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Press Release

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FCUL HOSTS BRAZIL CREDIT UNION GROUP IN TALLAHASSEE FOR FIRST FORMAL MEETING OF WOCCU PARTNERSHIP

TALLAHASSEE, FLA. - The Florida Credit Union League (FCUL) hosted 17 representatives from Brazil's SICREDI credit unions and the World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) at the League offices in Tallahassee on July 26, 2007. The visit was the first formal meeting of the two groups since their alliance was formed through WOCCU International Partnerships program in March.

With help from Victor Corro, WOCCU International Partnerships manager and translator, FCUL President/CEO Guy Hood opened the meeting by explaining the structure of FCUL and FCUL Service Group as well as what the League provides its members in the way of lobbying, compliance, education, products, and services.

The group's interests ranged from the number of credit union employees and branches in Florida, to the number of League staff, to how Florida credit unions underwrite loans. They were also interested in how the League determines which candidates to support, builds relationships with legislators, and represents credit unions.

In addition to League executive staff, four Florida credit union presidents/CEOs also attended the meeting as part of FCUL's "Brazil" team. Bob Beskovoyne, CCUE, Martin FCU; David Brock, CCUE, Community Educators CU; Bill DeMare, Bay Gulf CU; and Allen Upchurch, Harvesters FCU, all provided the group brief overviews of their credit union's operations. Bill DeMare, the FCUL team leader, was able to share his comments in the group's native language, Portuguese, which he learned while living in Brazil from 1970 through 1983.



Bill DeMare (l), President/CEO Bay Gulf Credit Union, speaks, in Portuguese, to several members of Brazilian group.

Alcenor Pagnussatt, Confederação SICREDI Director/President, thanked the League on behalf of his group and stated he was "glad to see a strong credit union movement in the United States" and that "one thing we need to do is unite" to ensure a bright future for credit unions.

After a tour of the League offices, the Brazil group visited Southeast Corporate FCU. After a night's stay in Tallahassee, the group traveled to Jacksonville to visit Southeast Corporate's other location as well as FCUL Chairman John Hirabayashi's credit union, Community First CU of Florida.

(The Florida Credit Union League is a Tallahassee, Florida-based statewide trade association offering a myriad of services focused on meeting the current and future needs of Florida's credit unions. It is the mission of the Florida Credit Union League to ensure an operating environment in which credit unions will thrive.)

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