



## HOPE Ranks 5th Nationally in Membership Growth

### Only Community Development Credit Union to Make List

HOPE ranked fifth in the nation in the rate of membership over a two-year period of 2005 and 2006. According to the research firm Callahan and Associates, HOPE's membership grew at a pace of 235%, compared to a national average of 1.49% for the same two-year period.

"Our mission is to foster economic opportunity by making affordable financial services available to everyone, regardless of their station in life," said Bill Bynum, CEO of HOPE. "Even before Katrina hit, the Delta and surrounding Mid South was the most economically-distressed region in the country. The increased demand for our services shows that HOPE is needed now more than ever."

HOPE's growth can be attributed to several factors. They include a large number of financially underserved people and communities, strong partnerships with community groups and faith-based organizations, and extensive hurricane relief efforts.

Immediately after Katrina, HOPE expanded its work to the Mississippi Coast, and began re-staffing its New Orleans branch. The credit union opened accounts that allowed residents to receive insurance and government payments. HOPE made emergency bridge loans for short-term recovery

needs such as repairing roofs, and replacing clothes, furniture, and vehicles. Recovery loans were also made to nonprofits and small businesses.

In addition, HOPE designed a partnership with an Entergy and the Foundation for the Mid South to provide funds to more than 3,500 individuals who received hurricane relief grants. By routing the funds through ATM/debit cards, residents had more options to access funds in a secure manner, at a time when mail and banking infrastructure was disrupted. After the grant program ended, more than 80% of the recipients maintained their accounts at HOPE.

Another primary driver of HOPE's growth is an expanded menu of member services. With the recent addition of a Member Service Call Center, and a portfolio of services such as electronic banking, bill pay, and shared branching with a network consisting of more than 2,000 credit unions across the country, banking with HOPE is becoming more convenient than ever. "When people have access to the right financial tools, they have more options in life," said Bynum. "For so many people in our region, HOPE represents an opportunity to break away from predatory lenders, build assets and climb the economic ladder."



## HOPE Holds Annual Meeting

### Members hear about 2006 successes, future plans

Members gathered at the HOPE Annual Meeting held March 31 and heard about the impressive results delivered by the credit union during the past year and what the future holds for the organization.

Last year HOPE experienced record growth, expanded into new markets including the Mississippi coast and Memphis, increased staffing levels to provide better service to members, introduced new products and services, and continued its response to help families and communities affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

"HOPE received numerous awards over the last year from organizations that recognized the significance of our work," said Bill Bynum, CEO. "While our goal is not winning these honors, they do highlight our commitment to serving economically distressed families and communities with innovative and affordably priced financial resources. Our members' support of the credit union made these successes possible."

The annual meeting agenda also included the election of board members. At the meeting members elected Regina Austin, Senior Deputy Director, Fannie Mae; James A. Brooks, Supervisor, Mississippi Department of Education; Mike Espy, Principal, PLLC/AE Agritrade; Derrick Johnson, Mississippi State Director, NAACP; and George Penick, Director, RAND Gulf States Policy Institute. They will serve three-year terms expiring in 2010. Corky Wicks, a business analyst with Cellular South, was also elected to the



Above: Robert Gibbs discusses HOPE's progress with members. Right: Terri Sanders describes how HOPE helped her family after evacuating from New Orleans.



Supervisory Committee for a three-year term.

"HOPE has been successful in large part due to the vision and dedication of our board," said Robert Gibbs, chairman of the board at HOPE. "Our ability to meet challenges and answer the tremendous needs of our region is greatly enhanced by the experience and wisdom of the volunteers who serve as HOPE's leadership. Their continued support is vital to the organization as we reach out to more residents of the Mid South and expand our operations and bring new choices to people and communities."

# Identity Theft Insurance: Is It Right for You?



If someone steals your identity, having some way to protect yourself against the unpleasant consequences sounds like a good idea. But you should know that identity theft insurance is not a perfect solution.

First, keep in mind that many of the identity theft insurance plans and other related services are being offered by the same organizations, such as banks and credit card companies, that are sometimes failing to protect your personal information. Insurance

programs are revenue producing programs that may not meet all your needs

Consumer experts say that most people don't need identity theft protection. Why? Identity Theft Insurance doesn't reimburse you for money that is

stolen from you. Some policies pay expenses such as lost wages (often capped at \$2000) and legal fees, but a lawyer is usually not required to resolve an identity theft case. The main requirement is your time in dealing with creditors to provide documentation and work out the issues. Even though some plans claim to cover the costs associated with resolving an identity theft case, the burden of dealing with creditors will still fall on you because most creditors won't deal with anybody else.

Finally, identity theft is usually committed by someone we know, often family members, but identity theft insurance often doesn't pay if the crime is committed by a family member, so you're not protected against the thing that is most likely to happen.

As an alternative to spending your hard-earned money on identity theft protection insurance, take steps to prevent being a victim. Protect your social security number. Pay bills online instead of having them mailed to you. Shred documents that contain personal information. Opt out of credit card offers to reduce the chance that an offer could be stolen from your mailbox or trash and used to set up an account without your knowledge (call 888-5-OPTOUT).

## Branch Closing Notice

**HOPE branches will be closed in observance of the following holidays:**

**2007 HOPE HOLIDAY:**

Memorial Day  
Independence Day

**DATE OBSERVED:**

Monday, May 28  
Wednesday, July 4

*Don't forget: HOPE is always open, even when the branches are closed. Just use the HOPE24 telephone banking system or HOPENet, our internet banking solution.*

## HOPE Mortgage Loans Make Dreams Come True



There are lots of reasons to consider a mortgage loan right now. Maybe you're looking for your first home or considering your dream home. Perhaps you're in a house but you want to reduce that monthly payment.

No matter what your situation, Hope Community Credit Union may have just the opportunity for you. With mortgage interest rates remaining historically low, now's your chance to

take advantage of the opportunity to refinance or to buy into the American dream of home ownership.

HOPE Mortgage Loans are designed with our members in mind. They feature low rates, an easy application process, and there are never any hidden fees. You may even be able to qualify for a mortgage with no down payment.

**We offer a variety of loan options including:**

**Conventional Loans**

**FHA Loans**

**HOPE Mortgage Program**

**Revenue Bond Program\***

**USDA Rural Housing Loans**

**VA Loans**

Call us or visit a HOPE Branch to find out how you can take advantage of a HOPE Mortgage.

\*In certain areas

## CONTACT HOPE

**NOTE: HOPE's Terry Road Branch in Jackson and the New Orleans Central City Branch both have new telephone numbers!! Please take a moment to make a note of them for future reference**

**GENERAL ACCOUNT INFORMATION –**

**HOPE24 Telephone Banking:** (877) 214-HOPE

**HOPENet Online Banking:** Go to [www.hopecu.org](http://www.hopecu.org), then click on the HOPENet button.

**DEPOSITS:** Phone: (866) 321-HOPE

**E-mail:** [deposit@hopecu.org](mailto:deposit@hopecu.org)

**U.S. Mail** (Do not send Cash Deposits through the mail):

Hope Community Credit Union

P.O. Box 22886

Jackson, MS 39225-2886

**Consumer Loans** – E-mail: [consumerloan@hopecu.org](mailto:consumerloan@hopecu.org)

**Mortgage Loans** – E-mail: [mortgageloan@hopecu.org](mailto:mortgageloan@hopecu.org)

**HOPE Affinity Network** – E-mail: [affinity@hopecu.org](mailto:affinity@hopecu.org)

**Supervisory Committee** – Phone: (601) 944-1100

Email: [supervisory.committee@hopecu.org](mailto:supervisory.committee@hopecu.org)

**BRANCH PHONE NUMBERS:**

Jackson: (601) 961-6775

New Orleans: (504) 581-HOPE (4673)