



DOLLAR\$ and \$EN\$E

Personal finance newsletter

April — June 2015



Caring financial professionals

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CCOA Celebrates 20 Years!

This year CCOA is celebrating its 20th anniversary of helping individuals and families with personal finance issues!

In the past two decades, we have provided free financial counseling and education to more than 350,000 people.

The President/CEO of Sam's Club, Rosalind Brewer, will be the speaker for CCOA's 20th anniversary luncheon on April 29. Tickets are \$40. We invite you to attend. Email miker@ccoacares.com for tickets.

Our staff thanks you for allowing us to serve you and our community for the past 20 years.

One of the Best Non-Profits in AR

The Arkansas Business Journal recently honored CCOA as a finalist for best non-profit organization in the state at an awards dinner in Little Rock.

Attending the awards ceremony were: Charlotte Robards, Mike Robards (Executive Director), and Mary Catherine Harcourt (Dir. of Financial Systems).



"Beware of little expenses. A small leak will sink a great ship." – Ben Franklin

Most Americans Lack Savings

A recent Pew study paints a bleak picture of Americans struggling with financial stress. It found that 55% of households would not be able to make it just one month on their savings alone if they suddenly had no income. So what can families do?

- Take a look at the finances – how much is currently saved and how much more is needed?
- Review your expenses – track expenses for one month so you **know** where your money is going. Not where you **think** it's going or **hope** it's going. Big difference.
- Make changes in your spending/budget – look for ways to reduce or eliminate some expenses.
- Use that reduction in spending to increase your emergency savings.

Be proactive and start working a game plan to improve your family's financial health today!

Client Given National Award

CCOA housing client Linda Burton of Springdale was named the National Housing Client of 2014 by the National Foundation of Credit Counseling.

She is a 78-year-old widow who has cared for special needs children for years. Linda (pictured at right



with Joel Doelger, Director of Housing Counseling) worked with CCOA to save her home. In the end, she did just that – her home was saved, her loan principal was reduced by \$35,000, her interest rate dropped from 6.5% to 5.25% and her monthly payment dropped by \$350 a month! Total cost to Linda for over two years of CCOA’s help – \$0! Paid for by grants. CCOA can help you, too. You can view Linda’s remarkable story at <https://vimeo.com/108278505>.

Debt Free Grad Clients of 2014

Imagine having your own business and despite investing a lot of time and money into it, it just results in a lot of debt and stress on your marriage.

Scott and Claudia Huse don’t have to imagine that scenario because they lived it. In less than four years, the Springdale couple overcame \$159,000 of debt while on the Debt Management Program and all the financial stress that came with that debt to become debt free and named CCOA’s Debt Free Grad Clients of the Year.



They met with financial counselor Mary Sanchez and enrolled in the Debt Management Program to repay their debt in full within five years. Their interest rates dropped from an average of 10% down to 2% and they saved \$22,000 in interest.

Now they are inspiring others with their story and their future is so bright, they have to wear shades.

The Veteran’s Financial Review

This NEW, FREE program is for all veterans, active duty, guard, reserve and dependents.

- **Free Credit Monitoring Service!**
- **Free 1 hour 15 minute session with a Certified Financial Professional!**

The Veteran’s Financial Review includes:

- An inside look at credit scoring
- Review of your spending plan and tips on improving your cash flow and savings

- At the conclusion of the session you will be offered a credit monitoring service FREE for 1 year (a \$240 value). This product includes the Score Planner tool which estimates the impact financial decisions have on the credit score.
- Call CCOA at 479-521-8877 to schedule the Veteran’s Financial Review. This session can be completed in person or over the phone. Please mention the Veteran’s Financial Review when scheduling your appointment.

Meet Mark Foster

Mark Foster is CCOA’s Director of Education. In his 17 years at CCOA, he has educated over 25,000 people with personal finance classes. He has also educated people through hundreds of TV, radio, newspaper and magazine interviews on financial issues.



Mark says, “It’s a blessing being a part of an organization that makes a positive difference each day, plus it’s great to work with a caring team.”

CCOA was recently given a \$1,000 check by Walmart ISD. Pictured are CCOA’s Mark Jones and Mike Robards.



Free Home Buying Classes

Free classes, but please register by emailing billr@ccoacares.com or call (479) 521-8877.

April 4 (Sat), May 2 (Sat) & June 6 (Sat)
9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. at Washington County Extension Service, 2536 N. McConnell Ave, Fayetteville

A complete overview of the home buying process, including Q&A with representatives from the Realtor, mortgage lender and insurance industries. Eligible first-time home buyers may qualify for Arkansas Development Finance Authority down-payment assistance of up to \$10,000.

