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36 Innovators, One Transformative Program: Introducing the 2026 CUES Emerge Cohort

MADISON, WI — March 26, 2026 —Thirty-six emerging leaders from across North America have been selected to participate in the 2026 [CUES Emerge](#) competition. Representing 18 U.S. states and one Canadian province, these rising professionals are stepping into a dynamic leadership experience designed to sharpen strategic thinking and accelerate their impact.

Delivered in partnership with Currency Marketing, the CUES Emerge program offers free, high-impact leadership development through interactive Virtual Classroom sessions and collaborative Mastermind groups. Along the way, participants connect with industry experts and peers, gaining fresh perspectives and building ideas that can shape the future of their organizations.

During the Mastermind phase, participants are placed into small groups of six, where they work together to refine initial concepts into well-developed business cases. These sessions are supported by mentors—often past CUES Emerge participants—who offer guidance, perspective, and practical insights. This year’s Mastermind mentors include:

- Jana Chamberlin, CCM, CEM (2023 finalist)
- Jayde DelGado, CCM, CEM (2023 CUES Emerging Leader)

- Lyla Elliott, CCM (2022 participant)
- Jessica Smith, CCM (2025 finalist)
- Amber Stutzman, CCM (2021 participant)
- Ryan Suttles, CCM (2025 CUES Emerging Leader)

Following the Mastermind experience, participants have the option to advance to the competition phase, where their business cases are evaluated by a panel of credit union leaders. Five finalists will be selected to present during the live, online CUES Emerge pitch event on October 7. From there, three top presenters will earn tiered learning and coaching packages, with one individual ultimately named the 2026 CUES Emerging Leader.

Reflecting on his experience, 2025 winner Ryan Suttles, CCM, Real Estate Specialist at State Employees' Credit Union, shared, "The program was amazing. It challenged me to think differently and gave me a lot of clarity regarding what kind of leader I want to be. There was a lot of mentorship, coaching, and collaboration with other like-minded professionals across North America."

To view the full list of 2026 CUES Emerge participants and follow their progress, visit CUESEmerge.com or search [#CUESEmerge](https://twitter.com/CUESEmerge).

About CUES

For over 60 years, CUES has advanced the credit union movement by developing exceptional purpose-driven leaders who meet the unique needs of their organizations and the communities they serve. CUES partners with the credit union system to elevate the leaders of today and tomorrow through exclusive networking and event opportunities, programs that facilitate personal and professional development, and unmatched digital and in-person learning experiences. Visit CUES.org to learn how CUES plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of credit unions.

About Currency Marketing

Currency Marketing (<https://www.currencymarketing.ca/>) is the leading credit union-focused financial education firm. The *It's a Money Thing Financial Education Program* helps credit unions attract, educate and inspire young adult members, and provides education and financial training for members and staff. In addition, Currency Marketing partners with CUES to manage the CUES Emerge program aimed at celebrating the best emerging credit union leaders and their ideas.

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