



**JEANNE D'ARC**  
CREDIT UNION  
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CONTACT: Michelle Silveira  
978-323-4780

### **BUDGET BUDDIES GRADUATES FIRST FINANCIAL LITERACY CLASS**

LOWELL – The inaugural graduating class of Budget Buddies, a non-profit organization that provides low-income women with innovative financial training to help move them out of poverty, received their diplomas last night (March 3) at Jeanne D’Arc Credit Union’s headquarters at 1 Tremont Place.

The pilot program began in September with clients attending monthly workshops given by Jeanne D’Arc Credit Union on such subjects as budgeting, banking and credit. Volunteer coaches – from Lowell, Chelmsford, Dracut, Westford and Acton – devoted hours each month to helping their buddies to complete homework exercises, reinforcing the workshop materials, and working on their six-month financial goals. The eight local women – clients from the Chelmsford Housing Authority and Lowell Transitional Living Center – are excited to have graduated with new financial skills and a path to a more secure future for themselves and their families.

Members of Jeanne D’Arc Credit Union’s community education department specially developed and presented the curriculum for the workshop component of Budget Buddies.

“The educational support provided by Jeanne D’Arc Credit Union has been a huge factor in the success of our pilot,” says Budget Buddies Executive Director Anita Saville.

Since September, coaches have helped their buddies pay down credit card debt, reduce monthly expenses, resolve tax issues, seek debt consolidation loans, and create savings plans. Many clients say they are considerably more confident about handling their finances now than they were before the program.

Budget Buddies is now talking to prospective partners about the next phase of its program, which will incorporate lessons learned from the six-month pilot. Jeanne D’Arc Credit Union has volunteered to provide additional instructional support for the second phase and is an official corporate sponsor of Budget Buddies.

For more information on Budget Buddies, see [www.budget-buddies.org](http://www.budget-buddies.org).

**About Jeanne D’Arc Credit Union:**

Jeanne D’Arc Credit Union was established in 1912 and is a full-service, member-owned community-based financial cooperative with more than 55,000 members and more than \$900 million in assets. It operates six full-service branches in Lowell, Dracut (2), Tyngsboro, Chelmsford and Methuen, Massachusetts; four high-school branches at Lowell High, Dracut High, Methuen High and Nashoba Valley Technical High schools; and a loan center in Lowell.



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