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CONTACT: Jen Kochan, Communications Director
608.288.5325, jenk@cues.org

Introducing the CUES Credit Union Leadership Standard to Strengthen Leadership Development

MADISON, Wis.—November 17, 2026—CUES today announced the launch of the **CUES Credit Union Leadership Standard**™ (CUES Standard), a research-based set of 24 competencies defining the knowledge, skills, and behaviors credit union leaders need to succeed. Built with credit unions, for credit unions, the CUES Standard creates a common framework for effective leadership and a practical way to guide development.

Credit union leaders have expressed the need for stronger succession pipelines, a deeper bench of capable leaders, and a consistent way to develop talent. The CUES Standard supports the work already underway in credit unions by helping them set shared expectations and focus on the capabilities that matter most.

“Leadership matters now more than ever, and the demands on credit union leaders are also more complex than ever," said Heather McKissick, CEO of CUES. "Developing strong leaders can't be left to chance. We brought together over 60 years of CUES experience, research, and the perspectives of industry leaders to create a framework that is intentional, actionable, and puts CUES to work right alongside credit unions as an extension of their existing talent development programs."

The CUES Standard organizes 24 leadership competencies across four domains, encompassing capabilities such as self-awareness, team dynamic, and member experience. Together, they reflect the financial, operational, and member-focused responsibilities of credit union leadership.

“Credit union leaders must balance sound financial performance and effective governance with a mission to serve members and communities," said Pixie Gray, SVP/Organizational Development at CUES. "The CUES Standard takes away the guesswork and makes those leadership expectations clear. It helps credit unions see which capabilities they need to strengthen, and where focused development will make the greatest difference."

The CUES Leadership Diagnostic helps members put the CUES Standard to work. While the CUES Standard defines what effective credit union leadership looks like, the Diagnostic helps leaders understand how their teams' current capabilities align with it, using a team-level assessment that identifies strengths and opportunities for development.

After a leader completes the Diagnostic, they receive a summary of their results and a detailed review with a CUES Representative. Working closely with the credit union's team, CUES helps interpret findings, identify next steps, and connect members with relevant learning resources.

Available to CUES members, the CUES Standard builds on the leadership development expertise CUES provides through education programs, university partnerships, and ongoing member support.

Learn more about the CUES Standard and the CUES Leadership Diagnostic at cues.org/leadership-standard.

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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.