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Texasgulf FCU Scholarship Recipients for 2017 - 2018

Pictured seating left to right– Paige Halamicek, Annabelle Hanka, Kelly Salyer, Brooke Krpec, and Amber Woytek; standing – Lauren Lathon, Megan Chumchal, Marco Jimenez, Makayla Biskup, and Valori Prazak.

2017 Texasgulf FCU Holiday Schedule

Labor Day

Monday, September 4

Columbus Day

Monday, October 9

Thanksgiving Day

Thursday, November 23

Day After Thanksgiving

Friday, November 24

Christmas Day

Monday, December 25

New Year's After

Monday, January 1, 2018

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TexasgulfFCU has awarded ten \$1,000.00 scholarships to Wharton County high school seniors who will be starting their college education in the fall. After an extensive review of the over forty applications that were submitted, each recipient will receive \$500.00 for the fall semester and \$500.00 for the spring semester.

The ten Texasgulf FCU Scholarship recipients are; from El Campo High School: Makayla Biskup, daughter of Mark & Susan Biskup. Makayla will be attending WCJC and will major in Theatre. Paige Halamicek, daughter of Allen & Peggy Halamicek. Paige will be attending Texas A&M in Galveston majoring in Marine Transportation. Brooke Krpec, daughter of Pamela & Gary Krpec. Brooke will be attending Texas A&M University majoring in Biology (pre-med). From Boling High School: Megan Chumchal, daughter of Melanie & Randy Chumchal. Megan will be attending Texas A&M University majoring in accounting. Annabelle Hanka, daughter of Velmira Laurel and James Hanka, Jr. Annabelle will be attending University of Mary Hardin – Baylor majoring in English. Marco Jimenez, son of Raul & Imelda Jimenez. Marco will be attending University of Texas – Dallas. Amber Woytek, daughter of Keith & Brenda Woytek. Amber will be attending WCJC majoring in Dental Hygiene. From East Bernard: Valori Prazak, daughter of Deanna & Ronald Wilson, and Kenneth Vacek. Valori will be attending Texas A&M University majoring in Visualization. From Wharton High School: Lauren Lathon, daughter of Kirsten & Cedric Lathon. Lauren will be attending University of Texas majoring in Government. Kelly Salyer, daughter of Sammy & Adriana Salyer. Kelly will be attending Baylor University majoring in International Studies/pre-law.

The Texasgulf FCU 2018 – 2019 Scholarship applications will be available on November 1, 2017. Applications may be picked up at either Texasgulf FCU location, downloaded from our website, <https://www.texasgulffcu.org/membership-scholarship-program> and click on “download application” or send an email request with “2018–2019 Scholarship Application” in the subject line to info@texasgulffcu.org.



Legal Corner

By Kari D. Lutringer

IF I ONLY HAVE A HANDWRITTEN WILL, IS THAT A VALID WILL?

A handwritten will or “holographic will” may be a valid will that can be probated after your death, if certain requirements are met. The holographic will must be wholly or entirely in your handwriting. Before the will can be “probated” or made effective by a probate court, two witnesses familiar with your handwriting must testify that the handwriting in the will is your handwriting. In my experience, coordinating two witnesses that are familiar with another’s handwriting to testify in court can be time consuming and challenging for a lawyer.

A handwritten will, just as a formal will, must still identify your spouse and children, if any, your property, and the way you want your property, both personal and real, to pass after your death. Although a handwritten will may seem simple and easy it is typically more costly to probate than a will that is “self-proved” or signed and executed under all the formalities of the Texas Estates Code. A testator, or the person making the will, may make his will “self-proved” by including an affidavit stating that the will is in fact his last will; he is at least eighteen years of age; that he was of sound mind; and that he has not revoked this will. It also contains a statement of the witnesses. As an alternative to the self-proving affidavit, a will may be simultaneously executed, attested, and made self-proved before a notary. A will that is “self-proved” does not require the testimony of witnesses regarding the testator or the events surrounding the execution of the “self-proved” will, and therefore, takes less time and expense to probate.

The most frequent problem with a holographic will is the failure to name an executor and to provide for no bond. The lack of a named-executor and no bond requirement in any will greatly increases costs of probate. Many people attempt to save money by purchasing inexpensive wills online; however, in order to be effective, these wills will still need to comply with necessary formalities. If you are on a limited budget, I would suggest finding a pro bono clinic that offers simple will preparation, as an alternative to a handwritten will or purchasing a will from an online source without consulting an attorney.

Kari D. Lutringer is a guest columnist and an Of Counsel attorney at the law firm of Wadler, Perches, Hundl & Kerlick in Wharton, Texas. Attorney’s note: The information in this column is not intended as legal advice but to provide a general understanding of the law. Readers with legal problems, including those whose questions are addressed here, should consult attorneys for advice on their particular circumstances. Submit your questions for this column via email to plundl@wphk-law.com or via U.S. Mail to Wadler, Perches, Hundl & Kerlick, Philip J. Hundl, c/o TGCU Legal Column, 101 W. Burlison Street, Wharton, Texas 77488.

It’s a fraud jungle out there — Protect yourself!

Safely navigate the fraud jungle by understanding the various ways fraudsters try to obtain your personal and debit card information. The more you know, the more you can guard yourself against fraud. Follow these tips and guidelines for preventing fraud.

Personal information

Phishing is a scam in which fraudsters pose as legitimate businesses to trick you into divulging your Social Security number, account numbers, passwords or other sensitive personal data.

No legitimate business will request this type of information. Don’t give out your personal information.

Card safety

Debit cards are accepted virtually everywhere you use cash and many places where checks aren’t accepted.

- Use your PIN whenever possible for an extra layer of protection.
- Set up fraud alerts through online banking and mobile apps.
- Review financial accounts and monthly statements.
- Sign your card on the signature panel.
- Report lost or stolen debit cards immediately to your financial institution.

ATM security

Be vigilant at ATMs. If something seems suspicious, contact your financial institution.

- Cover the PIN pad with your hand while entering your PIN.
- Use familiar ATMs in well-lit areas.
- Watch for shoulder surfing — a camera positioned to obtain your card number. This may look like a small hole drilled above the keypad.
- Look for skimmers placed over the ATM card slot.
- Do not use the ATM if the card slot or keypad looks suspicious.

Online shopping

When shopping online, be aware of ways to avoid undue risk and keep your personal information free from fraud.

- Shop with trusted brands. Look for the green padlock icon and HTTPS:// to ensure you’re on a secure website.
- Never give private information, such as your Social Security number, passwords or birthdate, to anyone online.
- Create strong passwords with more than eight characters, an uppercase letter and at least one number or special character.
- Use and update firewall software to protect your computer’s information.
- Avoid free or special product offers — these are usually too good to be true.

If you suspect identity theft or fraud on your Texasgulf FCU account or card, call us immediately at 1-800-647-8427.

After hours: Lost or Stolen Visa® debit card: 1-800-383-8000
Lost or stolen MasterCard® credit card: 1-800-442-4757

Financial Fitness

By Ann Hundl

A BALANCING ACT: SAVING FOR RETIREMENT AND EDUCATION



How do you handle competing priorities when both may feel equally important? This is a question many face when it comes to saving for their own retirement and their children's education at the same time. People are often told to save as much as they can for retirement. At the same time, they hear that given the realities of college costs today, it is critical that parents (and even grandparents) set money aside to help kids obtain a quality education. So how can you strike the right balance as you try to attain both objectives?

If you find yourself facing this dilemma, you are not alone. Even if you are doing all you can to be a responsible saver, you may not feel confident that you are taking the right steps. As you save for retirement and college, a little perspective can be helpful.

A simple fact – retirement takes priority

As much as you'd like to help your children, your primary savings focus should be on protecting your own financial security. The biggest challenge you face is having enough money to cover what could be several decades of retirement expenses. Social Security may supplement your income needs, but unless you have access to an employer's pension plan (and these days, few of us do), you are responsible for your own savings. Therefore, the size of your nest egg and the effectiveness of your retirement investments could make all the difference. You should consider putting money aside for retirement in a workplace retirement plan (Like a 401(k) or 403(b) plan), IRAs or annuities.

The reason retirement savings should be your top priority is that once you reach retirement, you have limited options if your savings come up short. If that happens, you may need to return to the workforce or adjust your lifestyle. Few people find either choice desirable, as it means adjusting your retirement expectations. The best time to act is while you are working and earning income.

College saving is still important

Although retirement deserves the greatest attention, setting aside funds to help children achieve a quality higher education is still an important goal for many parents to pursue. This is where your personal financial discipline comes into play.

Consider this scenario: If you can set aside \$100 per month (or about \$3.25 per day) for 18 years, earning a 7 percent average annual return, you'll accumulate more than \$43,000 toward a child's college education. (This example is for illustrative purposes only and does not represent an actual investment.) While this isn't enough to pay the entire cost, it will help. Children have the opportunity to pursue other sources of financial aid, including scholarships, grants, work-study programs and loans, to help offset tuition. You simply don't have options like these to help fund your retirement.

There are three important steps to making education saving a success:

1. Be strategic with your day-to-day spending so you have money available to save.
2. Start as early as you can to put time on your side.
3. Consider capitalizing on tax-advantaged savings by investing in a 529 college savings plan. Earnings can grow on a tax-free basis if funds are used to pay for qualified education expenses. There may also be additional tax or other benefits depending on the state you live in and the plan you select, so be sure to research your options.

You need a plan

The key to achieving both goals is to have a plan that identifies the specific financial targets you are trying to reach. This will make it easier to devise a strategy to simultaneously and successfully save for both retirement and college tuition.

Ann Hundl, CPA, is a Financial Advisor with Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. in El Campo, TX. She offers fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies. Ann can be reached at 979-541-5905 or at 810 N. Mechanic St, El Campo, TX 77437. Investment advisory products and services are made available through Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., a registered investment adviser. Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. Member FINRA and SIPC © 2017 Ameriprise Financial, Inc. All rights reserved.

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The following increases in certain fees will be made to all of our Truth in Savings disclosures, Courtesy Pay Policy, Electronic Fund Transfer Policy, Funds Availability policy and our Fee Schedule will be effective **August 1, 2017**:

	<u>New</u>	<u>Previous</u>
• Returned Check fee	\$25.00	\$20.00
• Non-Sufficient Funds fee	\$25.00	\$20.00
• Stop Payment fee	\$25.00	\$20.00
• Courtesy Pay fee	\$25.00	\$20.00

Please plan accordingly and make any adjustments before the increase in fees take effect.



Get a \$100 Cash Reward for Every New Line

This new exclusive cash rewards offer is our best one EVER! Now, as a Texasgulf FCU member, you can earn \$100 for every line when you switch to Sprint®.

Here's how it works:

- Members get a **\$100** cash reward for **every new line** when you switch to Sprint®.
- Current Sprint customers will receive a **\$50** cash reward for every line transferred into Sprint Credit Union Member Cash Rewards.
- Plus, get a **\$50** loyalty cash reward **every year** for **every line**

Here's how to sign up for Sprint cash rewards:

1. Become a Sprint customer.
2. Register at Texasgulffcu.org/member-discounts and click on the Love My Credit Union link.
3. Allow up to six to eight weeks to see cash rewards directly deposited into your credit union account!

Make the switch today and save with the Sprint Credit Union Member Cash Rewards!

Take Control of Your Debit Card With SHAZAM BOLT\$

Set your debit card up with alerts to help keep it safe from fraudulent transactions.

A text or email will be sent to you when:

- Your card is not present for a purchase
- The purchase amount is over the limit you set
- Foreign country transactions

If you didn't make any of those transactions, or if your card is lost or stolen, you have the power to put a temporary block on your card!

You also can send money to a Shazam Bolt\$ user's debit card or receive money from another user's debit card.

Register your card at Texasgulffcu.org/debit-cards and click on the Shazam Bolt\$ link.

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