

AACUC Unveils Maurice R. Smith DEI Leadership Award

Organization Pays Tribute to Credit Union Trailblazer and Past Winners by Renaming Award

SNELLVILLE, GA, UNITED STATES, March 24, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The African-American Credit Union Coalition ([AACUC](#)) announced it has renamed its Trailblazer Award to the Maurice R. Smith DEI Leadership Award in honor of retired CEO of both Local Government Federal Credit Union (LGFCU) and Civic Federal Credit Union Maurice R. Smith.

Smith – attributed with penning the credit union 8th Cooperative Principle Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – has a decorated credit union career. His recognitions include 2021 DEI Trailblazer Award, 2019 Pete Crear Lifetime Achievement Award and 2017 African American Credit Union Hall of Fame from the AACUC as well as 2023 Greg Inman Servant Leadership Award from the Credit Union National Association (CUNA), 2022 Advancing Equity Award from the Carolinas Credit Union Foundation and 2020 Herb Wegner Memorial

Award from the National Credit Union Foundation, among others. His thought leadership and commitment to the movement include serving as current Board Chair of the AACUC, Past Board Chair of CUNA, Steering Committee Member for the Callahan CU Services Limited Partnership, Administrative Board Member for Filene Research Institute, Executive Committee Member of CUNA CEO Council, Board Member for the NCLM Local Leadership Foundation and Vice Chairman of the National Board Institute of Emerging Issues.

“I am humbled that the AACUC would bestow this honor upon me,” said Smith. “Committing to DEI as a credit union leader was of high importance to me, not only for the human consideration of doing the right thing but also the business case for our credit unions to succeed financially and operationally for our members. I am highly confident that future award recipients as with past recipients will continue to carry this mantle in service to making our cooperative and our communities more inclusive.”



Maurice R. Smith

Smith began his career in financial services as a loan officer for State Employees' Credit Union. Smith served in several capacities including Vice President/City Executive and Vice President of Marketing/Training. Smith joined LGFCU in 1992 as the Executive Vice President and was promoted to President in 1999 and later CEO. Civic was chartered in 2017. Smith received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington and earned a Juris Doctorate from the North Carolina Central University School of Law. Smith is licensed to practice law in North Carolina, the District of Columbia and before the United States Supreme Court. Smith is also a North Carolina Certified Superior Court Mediator. Smith achieved a North Carolina Real Estate Brokers License, Certified Credit Union Executive Designation and attended several management and marketing schools. He is a Deacon at Wake Chapel Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, and participates in several community and civic activities. Smith is a self-proclaimed cooperative nerd. He believes that a business model that empowers its members to engage in democratic, self-help, classless principles is superior to other business types. As a fan of credit union ideals, Smith is avid about his beliefs.

"Our movement continues to evolve, and so it's only fitting to evolve the award name without losing reverence for the DEI and trailblazing legacy of past award recipients," said AACUC President/CEO Renée Sattiewhite. "Maurice Smith is revered in our credit union movement. Anyone in this current and next generation of credit union leaders who receive the Maurice R. Smith DEI Leadership Award will know exactly what it stands for and the character and accomplishments of the man for whom it is named."

AACUC established the Maurice R. Smith DEI Leadership Award – originally the DEI Trailblazer Award in 2020 – to recognize leaders and organizations that inspire accountability for our collective Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) efforts in the credit union movement and blaze the trail for others to follow. The AACUC Chairman and President/CEO select the honorees based on the following criteria:

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion thought leadership
- Demonstrated commitment and passion for engaging others in DEI
- Social impact of their work on the credit union community and our society

This year five honorees including four individuals and one organization will be awarded the prestigious recognition on Wednesday, July 19, 2023 during the 25th Anniversary AACUC Annual Conference to be held at the Atlanta Evergreen Lakeside Resort in Stone Mountain, GA. Honorees will be announced in April.

Past honorees can be found at www.aacuchof.org/trailblazers.

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About the African-American Credit Union Coalition

The AACUC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization created in 1999 to increase diversity within the credit union community through advocacy and professional development. Recipient of the 2022

Anchor Award from the National Credit Union Foundation for its leadership and global efforts unifying financial industries in eradicating racism amid the COVID-19 pandemic and social unrest in 2020 with its Commitment to Change: Credit Unions Unite Against Racism initiative, AACUC has become an all-encompassing organization for executives, professionals, volunteers, consultants and regulators within the financial services industry. AACUC is considered a leader in the credit union movement, adopting the 8th Cooperative Principle (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) and enabling credit unions to become more diverse and inclusive. For more information, visit: www.aacuc.org or follow us on social media at: Facebook.com/AACUC1, LinkedIn.com/company/AACUC, Twitter.com/AACUC1 or Instagram.com/aacucctc.

About the Maurice R. Smith DEI Leadership Award

The Maurice R. Smith DEI Leadership Award – originally the DEI Trailblazers Award – recognizes leaders and organizations that inspire accountability for collective Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) efforts in the credit union movement and blaze the trail for others to follow. Honorees are selected based on the following criteria: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion thought leadership, demonstrated commitment and passion for engaging others in DEI and social impact of their work on the credit union community and our society. Learn more here.

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