

GREAT NEWS!



President's Message

Happy 2023! Now is the time of year folks start making a resolution or two. Exercising more, eating better, and improving work/life balance seem to be at the top of everyone's lists. I encourage you to think about including a few financial resolutions, too. Here are some ideas:

- **Pay down or pay off your high-interest credit cards.** Create a budget and determine how much you can pay toward your debt beyond the minimum monthly payments. A debt consolidation loan could also save you money. Ask us about options for consolidating high-interest credit card debt.
- **Add a little extra to your savings account every payday.** Whether you're saving for something specific or just a rainy day, you can grow your savings quicker by transferring a little extra to your account every time you get paid. If you're looking for higher returns on your savings, visit the credit union to open a certificate of deposit (CD) account.
- **Make a plan for retirement.** If you don't have a retirement account yet, start one. Greater Texas | Aggieldand Financial Solutions is here to help you plan for both long- and short-term savings goals, so head to gifcu.org/financial-solutions today and get started.

No matter what your financial resolutions are, we're here to help you achieve them. Thank you for being a part of Greater Texas | Aggieldand Credit Union, and, happy New Year!

Sincerely,

H. N. Baker

Howard N. Baker II
President, Chief Executive Officer
Greater Texas | Aggieldand Credit Union



Protect Yourself from Fraud

Steps to Avoiding Tax-Return Identity Theft Written by a TurboTax Expert • Reviewed by a TurboTax CPA 2022

Someone who steals your identity for tax purposes is probably not intending to pay your back taxes for you. He or she is after your tax refund. Make sure your refund ends up in your hands and not that of a thief by practicing a few simple habits that can protect your personal information.



Leave your Social Security card home

Tax-return identity theft almost always involves a stolen Social Security number (SSN), since the IRS and state tax authorities use these numbers to identify taxpayers. The thief uses your stolen SSN to file a fraudulent tax return early in tax season—before you're likely to file—and then pockets the refund.

To prevent identity theft, leave your Social Security card at home in a safe place and don't carry any document that has your SSN on it.

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ANNUAL MEETING

TRIUMPHANT LOVE LUTHERAN CHURCH

February 23, 2023

Check-In: 5pm
Meeting: 6pm

9508 Great Hills Trail
Austin, TX 78759

See You There!

Light refreshments and Southside BBQ gift cards available for members*

*While supplies last

Registration required

Register Online: gifcu.org/annual-meeting

On-site registration is limited, so register early to guarantee your spot!

PLEASE JOIN US!

SCAN TO REGISTER



We look forward to seeing you!

Greater Good

SPOTLIGHT



Aggieldand CU and the Integrated Business Experience

at Texas A&M University

The Integrated Business Experience (IBE) is a hands-on learning experience that puts post-graduate students to the test of developing and managing a real business. During the program, students work to identify a unique product or service, then form companies to bring their concepts to market. They are required to conduct market research to determine market viability for their idea, create business and marketing plans, establish manufacturing arrangements if needed, and pitch their ideas to a panel of judges to secure funding. In September 2022, ten companies pitched financial and marketing leaders at Aggieldand Credit Union to secure funding for their businesses. Each of the 10 companies were successful, convincing the Aggieldand judges to approve business loans ranging from \$1,100 to \$3,000 based on the business pitches. Funding

decisions were based on the individual business pitches and how well each team presented their case. Aggieldand's funding was \$18,350 this year, bringing its total funding for the program to \$100,000 over seven years.

This December each business made its final presentation to Aggieldand Credit Union and guests to showcase their performance, and then celebrate the donation of their profits with their chosen charity.

Together, the 10 companies earned more than \$21,000 during the program to be donated to local non-profits. The Giving Tee was the winning group which raised almost \$8,000 for Voices for Children – CASA of Brazos Valley.

(PROTECT YOURSELF FROM FRAUD, CONTINUED)

Also, provide your SSN to others only when absolutely necessary—don't give it out just because a business asks for it or over email.

Make your passwords work for you

You don't have to be tech-savvy to protect your accounts from hackers. Start by choosing a strong, unique password for each financial site you use, such as online banking or brokerage accounts. Don't have your computer automatically save passwords, especially on work computers, and change passwords regularly.

Keep financial information private

Thieves who can't hack into your computer for your financial information may try to get your information in other ways. Be wary of providing personal information over the phone or through the mail. Unless you have initiated the contact or you are sure you know the person you're talking to, it's better just to say no.

Beware of phishing

Phishing is a term for online scams that use official-looking emails that seem to come from the IRS or your bank, but actually are from thieves seeking your SSN, bank account information or passwords. Always be suspicious of this kind of email. The IRS never requests financial or personal information in email communications, and neither do legitimate companies. In addition, the IRS won't call you to tell you that you owe taxes. They will send you a letter.

Shred bank and tax documents

Thinking like a thief helps you reduce your risk of identity theft. Consider your tax documents, receipts and bank statements as potential trapdoors that allow entrance into your personal life. If you want to dispose of these financial documents safely, shred them.

Keep on top of data breaches

With so many data breaches making headlines in recent years, it's more important than ever to safeguard your information and check for fraud. Not every type of stolen personal information will result in tax-related identity theft, but there are things you can do to help prevent becoming another victim including:

- Find out what type of data was taken, if you receive notice of a data breach or computer hack.
- Stay in close contact with the affected company and find out what it's doing to protect you.
- Contact one of the three major credit bureaus to place a "fraud alert" on your credit record.
- Fill out and send IRS Form 14039, Identity Theft Affidavit.

Lock up your mailbox

Getting a locking mailbox can prevent someone from checking to see what mail you've received. Since letters may contain private financial information, a locking mailbox can also help to prevent identity theft.

<https://turbotax.intuit.com/tax-tips/security/10-steps-to-avoiding-tax-return-identity-theft/L10xQ47Gf>

Upcoming Holidays

CLOSURE ALERT

All credit union offices will be closed in observance of the following holidays. But fret not—online and mobile banking are here for your 24/7!

New Year's Day
MONDAY, JANUARY 2ND

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
MONDAY, JANUARY 16TH

Presidents' Day
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH

Find a complete list of holiday closings here:
gtfcu.org/holidays



Banking
at your fingertips

Easily view your information, transfer funds, and deposit checks directly from your phone with our mobile app!



Find a Fee-Free ATM

Easily access your account!

With your Greater Texas or Aggieland Credit Union ATM or debit card, use surcharge-free ATMs at 7-Eleven and Stripes locations nationwide.



SCAN TO FIND A FREE ATM NEAR YOU!



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