

Pheple Federal Credit Union's "Path to Financial Literacy"

Since 2013, Pheple FCU has been steadily growing and developing our Partners in Learning Program, which is a unique interactive program designed to educate students of all ages on the importance of saving, money management, and developing healthy financial habits that they can use throughout their entire life. The program includes opportunities from Kindergarten through college through various steps that follows students from our Save Day Program in the elementary schools to our high school student branches. We call this process Pheple FCU's Path to Financial Literacy and it reaches students throughout their entire educational experience and beyond.

Pheple FCU currently partners with 15 local schools to help educate their student body, including over 1250 of Pheple FCU's youth members. Each student is invited to take part in different steps along the Path of Financial Literacy regardless of their membership status.

Starting in elementary school, students are able to open an account as part of our Clubhouse Life Little Savers Club, and we encourage students to participate in our



Author Floyd Stokes poses with students showing off their signed copies of his book "Save Day," written exclusively for Pheple FCU

designated "Save Day," which allows them to earn rewards and prizes for making deposits. Two steps along our Path in elementary school are open to all students regardless of membership status. In third grade, students enjoy a visit from author Floyd Stokes, who reads his book "Save Day," written just for our program, along with his other books such as "We are Money Smart". Our author visit includes a fun and exciting way to learn about different healthy financial habits. Fifth graders are invited to participate in our Discovery Days event, where members of the business community from various

disciplines come together to offer a hands-on approach to an age-appropriate career fair. This gives students a chance to learn about the potential careers and educational pathways that are offered right in their local area. Students have the opportunity at each booth to ask questions and see firsthand what each career consists of, getting their minds ready to start thinking of the all-important question: "What do I want to be when I grow up?"

As we continue the Path into middle school, we give students multiple ways to learn about finances. Our ongoing Cha-Ching! Teen Savers Program provides our middle schoolers an opportunity to continue to save money with their “Save Day” deposits and chances to win gift cards. One of our milestone steps along the Path is our 8th Grade Mini Reality Fair. Pheple FCU works with middle school guidance counselors to not only educate and introduce students to budgeting, but also help the schools meet some of their educational requirements. Our 8th Grade Mini Reality Fair uses credit union staff members to speak to students about real life expenses during a rotational classroom setting, and wrapping up with a financial counselor to see how well they completed their first look at budget sheets.



A local police officer speaks to 5th graders during our Discovery Days Career Fair

Once the students reach high school, the Path continues with more opportunities to learn about Financial Literacy. Teachers can request Pheple FCU’s Financial Literacy Advocate to guest speak in their class; programs offered feature a wide variety of financial topics from managing savings and checking accounts, to the difference between credit unions vs. banks, to credit reports or financial fraud. During their junior year, students are invited to take part in our full Financial Reality Fair. Students are asked to pick a career, research the education requirements and average salary the week before the Fair. An individualized budget sheet is then created for each student to use the day of the Fair, where they visit booths and learn about monthly expenses they will have in the near future, fill out the budget sheets, spin the famous Credit Union “Wheel of Reality,” and visit a financial counselor for feedback.



Current staff of the Warrior Cash Stash, a student branch located at Penn Trafford High School in Harrison City, Pennsylvania

Student Branches are another tool that helps prepare high school students for the future. Pheple FCU currently has two student branches, the Warrior Cash Stash in Penn Trafford High School, and the Centurion Cash Stash in Greensburg Central Catholic High School. This allows students within each high school to engage with their peers to learn about finances, credit unions, and utilizing tools that are offered by financial institutions. Our student branches are open to students during lunch time for a convenient and reliable experience. Since

the opening of our first student branch in 2013, our student branches have employed 20 high school students to run and market our student branches. These students are

provided with a unique opportunity to learn about the financial industry, build their own person finance abilities, learn about the credit union movement, learn about the professional work force by working in both the student branches and our public Pheple FCU branches, and developing employment skills that can be used for life. Many of our student tellers stay on staff and come back to work summers or holiday breaks. We strive to give each student teller the support and encouragement to succeed in whatever their next step may be. Our many success stories include our first-ever student teller, Matt, who is now a full-time employee and holds the impressive position of Controller within our organization.

Pheple FCU encourages community involvement for our financial literacy programming as well. Events and fundraisers during the year such as our annual Bingo, Christine Saddler Memorial Fun walk to honor our previous Financial Literacy Advocate, Food Truck Round-Ups, Breakfast with Santa, and Breakfast with the Easter Bunny provide opportunities for the community to support and learn about our programs and the impact they make on today's youth. We work directly with youth outside of the school setting at events such as the Childrens' Health and Safety Fair, hosted by State Representative George Dunbar, and visiting local Girl Scout Troops.

We are excited to continue to grow our Path to Financial Literacy in 2020 with the expansion of our program into the college setting and the opening of our newest branch, The Vault by Pheple FCU, located at Westmoreland County Community College in Youngwood, Pennsylvania. Opening in February 2020, this new location will extend the Path beyond high school and serve as a bridge into adulthood. This full-service branch will be completely staffed by college interns, providing real-life experience to young



Pheple FCU Controller Matt Senkow, a former student teller, speaking at the 8th Grade Mini Reality Fair

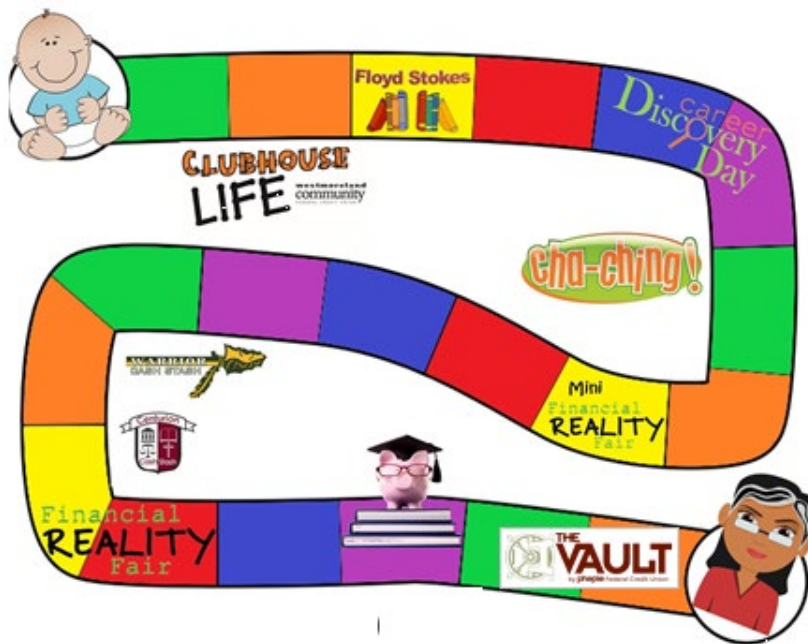


(above and right) The future of our Path to Financial Literacy sees the opening of The Vault by Pheple FCU, a full-service, student-run branch at Westmoreland County Community College. Artwork created by WCCC student Tim Powell.



adults getting ready to enter the workforce. After graduation, students still have the opportunity to expand their financial knowledge with events such as Pheple FCU's Student Lending, Homebuyer, and IRA Seminars.

The Path to Financial Literacy has allowed us to encourage lifelong financial learning. We consistently receive community feedback regarding the lack of formal financial education in today's public school system. Our program fills a need for accessible financial education that touches students at every stage along their educational journey. By maintaining and expanding this program, we can continue to positively impact the lives of local citizens for many years to come.



The Path to Financial Literacy

- Elementary School - Join our Clubhouse Life Little Savers Club
- 3rd Grade - Enjoy a visit from Author Floyd Stokes
- 5th Grade - Learn all about careers at Discovery Day
- Middle School - Become part of the Cha-Ching! Teen Savers Club
- 8th Grade - Participate in our Mini Financial Reality Fair
- High School - Be a member at one of our Student Branches
- 11th Grade - Learn more about finances at the Reality Fair
- College - The Vault by Pheple FCU at WCCC