do I choose a digital wallet?

The wallet you use is generally based on the operating system of your mobile device. So, iOS users have Apple Pay, and depending on device manufacturer, Android users can opt for Google Pay or Samsung Pay. Beyond the “big three” device-specific systems, payment apps like PayPal, Venmo, Zelle and others are also available. You can use multiple wallets for different functions (e.g., purchases versus peer-to-peer transfers). Best of all, your Keesler Federal credit and debit cards are compatible with all the above systems.

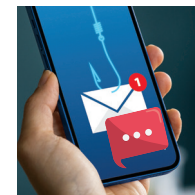
How do I pay with my digital wallet in a store?

When making a purchase, look for the mobile payment symbol or your app’s brand icon on the payment terminal. Open your digital wallet, select the payment type, and hold the device near the terminal to authenticate and complete your transaction. Not only can you pay with your device at many traditional cash register checkouts, more

vending machines and self-service gas pumps are being upgraded to accept digital wallet transactions.

Is my financial information secure?

Though no payment method is 100% risk free, in many ways digital wallets are more secure than carrying cash or physical cards. Both cash and cards can be stolen, and cards can be used without a PIN, but digital transactions protect you by requiring additional layers of authentication like a fingerprint scan, face recognition, or a password. Plus, mobile payments are heavily encrypted and use tokenization technology to keep your card and account information secure.



Be Scam Savvy!

Scammers don’t take days off and neither should you. When you identify suspicious communications, report it. These are the most common examples of internet fraud:

- **Phishing, vishing or spoofing** involves using fake emails, text messages, or copycat websites to commit identity theft. It can be used to steal personal information, like credit card and bank account numbers, debit card PINs, and passwords. Keesler Federal will never ask you to provide private information by email or text. At times, you may be asked to verify activity by clicking a secured link sent directly by our fraud center. If you receive a suspicious email or text, call us at 1-888-533-7537.
- **Credit or debit card fraud** occurs when scammers fraudulently acquire credit or debit card numbers to obtain money or property.
- **Malware/Ransomware** is dangerous software that is designed to disable computers and computer systems.
- **Data breaches** occur when sensitive data (personal or financial information like birth dates, credit card and bank account numbers) is hacked into, leaked, or posted from a secure location by accident.

If you think you’ve been a victim of an online scam, you can file a complaint at:
<https://www.ic3.gov/Home/FileComplaint>.

Be sure to notify your bank and credit card issuers.

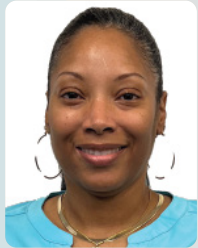


AACE Champions

What is the AACE Recognition Quarterly Awards Program?

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

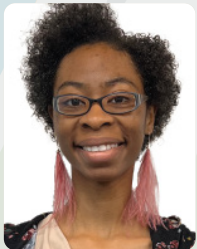
 Approachability Authenticity Commitment Empathy



Judy Chopin
Financial Service
Representative I
Metairie Lakeside



Crystal Hamilton
Consumer Loan
Underwriter I
Lending



Naomi Sipp
Teller Service
Representative I
Gautier



Chinara Whavers
Sales and Service
Representative
Training



Sheena Wiggins
Assistant Branch
Manager II
Orange Grove

Caring for Aging Parents

There are important steps you can take to help your aging parents find living and health care assistance, as well as to secure financing for the cost of the care.

Many adults have aging parents who are in need of living and health care assistance. There are a number of resources today that can help them grow old gracefully, either in their existing home or in a facility, along with multiple options for financing the cost of the care.

Living options

Living alone

Depending on the independence of your parents, living alone in their existing house may be an option. However, you may need to make several modifications—some of them expensive—to make their home environmentally safe and suitable for an aging person. For instance, important safety features such as a first-floor bathroom, grab bars in hallways in bathrooms, and an emergency response system may be necessary.

If your parent requires assistance with meals or chores, there are several services which can provide support, such as Meals on Wheels, which are free for anyone over 60.

You can also consider an in-home aide if your parent needs additional personal assistance.

Living with Family

Some families choose to move an aging parent into their own home. If you can do this with minimal conflict, this can be beneficial as it avoids having to maintain a second home and of course can be less expensive. If your parent has dementia or other health issues, adult day care can be helpful, as it allows them to socialize with other adults.

Assisted living

If your parents are independent and can care for themselves, they may be eligible to enter a continuing-care retirement community, where they can rent (or purchase) an apartment and be eligible for nursing care, if it becomes necessary. Consider purchasing long-term care insurance, which can help pay for nursing home costs or the cost of an in-home aide.

Nursing home

If your parents need more extensive care and require a nursing home, research the options extensively. You

may need to reserve a space far in advance, as waiting lists are often long at popular facilities. The government provides limited financial assistance for families paying for nursing home care. Financing long-term care can be a tremendous challenge for many adults.

Financing long-term care

Medicare will only pay the full cost of professional help if a physician certifies that your parent requires nursing care and if the services are provided by a Medicare-certified home health care agency. However, Medicare will pay for nursing home care for the short-term only, with benefits restricted to low-income individuals with limited assets.

You can offset some of these costs, as you can claim a federal tax credit up to \$3,000 off the cost of in-home care or day care.

You can use a flexible spending account, too, which helps your pay for a certain amount of covered expenses with pretax dollars.

With the cost of elderly care continually on the rise, financial planning can be an important step in providing adequate support for your parents' future well-being.

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This material was prepared by LPL Financial, LLC

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