

# AACUC Inducts New Honorees into Credit Union Hall of Fame

SNELLVILLE, GA, UNITED STATES, March 5, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Over 400 attendees witnessed the African-American Credit Union Coalition (AACUC) induct five industry leaders into its African American Credit Union Hall of Fame at the historic Organization of American States Building in Washington, DC during the Governmental Affairs Conference.

"I'm overwhelmed by the memories and moments we're able to capture during the Hall of Fame," said Renée Sattiewhite, AACUC President/CEO. "The evening bridges the gap between our seasoned veterans and the next generation, reminding us of the work that's been done and that's still needed to advance equity and access to financial capital within communities of color. The event continues to be one of our most consequential events to honor those present and past who have shaped our movement."

AACUC's signature event, originally a fundraiser, honors and recognizes individuals who have and are contributing to the credit union movement by providing access to financial capital for African Americans and majority-ethnic communities. Eighty-one diverse individuals have been inducted into the African American Credit Union Hall of Fame to



Harold Roundtree, Pearl Wicks, Serena Ashley, Tony Black, Jr., and Girado Smith (L to R)



AFRICAN-AMERICAN  
CREDIT UNION COALITION  
African-American Credit Union Coalition

date.

This year's honorees included:

- Tony LaDarryl Black, Sr. (posthumously), President/CEO, Baylor College of Medicine Federal Credit Union
- Barbara J. Leonard (posthumously), Board Chair, Unitus Community Credit Union
- Harold Roundtree, President/CEO, UNCLE Credit Union
- Girado Smith, President/CEO, Educational Systems Federal Credit Union
- Pearl Wicks, Chief Retail Officer, Hope Credit Union

Tony LaDarryl Black, Sr., was a dedicated leader who began his finance career in 1983 at United Gas and Pipeline Federal Credit Union in Houston, TX. He advanced to Associate Manager at Energy Employees Credit Union before becoming President/CEO of Baylor College of Medicine Federal Credit Union in 1997. For over 25 years under his leadership, the credit union flourished, providing invaluable financial services to its members across the Greater Houston area. Black held various community leadership roles, most notably his involvement with the AACUC spanning over 20 years and serving as the AACUC Texas Regional Chapter Secretary from 2021 to 2024. A proud business owner for over 20 years, he held a bachelor's degree and an MBA from the University of Houston.

Barbara J. Leonard served more than 20 years on the Unitus Community Credit Union Board, becoming its first female chair. Born in Portland, Oregon, she earned a business degree from the University of Oregon and spent 30 years at U.S. West Communications. A dedicated community leader, she was a prominent member of The Links, raising more than \$500,000 for educational scholarships. Leonard was also active in Maranatha Church. Known for her mentorship and passion for helping others, Leonard passed away in 2012 at age 65, leaving a legacy as a devoted wife, mother, and community advocate.

Harold Roundtree brings over 30 years of senior executive management experience to the credit union industry. As President and CEO of UNCLE Credit Union since 2011, Roundtree has consistently led his teams with vision and integrity, while driving the organization toward exceptional growth, leading to financial success and community enrichment. He is a member of the California Department of Financial Protection and Innovation's Credit Union Advisory Committee and the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco's Community Depository Institutions Advisory Council. In 2024, he was elected as At Large Director to the California Credit Union League Board. He also served as 2nd Vice Chair for the AACUC West Coast Regional Chapter.

Girado Smith is the President/CEO of Educational Systems Federal Credit Union where he previously served as the Chief Financial Officer for over 18 years. During his tenure, Smith has led the credit union's financial operations and strategic direction. He is committed to serving the education community and expanding the credit union's reach by offering customized solutions and excellence in member service. He is driven to shape a culture of teamwork and inclusion within our industry and played an integral role in partnering with the AACUC to form the

Rosemary Brinkley C-Level Leadership Development Program.

Pearl Wicks is the Chief Retail Officer for Hope Credit Union (HOPE), where she directs all aspects of HOPE's retail operations for its 40,000 members. During her 17-year tenure, she led HOPE's flagship Hurricane Katrina Recovery program directing over \$600 million towards the rebuilding of homes for 10,000 residents. Wicks also played a pivotal role in the execution of seven credit union mergers and the integration of 10 former bank branches slated for closure into HOPE – all located in majority Black communities. A graduate of Jackson State University, she previously served two terms on the board of Opportunity Finance Network.

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About the African American Credit Union Hall of Fame History

On October 16, 2008, the AACUC unveiled an exhibit featuring African Americans in the credit union movement the first 100 years at the America's Credit Union Museum in Manchester, N.H. Continuing with that effort, the Funding Development Committee, led by Helen Godfrey Smith, created the African American Credit Union Hall of Fame. This virtual hall of fame was created to serve as a fundraiser and to honor and recognize African Americans who have and are contributing to the credit union movement – many who are unsung heroes and trailblazers. To be inducted, individuals must meet the following criteria: 1) provided in excess of 10 years of service in the credit union industry; 2) worked to provide financial services for the general public; and 3) contributed at least four significant accomplishments that provided access to financial capital for African-Americans and majority-ethnic communities.

About the African-American Credit Union Coalition

The AACUC is a 501c3 non-profit organization created in 1999 to increase diversity within the credit union community through advocacy and professional development. A 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, 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).

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