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NCUA Media Advisory

Board Member Hyland Sees Opportunity Through Diversity

Alexandria, VA, August 11, 2009 – Board Member Gigi Hyland spoke on August 7th at the African-American Credit Union Coalition's 11th Annual Conference and urged attendees to embrace the diversity of their memberships and strive for greater collaboration.

Recounting the lasting impression her 5th grade teacher made on her, Hyland noted that her teacher's "gift was to bring us together to celebrate our unique, diverse heritage...It is because of [my teacher] that I began to understand that what makes this country great is the idea—the idea that all people are created equal. Diversity enhances our abilities as a nation; it doesn't hinder them."

" So what does this...have to do with credit unions? Despite all of today's challenges, this huge upheaval and shifting within the financial services marketplace presents a tremendous opportunity for credit unions. I believe diversity and collaboration are the cornerstones for credit unions' future sustainability and success," remarked Hyland. In noting the Coalition's mission, Hyland observed that the Coalition's members "can play a key role in helping the credit union movement move forward into a future that embraces those cornerstones."

Specifically, Hyland said that:

- "Credit unions must strive to bring greater diversity to their leadership--credit unions' management, board and staff should be as diverse as their membership;
- Being an elected director is a privilege, not a right—you need to find ways to make opportunities and room for other members to volunteer, so the board is as diverse as the credit union's members in skin color, gender, and/or age; and
- Educate, educate, educate your members—if members can't learn the basics of a checking account, a credit card account, etc., from your credit unions, it's pretty likely they won't be empowered financially anywhere else."

In conclusion, Hyland urged attendees "to be focused on the future," and "to move the credit union movement forward to a collaborative and sustainable future."

The National Credit Union Administration is the independent federal agency that regulates, charters and supervises federal credit unions. NCUA, with the backing of the full faith and credit of the U.S. government, also operates and manages the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund (NCUSIF), insuring the deposits of over 89 million account holders in all federal credit unions and the majority of state-chartered credit unions.