AN UNEXPECTED BOOST TO MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

Leading with Financial Wellness Became the Secret Sauce for First City Credit Union

Case Study

Abstract

As a SEG-focused credit union in the most populous county in the US, First City was looking to reverse a decline in membership. They found a strong partnership with GreenPath Financial Wellness: a way to carry out their financial advocacy mission while gaining a competitive advantage among new SEGs.

Since 1937, First City Credit Union has served public sector employees across Los Angeles County through six branches rooted in the communities they serve.

FirstCity CREDIT UNION

- **Headquarter**: Altadena, CA
- **Assets**: $900M
- **Membership**: 58,000
- **Branches**: 6

Gina Garcia
Vice President, Development

What they didn't have was membership growth or a reliable way to open doors with prospective select employer groups (SEGs). Membership had been declining for years, leaving leadership hard-pressed to sustain the institution's core mission: empowering members' financial wellness through advice and advocacy.

In 2023, Gina Garcia joined First City to rebuild the financial wellness program and develop relationships with new SEGs.

STRUGGLING TO SUSTAIN THE MISSION OF THE INSTITUTION

The Discovery

Unfortunately for Gina, the existing vendor providing financial wellness services wasn't providing the level of service she needed, and required FCCU to pay for any additional support. This led her to consult with peers and begin exploring other vendors. Her expectations were low. The best-case scenario was to find a partner that could save her some time and deliver on the fundamentals of financial wellness for members.

What she found was a **source of fresh energy and capacity for FCCU**. A peer from Orange County Credit Union recommended GreenPath, simply on the strength of their expansive resource library.

"I WOULD HAVE NEVER IMAGINED IT WAS GOING TO HAVE THIS KIND OF IMPACT."

"I thought I was getting a small resource that would save me time and give me something to talk about when I went out. I would have never imagined it was going to have this kind of impact."

> ***People are suffering in silence when it comes to financial well-being, and I'm here to normalize the conversation around financial help. That's how I drive business. That's how I capture new members. I don't need to sell on rate.***

The Partnership in Practice

FCCU's CEO was familiar with GreenPath and aligned with Gina's recommendation to switch partners. From the initial conversations, **it was clear that GreenPath was bringing much more to the table**; not to mention the fact that FCCU was saving thousands annually by switching vendors.

GreenPath's representative and Partner Experience Manager, Jessie, collaborated with Gina to identify which resources FCCU needed most and potential gaps, such as Spanish versions of specific content.

In practice, Gina uses financial wellness and GreenPath's resources to open conversations with new SEGs, rather than FCCU products, because she found prospects were more receptive. And thanks to **Gina's advocacy and Jessie's dedication, departments across FCCU have seen the value in the partnership** and are finding new ways to use it on behalf of staff and members.

FCCU isn't just trying to attract new members: they're deeply committed to enhancing financial wellness in every SEG and community they serve.

The Results

Since Gina came on, FCCU has seen an **undeniable shift in membership growth and overall engagement with financial wellness.**

Whether it's financial wellness seminars or topical resources, staff and members at FCCU know that GreenPath is a trusted resource that will protect confidentiality and counsel anyone to a solution that has their best interests at heart.

GreenPath also **works directly with staff across departments at FCCU** to provide specific resources and support, whether that's hosting round-table discussions or developing additional topics and Spanish language content.

Gina leads FCCU's growth strategy with financial wellness, and GreenPath has given her the resources and benefits she needs to attract valuable new SEGs and expand the mission of the organization.

As of 2026

By the Numbers

Annual membership growth is at 3% and climbing.

FCCU has partnered with new SEGs, expanding their reach by over 23,000 employees.

Over the past 1.5 years, FCCU has conducted 54 financial wellness events reaching over 1,600 people.

22 members have enrolled in a GreenPath Debt Management Plan.

Members have paid off $193,630 in debt.

By the Relationships

One of the first members to use GreenPath (before it had officially launched) was a young nurse who was trying to rebuild after getting buried in debt. She wasn't eligible for a debt consolidation loan - GreenPath's Debt Management Program was perfect for her.

A long-time county employee and member emailed Gina to say that GreenPath had given her a safe space to talk about her goals and help plan for retirement - a first in her career.

"GreenPath has truly set the standard of service for what I expect from my vendors, and I'm so grateful for that partnership. I've seen the mountaintop. I won't go backwards."

> ***First City was negative on membership growth for five consecutive years before I got here and before my partnership with GreenPath. By December 2024 - the year I signed on with GreenPath - we were able to bring membership growth into positive territory for the first time in five years."***

Explore A Partnership with GreenPath Financial Wellness

Trusted by 560+ credit unions, banks, and employers nationwide, a partnership with GreenPath means financial wellness for the people you serve. Connect with a representative today to learn more.

MarketDevelopment@greenpath.com

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