



# The DIRECT Line

a communication to our valued members

## #1 New Year's Resolution: a low interest VISA credit card!

Did holiday shopping add a little too much to your high interest credit card? You don't have to pay high rates and fees to enjoy the benefits and convenience of a VISA credit card. . . you just need to choose the right card. Our **VISA Platinum Rewards Credit Card** offers all the benefits and none of the fees. Plus you'll earn Rewards Points with every purchase.

Right now is a great time to apply during our VISA credit card Special! Transfer your balance from a high interest card and enjoy a low **6.9% APR\*** interest rate on the promotional balance until it is **PAID OFF!**

Or, card holders can also take advantage of this low rate on Cash Advances. What a SAVINGS! APPLY TODAY! This offer is good thru March 2015 only.



### In This Issue

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- NO annual fee**
- NO balance transfer fee**
- NO cash advance fee**



Join us for  
**MembersAlliance Credit Union's  
 76th Annual Meeting**  
**Thursday, February 19, 2015**  
 5:30p.m.  
 Alpine board room • 2550 S. Alpine Rd., Rockford

All members are invited to attend.

Light refreshments • Door prize

**Annual Report**

\*APR=Annual Percentage Rate. Promotional rate subject to qualification. For cash advances and balance transfers made between Dec. 22, 2014 - March 31, 2015, the rate is valid until the promotional balance is paid off. Any cash advances and balance transfers made after March 31, 2015 will be at the Annual Percentage Rate documented on your statement.

## A Better Way to Pay for College!

*What you need to know before applying for student loans.*

**Fill out your FAFSA** – the Free Application for Federal Student Aid should always be filled out as early as possible. Even if you think you won't qualify, fill out the FAFSA because most grants and federal loans will require you to have a completed application on file. In most cases financial aid is given on a first-come first-served basis. Applying early means you'll have the best shot at the most financial aid possible. (visit [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov))

**Apply for scholarships and grants first** – Look for "free money" first. High school counselors and college financial aid offices are great resources for information about scholarships and grants.

**Apply for federal loans** – After applying for scholarships and grants, get your federal student loans (Perkins and Stafford) which are typically the least expensive and safest loan option. Federal loans should be considered before applying for alternate funding.

**Evaluate alternative loan options** – Most students will need additional funding, so after you've exhausted federal loan options consider a private loan like our **Student Choice Loan**. It's important to compare loan details to make sure you're getting the best deal on your student loan. Some important things to look into include:



**Membership** – Some lenders require membership for a student to be eligible for certain benefits. As a member of MACU you're eligible for all the great perks of membership.

**Credit Scores** – Expect to have your credit score checked when applying for a private student loan. Some students may not have enough credit history to qualify for a loan and may need a co-borrower.

**Interest Rates, fees and repayment** – Interest rates and fees vary greatly between lenders. Always compare rates and fees on your loan. Look for a loan with zero origination or prepayment fees, low interest rates and flexible repayment options like our **Student Choice Loan**.

Through our partnership with **Credit Union Student Choice**, the leader in higher education financing solutions for America's credit unions, we offer an innovative financial literacy platform from **iGrad**. **iGrad's** standard platform is aimed specifically at college students and recent graduates to help them make smart decisions about paying for college and everyday finances.

To learn more, visit [membersalliancestudentchoice.org](http://membersalliancestudentchoice.org).

## BBB's 2015 Tips for the Smart Consumer



The Better Business Bureau (BBB) offers these helpful tips to aid in fighting scammers, preventing identity theft and saving money in 2015:

- **Look for the BBB Seal of Accreditation** and always check a business out with BBB prior to making a purchase.
- **Keep your computer safe.** If you haven't already, install anti-virus software onto your computer and don't forget to regularly check for software and operating system updates and patches. Don't open attachments or click on links in e-mails unless you can confirm the e-mail came from someone you trust.
- **Never wire money to someone you don't know.** Many scams require that the victim wire money back to the scammers. Tracking money sent via MoneyGram or Western Union is extremely difficult. Even more troubling for victims is it's nearly impossible to get your money back.
- **Fight identity theft.** Shred paper documents that include sensitive financial data and dispose of computers, cell phones and digital data safely. Your BBB joins MACU to host 2 free shred events each year.
- **Fight fake check fraud.** Thanks to advances in printing technology, scammers have the ability to create very real-looking phony checks. Educate yourself on the common types of check fraud and be extremely wary of checks that come with claims that you've won the lottery, are eligible for a government grant or have landed a job as a secret shopper when you never applied.
- **Create a budget and stick to it.** If you're a cash-strapped consumer, setting a budget can help. Ask your credit union for help.
- **Ask the BBB for help.** File a complaint with your BBB if you have a disagreement with a business or have been ripped off by a scammer. Your complaint will become part of the business' record and may help others in dealing with that company.

For more tips, visit [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org)



How to get your SPRINT PHONE SERVICE DISCOUNT

Call 877.SAVE.4CU (877.728.3428) and let them know you're a credit union member\*.

Ask to be a part of the NACUC\_ZZM Corporate ID to save  
Visit [LoveMyCreditUnion.org/Sprint](http://LoveMyCreditUnion.org/Sprint)  
or Visit your nearest Sprint store

\*Current and new Sprint customers need to verify credit union membership to take advantage of these exclusive discounts. Visit [www.Sprint.com/verify](http://www.Sprint.com/verify) or download the Love My Credit Union Rewards app in the Apple App Store or Google Play to verify your membership. Some restrictions apply.



## Make Holiday Saving Easy with a Club Account

Did your wallet come up shorter than your gift list last Christmas? Open a **Christmas Club Savings Account** with MACU and be ready this year!

This short-term savings account is an easy way to gradually save and to protect the money from yourself until the holiday season arrives. You could use an existing account to save for the holidays, but that money may prove too tempting to leave untouched. You can deposit as much or as little as you choose each day, week or month – whatever works for you– and funds are disbursed on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Set up an automatic transfer for even easier saving. Ask a member service representative for details.



## NOTICE TO MEMBERS: CHECKGuard Overdraft Privilege Limit Change

Effective March 2015 CheckGuard Overdraft Privilege limits will be determined DAILY based on your last 35 days deposit history or by an aggregate minimum balance in your share accounts (excluding Share Certificates and IRAs) instead of a standard fixed limit based on the checking account product. Please refer to the following chart:



### Current Limit Structure:

Your CheckGuard OVERDRAFT PRIVILEGE LIMIT is:	IF you have the following CHECKING ACCOUNT PRODUCT
\$400	Basic
\$500	CheckMax
\$600	CheckMax Plus, CheckMax Plus 55, Wal-Maxx Plus, Wal-Maxx Plus 55

### New Daily Limit Structure effective March 2015:

Your CheckGuard OVERDRAFT PRIVILEGE LIMIT will be:	IF your Total Share Deposits Over Last 35 Days are:	Or If your Minimum Aggregate Share Balances are:
\$100	\$250	N/A
\$250	\$500	N/A
\$500	\$1,000	\$1,000
\$600	\$1,200	\$1,200
\$750	\$1,500	\$1,500

MembersAlliance Credit Union does not encourage overdrafts; we encourage you to manage your finances responsibly. Having an item returned or declined due to insufficient funds can be costly, inconvenient and potentially embarrassing experience. We want to save you from the additional merchant fees and possible damage to your credit history that might result if an item is returned or declined.

## Free Online Debt Management Tool helps you get on track

You're just a click away from a powerful resource for getting a handle on your debt. It's called **SavvyMoney Checkup**, and it's a free member resource designed to help you have a clearer understanding of your financial health. With **SavvyMoney Checkup**, you'll learn how to pay down your debt, create a personalized budget, monitor your spending, and more. You'll even get all the resources you need to track your spending and live within your budget.

**SavvyMoney Checkup** takes you through an anonymous, 15-minute questionnaire to organize your information on income, debt, and expenses. Simply answer a few questions and in minutes, you will receive a thorough analysis of your financial situation, including powerful tips to help you control your debt, build a budget and start living the life you want to live.



- Free financial assessment tool
- Complete the assessment in just a few minutes
- Absolutely secure and private
- Receive thorough analysis of your financial situation
- Obtain tips from leading financial experts
- Control your debt, build a budget and gain financial freedom

Your privacy will be completely respected since you won't have to disclose any personal identifying information. Best of all, it is FREE! Find the link at [membersalliance.org](http://membersalliance.org), under Member Services/ Debt Management and choose Learn More.

## MyCardInfo update for VISA credit card holders

As your credit union, we take your security very seriously. In October the United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT) released an advisory relating to a new public internet security threat called POODLE (Padding Oracle On Downgraded Legacy Encryption).<sup>\*</sup> POODLE affects SSL (secure Socket Layer) v3 within web browsers (i.e., Firefox, Chrome, Internet Explorer, etc.) that could make someone vulnerable to an attack by a cyber-criminal.

Given the risk, MembersAlliance determined that disabling SSL v3 on all of our systems and with all third party vendors was the appropriate response. Unfortunately this adversely affected communications with our **Visa Credit Card Single Sign On** link, **MyCardInfo**. We realize this was an inconvenience to our members and we apologize for the temporary service interruption.

To correct this issue, our online banking system was moved to a new platform. In the interim we added a direct link to **MyCardInfo** on our Visa page on the website. When the implementation and testing are complete on the new online banking platform, you will be able to access **MyCardInfo** through both channels on our website: WebDirect online banking and the Visa product page. Again, we apologize for the inconvenience. Security is always priority for our members.

<sup>\*</sup>For more info on POODLE, visit [membersalliance.org/Security-Privacy](http://membersalliance.org/Security-Privacy)

# MembersAlliance

You Can Rely On Us! CREDIT UNION

Main office

2550 S. Alpine Rd.

Rockford

815.226.2260

Perryville branch

6951 Olde Creek Rd.

Rockford

815.484.1160

Inside Walmart

3902 W. Riverside Blvd.

Rockford

815.484.5350

7219 Walton St.

Rockford

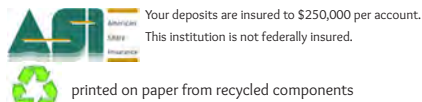
815.484.5345

4781 E. Rockton Rd.

Rockton

815.484.1250

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US Postage  
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Permit No 781



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## CheckMax Plus Checking Benefits Even Better!

**Coming this February** If you already enjoy the many benefits of having a CheckMax Plus or CheckMax Plus55 checking account, you'll love these new updates:

**EVERYDAY REBATE REWARDS** gives back even MORE! ERR will now offer quarterly rebates up to \$80 by submitting receipts (up to \$100/quarter) for everyday purchases.

**SAVINGS ON TAP** Savings has never been easier! Simply select to **Shop Online** or **Shop In-Store** and click or print your way to savings. Earn cash back when you shop with certain retailers online or print coupons to use in-store at your favorite merchants. There is even a Grocery Coupons Search.

**SAVINGS ON TAP - FREE MOBILE COUPON APP** Enjoy your member savings thru the convenience of a mobile app. Whether you're close

to home or on the road, simply look for participating locations on your mobile device then show the mobile coupon at checkout to redeem the offer.

If you don't already have a CHECKMAX PLUS checking account with us, ask how you can open one today!



## Calendar of Events

Subject to change.

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Jan. 19 | Martin Luther King's Birthday<br>traditional offices closed<br>(Walmart offices are OPEN) |
| Feb. 16 | President's Day - all offices closed  |
| Feb. 19 | MACU 76th Annual Meeting<br>5:30pm MACU S. Alpine Rd.                                     |