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New Credit Union Branch Premier's New Banking Technology

Personalized service and the latest conveniences of technology have merged into a progressive new way of doing business at Community Choice Credit Union -- and it's the first time this technology will be used in Michigan.

The Personal Teller Machine is the advanced financial services equipment now available exclusively to members of Community Choice. The user-friendly technology and new pod-style lobby design will officially be revealed at the Saturday, May 16 grand opening celebration of the credit union's seventh branch location -- at 31155 Northwestern Highway, at 13 Mile Road, in Farmington Hills.

PTMs are a cross between an ATM and a typical teller -- merging all the advantages of both, that neither option has completely on their own.

"At first glance it looks like an ATM, but with the added features of a video monitor, telephone-style handset, photo ID scanner, and cash and coin dispersal -- credit union members will be able to complete virtually any transaction at the PTM they would at a traditional teller line," said Rob Bava, Community Choice Credit Union CEO. "Using the PTM allows members to talk to, and see on a video monitor, a real-life credit union personal advisor, who might be somewhere inside that branch or located at one of our other six branches across Southeast Michigan."

The PTM is a fully functional remote unit allowing members to transact business, such as cash and check deposits, cash and coin withdrawals, and account inquiries or transfers. Once a member picks up the phone at the PTM, the call is routed to the next available personal advisor. When the connection is made, a live video image of the credit union advisor is streamed to the PTM that the member accessed, and from that point forward, transactions are completed as they would be at any conventional teller window.

Reaching beyond an ATM's ability to accept envelopes and dispense cash, PTMs additionally have an area to scan a driver's license to verify the member's identity and signature, a slot for accepting multiple dollar bills or a stack of up to 20 checks, and a cash and coin dispenser for withdrawals and change. The machine can also detect counterfeits.

"Unlike the ATMs we've all come to know and use, by having the personal advisor handling the transaction, a member can find out immediately how long a check's funds will be on hold, so the member can decide if they want to choose some other option," Bava said. "At an ATM, once the deposit envelope is pulled into the machine, the member cannot get it back out. Additionally, on typical work days, when our PTM personal advisors are not interacting with members, they are completing other credit union work, which makes everyone more versatile and effective in our overall service to members. We are also considering the option of making PTMs available 24/7."

In addition to the state's first installation of a PTM, Community Choice Credit Union's new Farmington Hills branch was created with the latest design in branch lobby concepts -- eliminating the traditional lobby filled with tellers standing behind walls of glass. Rather, the set up features modern, attractive working "pod" units, where each member is greeted at a concierge desk and assisted by a personal advisor who stands with the member side-by-side at a computer work-station pod to complete any and all transactions.

"We have always believed we're a progressive credit union trying to bring the best ideas and options to our members, whether it is financial programs or direct member service," Bava said. "With the addition of PTMs and our new pod-style lobby, I think we are showing a progressive attitude in very tangible ways."

Gene Pranger, developer of the PTM patent-pending technology, said: "I think it is striking that in this current economic climate that Community Choice Credit Union is thinking about their members and how best to serve them. You don't see that same focus currently from banks. It is a real tribute to the vision of the leadership of the financial institution when they place their members as a priority. I believe this philosophy will help the credit union to establish a very strong foundation for serving the residents' financial needs in Michigan."

The new Farmington Hills branch is a part of the newer, overall 42,000 square-foot facility that was dedicated in the fall of 2008. The majority of the facility serves as headquarters for the institution, housing over 90 team members.

Community Choice Credit Union first began in Redford Township in 1935, when neighbors Arthur and May Jenkins deposited \$5 each into a fund that any member could borrow from in a time of need. In fact, the Jenkins' home housed the Redford Township Community Credit Union from 1935 to 1960, when the credit union's first commercial space was opened.

The credit union continued to grow, and the charter expanded to serve residents of Redford and Livonia. Accordingly, the name was changed to Community Choice Credit Union in 1998. In 2007, Community Choice Credit Union merged with Research Federal Credit Union, creating an institution with more than \$416 million in assets.

Community Choice Credit Union membership is open to people who live, work, or worship throughout Genesee, Lapeer, Livingston, Macomb, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw and Wayne counties. In addition to the Farmington Hills headquarters, the credit union offers branch locations in New Hudson, Milford, Redford, Warren, and two locations in Livonia.

Community Choice Credit Union offers a complete array of financial services for members and community businesses, including checking and savings accounts, IRA investment accounts, debit and credit cards, personal loans, home mortgages and commercial financing. Detailed information and membership applications can be found at online www.comm-choice.coop.