

Wauna Credit Union Honors Debi Smiley's 37-Year Legacy

Clatskanie, Ore., January 2, 2026 – Wauna Credit Union (WCU) is honoring Debi Smiley for more than 37 years of dedicated service and leadership, marking the culmination of a 45-year career in financial services that helped shape the organization into the member and community-focused financial cooperative it is today.

Smiley began her career at Wauna Credit Union as a teller and advanced through nearly every level of leadership, including Vice President of Marketing, Chief Marketing Officer, and Chief Operations Officer. Throughout her tenure, she played a pivotal role in fostering WCU's member-first culture and guiding its growth from a hyper-local institution with \$28 million in assets to a \$400+ million credit union serving members across seven branch locations with more than 100 employees.

A recognized industry leader and graduate of Western CUNA Management School, Smiley championed creative financial solutions, including cannabis banking, ITIN membership access, municipal partnerships, and video teller units—expanding access for underserved and rural communities. She was instrumental in developing the Wauna Credit Union name, logo, and brand identity and is a recipient of a CUNA Diamond Award for excellence in marketing.

"I was so fortunate to have Debi as my mentor," said Ian Wiggins, SVP of Human Resources. "Nearly a decade later, I still go to Debi as a trusted advisor for her thoughtful and practical guidance."

Smiley's operational leadership spanned core functions including Technology, Branch Operations, Back Office Operations, Card Services, Facilities, and Marketing, helping implement mobile banking and modern systems while strengthening internal communication and business continuity planning. She served as interim CEO for approximately 9 months in 2007, providing stability for WCU during a time of transition.

"Debi was an integral part of the Credit Union's operations," said Robert Blumberg, CEO. "I am truly honored to have worked with such a professional individual. I am going to miss her."

Beyond the credit union, Smiley has been a driving force in community outreach efforts. A longtime member of the Clatskanie Chamber of Commerce, she has led and supported initiatives such as Heritage Days, Bulky Waste Day, and local fundraisers, while advocating for small businesses and economic development throughout WCU's service area.

"Debi's servant-hearted leadership and unwavering commitment to the credit union philosophy have set the bar for what it truly means to lead with purpose," said Willow Oelke, AVP of Community Engagement. "Because of her example, I don't just have a job—I have a calling."

As Smiley steps into retirement, Wauna Credit Union celebrates her enduring legacy, defined by a focus on service to her local community and always guided by the "north star" of the credit union philosophy—people helping people.