



NEWS RELEASE

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NWFCU Sponsors Reality Store Exercise to Help Students Get Financially Fit for the "Real World"

Herndon, VA – Staff from Northwest Federal Credit Union (NWFCU) and over 400 students of Herndon High School's senior class participated in a role-playing experience called "Reality Store" on May 16-17, 2006. The program, now in its second year, is designed to help students understand and plan for financial aspects of everyday life that will affect them over the next ten years (i.e. housing, children, taxes, student loans, etc.).

NWFCU, a strong proponent of educating youth to become more financially literate, sent 30 of its employees to lead the student groups and to guide them through the various hurdles of their financial plan. At the beginning of the exercise, each student received a "this is your life" scenario which provided their marital status, gross annual income and number of children. Students then had to complete worksheets to determine their net income and design a budget to cover their basic monthly expenses while still leaving money for clothing, entertainment and unexpected expenses—a challenging task in today's world!

Reality Store proved to be an eye-opening experience for the students as well as the facilitators. "I think everyone who participated was shocked by the 'reality' of the amount of money that it takes to survive with a family," said Kristin Shultz, controller for NWFCU. "Hopefully, we were able to enlighten the students as to how important it is to establish a financial plan because life in the real world is not only expensive but it sometimes throws you a curve ball!"

Jim Hannon, Herndon High School's Administrator for the class of 2007 noted, "When students start to understand just how much of their income goes toward groceries, rent or mortgage, utilities, and all the other items involved in daily living the 'reality' really hits home...It was truly a memorable program and I know many of our soon to be graduates benefited from the insight and advice that the folks from Northwest provided."

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Northwest Federal Credit Union is a full-service financial institution serving select government employees and 300+ companies in northern Virginia. Established in 1947 and headquartered in Herndon, Virginia, NWFCU is dedicated to its members and the surrounding community. The Credit Union currently has more than 83,000 members and assets in excess of \$1.5 billion. For more information, please visit www.northwestfcu.org.

NWFCU: Sponsors Reality Store for High School Students

Caption: NWFCU employees (*Cindy Senft, top photo; Susan Pickett, center photo; and Liz Grasty, bottom photo*) help to facilitate the Reality Store exercise by guiding Herndon High School students through their real-life scenarios and financial plans.

