GECCU LTD

General Employees' Co-operative Credit Union Limited

GECCU BUZZ

VOL.5

















PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2021

Fellow members,

2024 is indeed a momentous year for our beloved credit union!

We have attained the enviable milestone of 60 years of service to the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and we could not be more proud of this achievement. The theme for our anniversary celebration is "A Gem We've Built Together."

For the last 60 years, GECCU has provided financial security for Vincentians locally and abroad and this dedication continues to facilitate pathways for the realization of better lives and livelihoods of our members.

The commitment of this noble institution in developing our nation's resources is testament to our ethos of promoting co-operative values that reverberate within our communities. By creating a plethora of opportunities and numerous avenues for empowerment and success, we have built an organization that touches the lives of everyday Vincentians in transformative ways.

This year, we will celebrate our diamond anniversary in grand style with the creation of a calendar of activities that will evoke full participation from our membership. Be sure to follow us on our social media pages for updates on upcoming activities. We are indeed proud to share this milestone with you.

Before I close, it would be remiss of me if I did not take this opportunity to pay homage to the founding members of GECCU and the leaders over the years who had the profound vision to steer this institution into the 21st century.

Under their tutelage, we have been given the relevant tools to take the credit union forward. Therefore, we thank all the past and present directors, all committees, management and staff for their continued dedication to this gem we call GECCU.

Best Regards,

Michael Sayers



MEET YOUR GECCU STAFF

MR. ELIAS FRANCIS
Data Systems Administrator

Elias Francis, a seasoned Information Technology professional, has been at the helm of the Credit Union's IT Department since joining as Data Systems Administrator on November 16, 2000. Throughout his tenure, Elias has significantly advanced the organization's technological landscape.

As a visionary leader, he orchestrated the expansion of a robust network infrastructure, seamlessly connecting all six branches of the Credit Union. He has achieved notable technological milestones and spearheaded diverse innovative initiatives aimed at enhancing operational efficiency and member service. These accomplishments include the successful introduction of the ATM Card Service, Online and Mobile Banking (GECCU Link24). His goal is to see the cooperative movement develop its own infrastructure for card and other digital payment services. His approach is guided by the mantra, "Making IT Work for You!"

Elias champions employee empowerment and values collective decision-making, creating a work environment where individuals thrive through active participation. His strategic thinking and unwavering focus have played a pivotal role in the IT Department's success and the overall technological progress of the Credit Union.

Outside the professional arena, Elias finds enjoyment in nature and sporting activities such as football and athletics. He extends his leadership beyond the workplace, actively contributing to his church community for several years. Known for providing sound mentorship, especially to the youth, Elias reflects a commitment to excellence and a genuine desire to positively impact those around him, both professionally and personally.



60TH ANNIVERSARY CHURCH SERVICE

THE CREDIT UNION'S STORY OF FAITHFULNESS, DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT

From time to time organizations mark their anniversary. These can sometimes be times of celebration in the lives of its members. Each organization has its own story, and anniversaries are an ideal means of passing on that story to the coming generations.

On Thursday 8th February 2024, GECCU launched its year-long 60th anniversary activities with the theme: "A Gem We've Built Together" which began with a church service. Members, staff, volunteers, stakeholders and well-wishers gathered at the Kingstown Baptist Church to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Credit Union.



This 60th Anniversary church service allowed GECCU to reflect on its many challenges and successes, as a recollection and reminder of God's guidance and goodness, as expressions of thanks and praise, and as a commitment to continue faithfully into the future, regardless.

The service included a time of praise and worship, a special presentation from GECCU's Anniversary Choir, and a sermon by Dr. Cecil Richards. The congregation was led to a place of lively uplifting worship, deep spiritual reflections on God's goodness and mercy, and our continued dependence on Him.



The theme of the service was "A Gem We've Built Together", and the scripture was based on Nehemiah chapter 4. The sermon included a rehearsal of the story of Nehemiah, a Jewish leader in exile, cupbearer to the King of Babylon, and his vision to rebuild the walls and restore the city of Jerusalem which was destroyed by the Babylonians. With the help of the king of Babylon and some faithful Jewish fellowmen, Nehemiah set out to repair and rebuild the walls of the city. He was, however, not without severe opposition from influential individuals who did not understand his vision, and placed hurdles in his way, which negatively affected the commitment of some of his fellow labourers. With faith in God and the commitment of the other workers, the wall was built.

Like Nehemiah and his fellowmen, GECCU's brand should be built on both the faithfulness of God, the faithfulness of the generations that preceded us and the faithfulness of a community of like-minded people. The organisation must be ready to face and overcome all challenges and hurdles, anticipated or unexpected with a deliberate commitment and dedication to continue faithfully into the future.

Therefore, GECCU's 60th anniversary service which was ably chaired by Bro. Meriah Samuel was more than a time of mere nostalgia and camaraderie but a starting point for the future of GECCU. It provided the motivation, inspiration, spiritual insights and sustenance to its hard-working staff, members, volunteers, friends and well-wishers to continue to be a resource to our country, by strategic visioning and seeking new ways of providing excellent service amid competition.





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calendar of Activities

FEBRUARY
CHURCH SERVICE

MARCH
HEROES DAY FUN WALK

APRIL
SENIORS FUN DAY

JUNE
PIONEER LECTURE SERIES

AUGUST
ANNIVERSARY
BURSARIES

SEPTEMBER
SMALL BUSINESS
INNOVATION CONTEST

OCTOBER
MEMBERS'
APPRECIATION DAY

NOVEMBER
RENAMING OF
GECCU'S BUILDINGS

DECEMBER
COMMEMORATIVE
MAGAZINE



THEME:
"A GEM WE'VE BUILT TOGETHER"

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GECCU X COMMON GROUND BEQUIA EASTER MARKET

COMMON GROUND Bequia

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who came out and made the Easter weekend truly memorable at our GECCU Easter Market! More than 30 local vendors showcased their products at the Common Ground store, located on the Gingerbread Hotel Compound along the Belmont Walkway.

Your enthusiastic participation and the bold spirit you bring as small business entrepreneurs not only support our local economy but also weaves strength into the fabric of our community.





CELEBRATING NATIONAL HEROES DAY

THE HISTORY OF GECCU'S PARTICIPATION

From the moment the Government designated March 14th as National Heroes Day in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, GECCU, an indigenous organization in itself, understood the profound importance of the celebration and remembrance of the Kalinago and Garifuna culture. The organization whose roots are deeply planted in the community, sought to inculcate this shared understanding with its volunteers and staff. Garifuna, an Afro-Amerindian group, is one of SVG's indigenous peoples and their vibrant heritage is a mirror of strength and resilience.

GECCU's celebration of National Heroes Day embraced the heritage and legacy of our indigenous people and how it links Vincentians to their unique history and identity. As such, the credit union's Volunteers and staff travelled to Balliceaux along with descendants of the Kalinago and Garifuna people to gain insight into the struggles of their forefathers and the events that led to their exile on the island.

There were also yearly trips organized by the credit union to the village of Fancy on Heroes Day as staff and volunteers celebrated with patrons from across the island who visited each year. GECCU continues its contribution to the festivities every year with a donation to the Fancy chapter of the North Windward Tourism Association.

As an institution, it is our duty to remember the unwavering fortitude of our Kalinago and Garifuna brothers and sisters. We must continue to recognize their determination in the rejection of colonization. Their resolute spirit has transcended beyond our borders and demonstrates our courage as Vincentians.

Here are a few images from GECCU's visit to Balliceaux in 2005.









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GECCU RIVER-14 RECREATIONAL PARK

GECCU was acutely aware of the importance of River-14 to the socio-economic fabric of the South Rivers Community and as such, the credit union embarked on a mission to further develop the area. A decision was made to purchase one and a half acres of surrounding lands for the creation of a recreational facility in collaboration with the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) and other local partners. After two years of construction, the facility was completed in November 2021 and officially opened in March 2022. The park boasts a pavilion, kitchen, gazebos with built-in fire pits, bathroom facilities as well as spacious parking. It is the perfect venue for family outings, picnics, birthday parties and weddings.









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GECCU 60th Anniversary

Keeping Our Promises To You!

GECCU BUZZ VOL.5 CREDITS

Special Thanks to:
Education Committee Members
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Bro. Keith O'Neil- Vice Chairperson
Bro. Meriah Samuel - Secretary
Sis. Janice King – Assistant Secretary
Bro. Hugh Colin Sam
Sis. Diana Browne
Sis. Thelsea John
Sis. Jeussana Bacchus
Sis. Dionne John
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