

Membership Matters

Board of Directors

The Piedmont Advantage Board of Directors represents the history and tradition of the credit union as well as a commitment to the members and communities we serve.

Directors are volunteers and serve without compensation; so their time, talent and knowledge are shared with the credit union as a labor of love.

Tom Mekis
Chairman

Mark Saunders
Secretary

Mark Linville
Treasurer

Darren Cranfill
A.J. Eaker
Justine Lerch
Brian Myers
George Price
Diana Santos-Johnson

Elizabeth Davidson
Associate Director

Ramon Hoots
Director Emeritus

John Reece
Director Emeritus

Gene Sharp
Director Emeritus

Jim Taylor
Chairman Emeritus

Supervisory Committee

The Supervisory Committee ensures the Board safeguards assets and management complies with the organization's established policies. Committee members also are volunteers. Their gift of time demonstrates a commitment to the credit union's success.

Diana Santos-Johnson
Chair

Elizabeth Davidson
Toni Douglas
A.J. Eaker

From the Desk of President & CEO Dion L. Williams

At this year's 75th Annual Membership Meeting, we had the privilege of reflecting on our past while looking ahead to the future. It was a milestone moment, not just because of our long-standing history, but because we are building the foundation for the next 75 years of service, growth and innovation.

I had the honor of joining our Chairman, Tom Mekis, and special guest Kristina Ray, Administrator of the North Carolina Credit Union Division, to discuss how PACU continues to serve our members and communities. *Their inspiring remarks reinforced the strength of our credit union and the impact we've made together.*

We were also honored to receive a special proclamation from Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines, declaring December 10th as "Piedmont Advantage Credit Union Day," highlighting the deep roots we've established within the community. December 10th is the official date of our formation, 75 years ago in 1949.

This proclamation reminds us of the responsibility we carry to continue serving our members with the same dedication and commitment that has guided us for decades.

In looking back at 2023, we acknowledged the challenges, including the economic pressures that impacted many financial institutions. Despite these challenges, PACU remains financially strong and well-capitalized, positioning us to continue investing in our members and communities. *Our ability to weather tough times, as we have done throughout our history, reflects our resilience and adaptability.*

Our focus for 2024 and beyond remains clear: Supporting members through every financial stage. I'm proud of the growth in our financial counseling program, with more member-facing employees earning credentials to guide you toward the best financial decisions. Our youth financial education programs, such as the K-12 MoneyY-ZER series, are thriving, engaging young minds and preparing them for a financially sound future.

We also made significant strides in our technology, completing a core banking system upgrade that enhances your digital banking experience, with even more improvements on the way as we prepare to launch a new website in early 2025. *Yet, as we evolve digitally, our commitment to human, face-to-face service remains unchanged. We continue to invest in our branch network to provide personal interactions that our members value.*

Community remains at the heart of what we do. Since 2020, the PACU Foundation will have raised over \$100,000 by year-end to support residents overcoming financial hardship, and we've continued to offer scholarships for higher education, including our newest aviation scholarship fund at Forsyth Technical Community College in collaboration with Tom and Elizabeth Davidson. The impact of our Simply Service[®] Day, where staff volunteered at local charities further reinforces our mission to serve.

Lastly, I want to thank all of the members, presenters and dignitaries in attendance for their support and words of wisdom and inspiration. Additional highlights from the meeting are on pages two and three.

As we look forward, our path is clear. We will continue to invest in people, community and innovative solutions. Our sense of belonging is what makes PACU unique, and we're eager to share that with our members, friends and families.

Thank you for being part of this remarkable journey. Together, we're building a stronger future.



Dion Williams gives his report during the 75th Annual Meeting on September 24, 2024.

75th Annual Membership Meeting Highlights

Piedmont Advantage Credit Union: One of North Carolina's oldest state-chartered credit unions

In remarks delivered by Kristina Ray, Administrator of the North Carolina Credit Union Division, our history and milestones were highlighted as a testament to our enduring commitment to our members.

Originally founded as Piedmont Aviation Credit Union, we underwent a significant transformation to become Piedmont Advantage. This change expanded our reach beyond our aviation roots, allowing us to serve a broader community. According to Kristina, this strategic shift was crucial to our growth.

"Piedmont Advantage saw a need to expand its offerings to regional communities, grow its branch footprint and increase accessibility," Kristina said. "Because of all this, Piedmont Advantage is now the eleventh oldest existing North Carolina state-chartered credit union, with over 30,400 members and over \$397 million in assets, making it the ninth largest by membership and sixth largest by assets."

Kristina credited these achievements to the collective efforts of our volunteers, staff, management and members, noting that our success over the past 75 years would not have been possible without their dedication.

"For three quarters of a century, Piedmont Advantage has been, and continues to be, a champion of 'people helping people,'" she added, underscoring our active role in supporting the credit union movement and serving as a responsible corporate citizen.

Kristina also emphasized the importance of trust between the members and the credit union, thanking our members for their continued support and commitment. "To the current and former management teams, staff and officials, your contributions have shaped what Piedmont Advantage is today."

As we look to the future, Kristina expressed optimism for the next 75 years, saying, "The sky is the limit."



North Carolina Credit Union Division Administrator Kristina Ray presents a plaque in recognition of 75 years of outstanding service to Chairman of the Board Tom Mekis and President & CEO Dion Williams.

Chairman reflects on legacy of service

Chairman of the Board Tom Mekis took a moment to reflect on the longstanding tradition of volunteer leadership within the organization. He introduced the Board of Directors and Supervisory Committee, praising their dedication to representing our members without compensation.

One board member, in particular, stood out during his remarks: George Price, who has served on the Board for an impressive 63 years. "George's commitment and decades of service exemplify the values we uphold at Piedmont Advantage," Tom said. "His guidance has been invaluable in helping us grow and adapt over the years."

Tom also recognized the evolution of our volunteer base, noting how it has grown to represent the diverse communities Piedmont Advantage serves. "There was a time when all our volunteers came from Piedmont Aviation and Piedmont Airlines," he remarked. "Today, our representatives come from a variety of industries and backgrounds, reflecting the diversity of our membership."

Tom mentioned that while technology and services have advanced significantly, our core mission remains unchanged. "We've invested in technology upgrades and expanded service delivery options, but we haven't forgotten that people are our most important asset," he said. "That's been true since 1949 and will remain so for the next 75 years."



Chairman of the Board Tom Mekis commends our leadership to over 100 members in attendance.



Featured remarks and special recognitions

Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines presented a proclamation declaring, “From this day forward, each year, the tenth day of December, the official date of Piedmont Advantage Credit Union’s formation, shall be known as Piedmont Advantage Credit Union Day” in the City of Winston-Salem.

“This significant honor by Mayor Joines reflects our deep ties in Winston-Salem and our ongoing commitment to serving communities throughout the Triad and Charlotte regions,” President & CEO Dion Williams said.

Jean Golden-Rumer, President of the PACU Foundation, the credit union’s charitable affiliate, cited the mission of the foundation: “To help create strong, sustainable financial health in our local communities by using the power of cooperative efforts to enable dreams to take flight and soar.”

She emphasized the references to “cooperative efforts” and “flight” intentionally aligned the foundation with the credit union movement and PACU’s history in aviation.



Jean Golden-Rumer



Richard Moxley, Regional Director for U.S. Senator Ted Budd, extended the senator’s congratulations to PACU for our remarkable legacy of service and community impact.



State Senator Paul Lowe praised PACU’s dedication to our members and contributions to the regional economy, noting our continued leadership in financial services.



Treasurer Mark Linville reports members’ equity is more than \$34.5 million, which equates to a net worth ratio of 8.86%. A credit union is considered well-capitalized if its net worth exceeds 7.00%. Therefore, Mark said, we are well-capitalized.



Special thanks to Lindsey Dowling of the Carolinas Credit Union League for her assistance with the event.



Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines presents President & CEO Dion Williams with a proclamation declaring December 10th as Piedmont Advantage Credit Union Day in Winston-Salem.

Volunteer service shoutouts

A.J. Eaker is our newest Board member. He was elected at our 75th Annual Membership Meeting on September 24, 2024. A.J. first became a PACU volunteer through his service on the Supervisory Committee.



George Price is our longest serving Board member at 63 years. He was elected at our 12th Annual Membership Meeting on January 26, 1961. Over the years, George has served in all executive-level positions of the Board.



Jim Taylor was elected to the Board at our 20th Annual Membership Meeting on January 28, 1969. After 51 years of service, he is Chairman Emeritus, reflecting his 30 years as Chairman of the Board.



Ramon Hoots was elected to the Board as a director and Secretary/Treasurer at our Fifth Annual Membership Meeting on January 28, 1958. After serving decades on the Board, he is now Director Emeritus.



Gene Sharp was elected to the Board at our 29th Annual Membership Meeting on January 31, 1978. He served on the Board for 42 years and is now Director Emeritus.



John Reece was elected to the Board at our 49th Annual Membership Meeting on April 28, 1978. He served on the Board for 22 years and as Treasurer for many years. He is now Director Emeritus.



Scholarship recipients for 2024

For years, we have awarded scholarships to members for their higher education. Today, we award a \$1,000 to each of six members who are high school seniors, college students and continuing education students.



Maggie Clement of Pilot Mountain Western Carolina University



Sofia Ugalde of Winston-Salem Baret Scholars



Ellie Hunt of Greensboro College of William and Mary



Lauren Brickey of Summerfield Elon University



Bryce James of Pfafftown Appalachian State University



Joshua Hay of Mooresville Mitchell Community College



Our newest scholarship that is in its second year is the **Piedmont Advantage and Davidson Family Aviation Scholarship Fund** at Forsyth Technical Community College. This year's recipient of \$2,000 is **Marco Alvarez of Winston-Salem**, who is in his first year of Forsyth Tech's Aviation Systems Technology Program.

2025 PACU Scholarships

Starting October 1, 2024, we are accepting applications for our 2025 Piedmont Advantage Scholarships. High school seniors, college students and continuing education students who show dedication, leadership and community service are encouraged to apply.

Go to PACU.com/Scholarships for eligibility details. Deadline to apply is February 1, 2025.

Speaking of Scholarships: Tis the season to watch out for scholarship scams

Warn your teen or college student to beware of scholarship offers asking for fees or personal information. Go to Federal Student Aid Office's website, StudentAid.gov, to get free guidance to access and help manage your child's financial aid research and applying process.

Stay Safe Tips:

- Don't share Social Security or financial info unless necessary.
- Limit what's shared on social media.
- Be cautious of unsolicited offers and suspicious links.
- Don't store sensitive information on devices.
- Set up mobile banking alerts to monitor for suspicious activity.
- Encourage your child to seek advice before sharing personal info.

Commemorative Booklet

To learn more about our 75-year journey, copies of the booklet, *The 75-Year Blueprint of Resilience, Trust and Belonging*, are available while supplies last at any of our branches or downloadable from our website, PACU.com/75-Years.

To dive deeper into our rich history and hear more stories from those who have been part of our journey, scan this QR code or go to our YouTube page to view our PBS Viewpoints documentary and several short videos from our members.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2024 HOLIDAY CLOSURES						
Columbus Day	Monday, Oct. 14					
Veterans Day	Monday, Nov. 11					
Thanksgiving	Thursday, Nov. 28					
Day after Thanksgiving	Friday, Nov. 29					
Christmas	Wednesday, Dec. 25					