

Truliant spotlights area's diversity

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

Truliant employees got to explore the world last Thursday without even leaving the office.

The Winston-Salem based federal credit union celebrated International Credit Union Day (Oct. 20) by inviting four international organizations to its headquarters off Hanes Mall Boulevard.

Representatives from the Foreign Language Association of North Carolina, the Hispanic League, the Indo-US Cultural Association and Liberian Organization of the Piedmont (LOP) set-up shop in Truliant's cafeteria - outfitting tables with information about their groups, artifacts and other items. Truliant employees were invited to visit the tables to learn more about the organizations and the cultures they represent.

"We're trying to draw attention to the international nature of credit unions," said Truliant CEO Marcus Schaefer, who lived abroad for much of his childhood. "The credit union movement is a worldwide movement that helps consumers everywhere build foundations for themselves and their families."

International Credit Union Day was started to highlight the diversity of the credit union movement, which encompasses 49,000 credit unions in 97 nations around the world. Unlike banks and other for-profit institutions, credit unions exist to help their customers improve their financial situations, said Schaefer, who has traveled to several foreign countries representing the World Council of Credit Unions.

LOP President James Hunder jumped at the chance to share information about the organization and Liberia, a West African nation that recently made international headlines when its president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, was named as one of three winners of the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize.

"Some of the principal objectives of the LOP is to create cultural awareness, and this is just the perfect opportunity to do that," said Hunder, who founded the organization in 1988. "It's just an



Front row, from left: Amy Barnhart of the Hispanic League, James Hunder of the Liberian Organization of the Piedmont (LOP), Milan Arora of the Indo-US Cultural Association and Truliant's Marjorie Rorie. Back row, from left: Raphael Perez, Truliant CEO Marc Schaefer, Leslie Baldwin of the Foreign Language Association of NC, Truliant's Karen DeSalvo and Lisa Houston of the LOP.

opportunity to educate the audience about our culture."

Lisa Houston helped Hunder man the LOP table, which displayed a spread of Liberian handwork, from handmade bags and wallets, to iron-ore Kissi Money that was once used in the nation and the Liberian dollars that are in circulation today.

"It's always good to show the historical transitions from where we came from to where we are now," said Houston, who immigrated from Liberia in 1979. "I always loved to talk about history, to show (someone) what it is that we have to offer, to talk about the unity of the country and how we feel about the country."

Houston said many people are not aware of the strong ties that exist between America and her native country, which was founded by freed American slaves. Even the design of Liberia's flag is patterned after its parent nation, Houston said, and many American customs are also observed there.

"We have adopted a western culture, but we do have tribal and traditional culture intertwined with it," she explained.

Milan Arora, the immediate



Truliant employees Anabel Romero (left) and Catherine Setiawan.

past president of the Indo-US Cultural Association, educated employees about Indian culture during the celebration. Like the LOP, Indo-US's primary goal is to spread cultural awareness and appreciation within the local community. To this end, the organization, which is made up of about 125 members, hosts several cultural events, including the popular India Fest, which is staged downtown each spring.

Arora, who has lived in this country for 14 years, said he enjoys sharing his culture.

"It's always good to talk about your own country, the country that

you came from," said the father of one. "We are all naturalized and citizens of the U.S., but our culture is still the same."

Truliant employees Anabel Romero and Catherine Setiawan were among those who took part in the celebration. Setiawan, a native of Cianjur, Indonesia, has traveled abroad extensively. She said learning about other people's cultures has made her a better person.

"When I go to the new places, I like to try the food and learn about the culture," said Setiawan, who works in the company's Electronic Funds Transfer department. "It's opened my mind up."

Romero, a business relations representative and native of Guerrero, Mexico, praised Truliant for bringing the cultural diversity to the forefront during the celebration.

"Truliant tries to promote diversity and I think that's a good way of reaching out to the community," said Romero, an active member of the Hispanic League. "Everybody brings something different to the table, so promoting diversity is an important thing for employers to do."

HAWS

from page A4

Housing Choice Vouchers and 1,355 Public Housing units.

Since the program's inception, participating housing authorities have partnered with local businesses and service providers to operate their affordable housing programs more efficiently and effectively. For example, they have developed mixed-income and tax credit properties, created foreclosure prevention and mortgage assistance programs and increased the number of project-based vouchers offered to residents. Woods says HAWS could do similar things and more.

"We would apply some of the funds to streamline our internal operations, beginning with updating our access to and use of modern technology," he said. "Funds would also be used to give families with working head of households incentives to increase their education levels, job training and income levels over time."

HAWS argues that by offering more opportunities for affordable housing and developing a more educated, job ready population - financial stability will become more attainable for thousands of people.

"Moving to Work program could have an enormous positive impact on the economic development of the city of Winston-Salem," says Woods.

During his testimony, Woods explained the importance of designing effective and creative housing programs that appropriately address the needs of the local community. He stated, "Given the current pressures on the federal budget, it is now more important than ever to empower local housing agencies to do all that they can do for their communities with the funding available to them."

Woods hopes that his testimony will give the Housing Authority and other similar mid-sized agencies more of a voice in the matter of overall eligibility.

"Housing Authorities like ours that work hard to operate above and beyond the industry's standards deserve a chance to make an even greater difference in their communities."

Right choice, right price.

\$0

per month
premium¹

Medicare Advantage plan
with prescription drug coverage
from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina

Get trusted coverage at the right price
from BCBSNC.

- 2012 BCBSNC plans rated overall² ★★★★★
- Quality health care coverage for more than 78 years.
- SilverSneakers^{®1}, a fitness membership at no additional cost.³
- Strong network of contracted doctors and hospitals.

Annual Election Period ends December 7, 2011.

Attend a meeting to learn more
about our Medicare Advantage
Plans. Prospective new enrollees
will receive a \$10 gas card gift
certificate as a thank you - and
there's no obligation to enroll
in a plan!


Cannot be
redeemed
for cash.



Tues., Nov. 1 and Nov. 8
10:00 a.m.
Hampton Inn
1990 Hampton Inn Court
Winston-Salem (Near Hanes Mall)

Wed., Nov. 2 and Nov. 9
10:00 a.m.
Quality Inn & Suites
2008 S. Hawthorne Rd.
Winston-Salem (Take Hanes Mall Exit 190; left on Silas Creek)

Wed., Nov. 2
10:00 a.m.
Hampton Inn/University Area
309 Summitt Square Court
Winston-Salem (Hwy. 52 Exit 115 near
Madison Park)

 BlueCross BlueShield
of North Carolina

Visit us at bcbsnc.com/medicare

RSVP today to guarantee your seat.⁴ Call toll-free: 1-866-476-1263

For the hearing and speech impaired (TTY/TDD): Call 1-800-922-3140

Monday - Sunday, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

For meeting accommodations for persons with special needs: 1-888-370-2350

Other products offered for Medicare beneficiaries include Blue Medicare SupplementSM and Blue Medicare RxSM (PDP)⁵

BCBSNC is a Medicare Advantage organization with a Medicare contract. Benefits, formulary, pharmacy network, premium and/or copayment/coinsurance may change on January 1, 2013. The benefits information provided herein is a brief summary, but not comprehensive description of available benefits. Additional information about benefits is available to assist you in making a decision about your coverage. This is an advertisement; for more information contact the plan. ¹You must continue to pay your Part B premium. Rate is for Blue Medicare HMO Standard Plan, 2012. ²Plan performance summary star ratings are assessed each year and may change from one year to the next, <http://www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan/results/planresults/plan-list.aspx>. Accessed Oct. 13, 2012. ³The SilverSneakers program is provided by Healthways, Inc., a third-party vendor independent of BCBSNC. ⁴An authorized sales representative will be present with information and applications. There is no obligation to enroll. ⁵BCBSNC is a Medicare-approved Part D sponsor. Prescription drug coverage is not sold as a benefit of any Medicare supplement plan. [®]Mark of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. ^{®1}Mark of Healthways, Inc. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, U7678, 8/11.

Y0079_5377, File & Use 09052011