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Ignite Credit Union and BlueOx Credit Union Jointly Announce their Intent to Merge

Battle Creek, MI - Ignite Credit Union and BlueOx Credit Union are excited to announce their plans to merge pending regulatory approval and a membership vote. If approved, the combined organization will operate under the unified brand name, Ignite Credit Union but would continue to keep their individual names. Under this model, BlueOx would become “BlueOx Credit Union, a Division of Ignite Credit Union.”

This model where each organization maintains its individual name was established in 2022, when Allegan Credit Union and Rivertown Credit Union merged. This collaborative concept allows the credit unions to ensure their rich histories and legacies continue to be honored. Overall, the combined assets would be more than \$376M dollars, serving more than 32,000+ members with 11 branches throughout Michigan.

Credit Union mergers remain a hot industry topic. In a financial services sector that is constantly shifting, and is highly regulated, it is becoming more difficult for smaller credit unions to compete at the same level as the bigger players. Industry wide there are more organizations pursuing merger strategies that include strategic mergers like this one. For many smaller credit unions left on their own, it is becoming increasingly challenging to offer the wide range of products and services that members want. Attracting new members and new employees in this competitive market is also becoming increasingly difficult. Becoming a larger credit union provides opportunities to leverage resources and position organizations for continued growth. In turn, this would result in being able to provide even more benefits to members in the form of more product and service access, and integrating new and robust technologies, while continuing to maintain their unique brand identity that focuses on delivering excellent service.

Both credit unions wanted to find a partner that matched their own passion, aligned closely with their own mission, and shared a dedication and loyalty to their team members, members, and community. Another amazing benefit of this partnership is that both credit unions are on the same core system, and combining the two organizations will cause minimal to no member disruptions.

“What better way to demonstrate the credit union industry’s commitment to serve than to partner with a like-minded organization,” commented Steven Cobb, President/CEO, BlueOx Credit Union, “We pride ourselves on helping our members and communities in every way possible and are constantly looking for ways to maximize that impact. We look forward to not only continuing that commitment through this partnership but to a brighter future together, serving more members.”

Recently completing a merger Kristopher Lewis, President/CEO of Ignite Credit Union, added, “Credit Unions continue to be a huge financial voice and advocate for the communities we serve. I am super excited about our partnership with BlueOx Credit Union and what it means for the future. Mergers like this, born out of the passion to serve more members and help more people, increase our voice and the impact we can make.”

As member-owned cooperatives, and under the guidelines of the National Credit Union Association, full merger approval is contingent upon Ignite Credit Union membership approval. It is anticipated the entities would become one credit union sometime in mid-2024. As the merger process moves forward, both credit unions will provide information to their respective Memberships via their websites (www.ignitecreditunion.com and www.blueoxcu.org), and other applicable communication channels.

Ignite Credit Union

Ignite Credit Union is the recent culmination of Allegan Credit Union and Rivertown Community Federal Credit Union, two credit unions that formed a partnership to serve their members, employees, and communities more effectively. Both credit unions share blue-collar roots and believed that by joining together they could do more than either of them could do alone. Uniquely each credit union has maintained its individual brands under the umbrella credit union created in Ignite.

BlueOx Credit Union

Blue Ox’s story began in 1936 in Battle Creek, Michigan – Inspired by a small handful of educators from the Battle Creek School System. BlueOx’s original field of membership was limited to teachers, principals, supervisors, and superintendents of the Battle Creek School System. Today BlueOx Credit Union’s field of membership is open to the entire state of Michigan.

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