



Annual  
**REPORT**  
2017





“ *Helping people get  
a great start in life,  
a great foundation,  
is an investment.* ”

~ Gerry Schwartz

Welcome to  
our Annual  
Report 2017

UNITED WAY DAY OF CARING FOOD  
COLLECTION FOR GARDNER CAC

# Annual REPORT

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Gerald L. Bankowski, CPA  
Chief Governance Officer

## A Message from our Chief Governance Officer and President & Chief Executive Officer

GFA Federal Credit Union has served the members in our community since 1938, providing them with financial solutions for all of life's occasions. Time and technology have changed the way we do banking, yet our dedication to our members and communities in which we serve has remained steadfast. **When our members need a financially strong, local partner, we are here for them to lean on.**

As you read through this year's annual report it is more than just about the bottom-line, budgets, products, or services. It is your story; how we have been able to improve the lives of our members each and every day. In the end there is no GFA without our members. You are the reason we accept no less than "Better Banking".

Beyond providing exceptional service, lies our core values — Member Owned, Commitment, Community, Integrity, Secure, Value, and Service. These are the backbone of what it means to truly be "Better Banking."

"Better Banking" means that GFA team members know your name when you walk through the door. It means being your trusted partner when needed, and watching out for your financial security. We do all this while striving to provide support to those who need it most within the community.

You are the reason for our success and we are delighted to inform you of yet another successful year. GFA delivered performance results; increasing loan growth by over 13% from the prior year. Our total assets increased from \$471 million to \$498 million, while member deposits grew to \$369 million. Our capital remains well in excess of regulatory requirements at 10.3%.

Having a partner to lean on means we are there for our members in a number of ways. That is why we joined the Shared Branching Network, providing you access to an additional 5,600 branches and 30,000 ATMs nationwide.

Our consultative approach allows us to get to know our members on a more personal level. Providing an additional layer of personalized service helps us protect your hard earned savings. Last year we were able to save our members over \$500,000 by preventing scams from occurring.

We save our members money every day by refinancing their auto and home loans, as well providing affordable comprehensive insurance coverage. GFA always has your best interest in mind.

Our roots were formed here in 1938 and to this day, GFA is the only local financial institution in Gardner. You have been with us through the years and now it is our turn to give back to the community that has supported us since the beginning. GFA is making a multi-million dollar investment in the community of Gardner by expanding our main office. Our credit



Tina M. Sbrega  
President & CEO



union has grown considerably over recent years, and we have simply outgrown our buildings with no room for additional employees or growth.

Construction of our new headquarters will begin by June. The new building will be affixed to the current two story building at Parker Street. It will be approximately 26,000 sq. feet and will include a community room for public use, training center, suite for Wealth Management and Business Development, as well as a new Call Center. This project will allow for future growth of the credit union as we continue to expand products, services, and community outreach.

We would like to thank the Board of Directors for their countless hours on planning, preparing, and research needed for a project of this scope and magnitude. Their vision for GFA's future is what drives the success of this credit union.

We would also like to thank you for your membership and making GFA your preferred financial institution. We will continue upholding our values through commitment to our members, community outreach, and as always "Better Banking."

  
Chief Governance Officer

  
President & CEO



# Rising Stars



Julie Boudreau, BSA Risk Analyst. She has been a shining star at GFA for over eight years. Julie is the first employee to be awarded the title of "Better Banking" Champion. At GFA hard work, commitment and dedication is rewarded.

In 2017 the Rising Star Program was launched. This recognition program highlights employees who exhibit our core values (integrity, commitment, community, member owned, value, service and security) on a daily basis. They go above and beyond for not only our members, but other team mates as well.

Edmond Perry, Vice President/Real Estate Sales Development Officer received the Rising Star Award from the Cooperative Credit Union Association. He strongly believes in doing the right thing for the member.

He goes above and beyond to make the mortgage process as transparent and easy as possible, while understanding the needs of each homebuyer. His personal touch truly makes for a unique and valued homebuying experience.



# Credit Union Highlights

## 2017

Thanks to you 2017 was another tremendous year for GFA. Below are some of the highlights that we experienced.



GFA continues to grow as our assets have increased from \$471 million in 2016 to \$498 million in 2017.

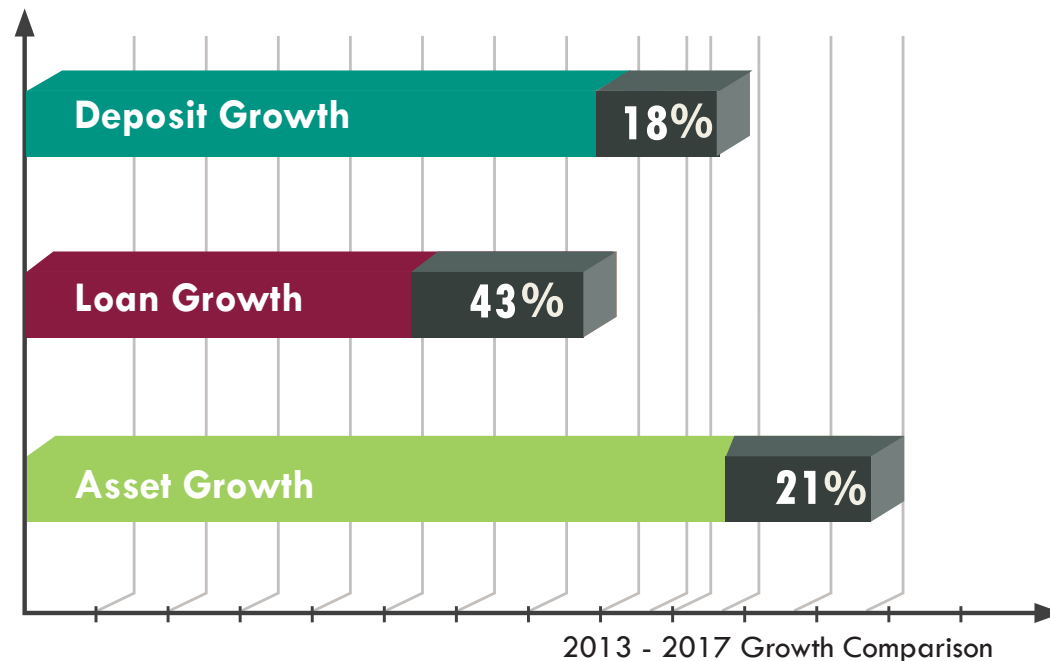
We have seen consecutive years of loan growth. This was accomplished by providing financial support to our members who need to purchase their first home, finance their transportation to work, provide a way to pay for continued education, and even help plan out the golden years.

Deposits also increased in 2017. Our checking and savings products have options for everyone's needs, from high interest checking to savings accounts that give back up to double the balance.

Our member satisfaction scores remain high—2017 is no different. We launched the “We are Listening” Survey to gain a better understanding of each interaction with GFA. Your comments not only help us give the best service possible, but they also let us know when our Better Banking Associates are “Rock Stars”.

### SHARED BRANCHING

We are pleased to announce that we have joined the CO-OP Shared Branching Network. Now GFA is with you no matter where you travel across the country. With 30,000 ATMs and over 5,600+ shared branches you have access to your money anytime, anywhere. That's more branches than Bank of America. Visit any participating CO-OP Shared Branch and make a deposit or withdrawal, a loan payment, and more.





We couldn't be happier with our new Peterborough NH branch!

At the end of 2017 we opened our doors to the brand new Peterborough NH branch, located at 99 Grove Street. The new location has been a host to a number of seminars in our Discovery Zone; as well as the Peterborough Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours Event.

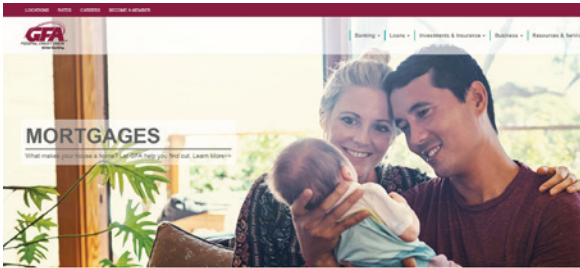
## WEALTH MANAGEMENT

George Slyman, Jr. Certified Financial Planning Practitioner® with Northeast Planning Associates has partnered with GFA Financial Group, this extends our wealth management services to Ashburnham, Winchendon, Rindge, and Peterborough branches. He has provided “Lunch and Learn” topics such as Retirement, Financial and Estate Planning at the Peterborough branches.



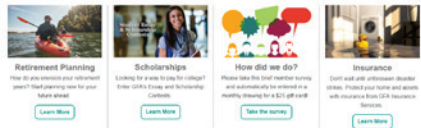
Not NCUA Insured	No Credit Union Guarantee	May Lose Value
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Investment products are not deposits of GFA Federal Credit Union and are not protected by any type of deposit insurance and are not insured by any federal government agency, are not obligations of or guaranteed by GFA Federal Credit Union, and may be subject to risk. Any insurance required as a condition of the extension of credit by GFA Federal Credit Union need not be purchased from GFA Insurance Services, LLC but may, without affecting the approval of the application for an extension of credit, be purchased from an agent or insurance company of the Member's choice.



GFA Federal Credit Union in MA and NH

Products and Services that fit your needs.



Our new GFA website was launched. It is designed for ease of use and to create more visibility in online searches. It is mobile friendly for those on the go, and offers more self-serve features.

iOpen - Within Online and Mobile Banking members can now open deposit accounts easily. Simply click the “Open Account” tab, no waiting in line required.



INSURANCE CENTER OF NEW ENGLAND

## KEEPING YOU COVERED

GFA has partnered with Insurance Center of New England to bring you even more insurance options. Their personalized services helps you protect what means most while saving you money. Bundling your insurance policy can save you up to 30%. They offer auto, home, rental, business, and life insurance options.



## Testimonials

# Our members say it best...

Dawn Casavant - VP of External Affairs & Executive Director  
of the Heywood Healthcare Charitable Foundation

*"We are grateful for GFA's commitment to community."*

"Tina has served on our Board of Trustees for 18 years and she has signed on to be Co-Chair of the Quabbin Retreat. This new facility will be developed as a full-continuum substance abuse and behavioral health treatment facility; developed to provide access to both addiction and mental health treatment for our communities. We are all affected by this disease of addiction and the great losses we continue to experience. Heywood is grateful for Tina and GFA's Board of Director's deep commitment to the community, and value the relationship between Heywood Healthcare and GFA."

**GFA's participation, engagement, and commitment to the community is how they provide "Better Banking".**



Rebecca Caranci, GFA Branch Manager

*"We always have our member's security in mind."*

Mary has been a long-time member of GFA, she comes in weekly to do transactions, but this occasion was a little different. She was making a large withdrawal, and when our Better Banking Representative inquired about it, Mary explained she received a call that her grandson was in jail and she needed to send \$4,000 to a bank account. The story sounded peculiar so it was brought to the attention of the Branch Manager, Rebecca who asked Mary to let her do some digging and make sure this wasn't a scam. Calls were placed to the police station where Mary's grandson was supposed to be and they didn't know anything about the situation. Eventually Mary and the Rebecca were able to get in touch with her grandson and he was fine and at work. This proved that someone was trying to scam Mary and the Better Banking team at GFA made sure it didn't happen.

**Looking out for our member's personal security is how GFA does "Better Banking".**





Shauna E.

*“GFA cares about their members.”*

Shauna was struggling with her auto loan payments, each month she would work with Danielle in Collections to bring her account current. Danielle asked if there was anything she should know that was causing her to be late each month. Shauna was struggling financially due to her son's Neurofibromatosis, she needed her car to go to work to pay for treatments and medical bills. Danielle worked with Shauna bi-weekly to make sure she was on track and today she is fully paid off.

**Caring about me and my family;  
that's how GFA does “Better Banking”.**



Nick G.

*“At GFA I’m not just a member, it’s like family.”*

Nick was looking to buy his first home, but he was unable to find one based on his pre-approval amount. The GFA Mortgage Team set to work and found he qualified for the FHLB down payment assistance program which gave Nick \$11,000 for his down payment and closing costs. Ed Perry, Vice President/ Real Estate Sales Development Officer introduced Nick to a local Realtor who found him a short sale home. Within a few months Nick closed on the house and is now a proud first-time homeowner.

**Going up one side the mountain and down the other for  
their members; that's how GFA does “Better Banking”.**

Walter D.

*“At GFA it's never about dollars and cents.”*

Walter is a long time member of GFA, when it was time to think of life beyond his kid's tuition bills he turned to Paul Fitzpatrick, SVP of GFA Financial Group. “When I first met Paul it was never about dollars and cents, it was about who are you, where are you coming from, and where do you hope to go. He helped me understand financial planning and I was always comfortable asking questions. I trust Paul and all the wonderful people at GFA.”

**Being interested in me; that's  
how GFA does Better Banking”.**



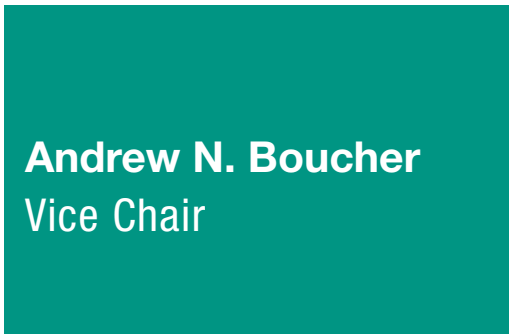
# Better Banking Board of Directors



**Tina M. Sbrega**  
President & Chief  
Executive Officer



**Gerald L.  
Bankowski, CPA**  
Chief Governance  
Officer



**Andrew N. Boucher**  
Vice Chair



**Mayor Mark P. Hawke**  
Clerk



**Charles P. Bowles**



**Douglas R. Delay**



**Elaine Fluet**



**Allen T. Goguen**



**Supervisory Committee**

Winfield S. Brown, JoAnne Parks, Dr. Daniel M. Asquino, Wendy Wiiks, James O. Garrison, Chairman

**Michael T. Horrigan**



**Omer Cormier**  
Director Emeritus



## Leadership Team



Linda Carmichael, SVP/ERM Officer, John Colantino, 1<sup>st</sup> VP/Chief Technology Officer  
Joan Moran, SVP/Chief Lending Officer, Paul Fitzpatrick, SVP/GFA Financial Group,  
Tina M. Sbrega, President & CEO, Susan Franklin, AVP/Marketing Director,  
Siobhan Bohannon, VP/Member Engagement, David C. Bojarczuk, Executive VP/CFO  
Pamela Genelli, 1<sup>st</sup> VP/Culture Officer, Kimberly A. Quinn, VP/Operations Officer,  
Edmond Perry, Vice President/Real Estate Sales Development Officer

# Better Banking

## GFA Advisory Boards

### Gardner High School Student Advisory Board



In alphabetical order: Ava Cormier (Chairperson), Christine Belitksy, Elijah Cormier, Cameron Davis, Laney Gernier, Danielle Jaillet, Kayla Keenan, Becca Lashua, Heather Malloy, Erin Malloy, Emma Mierzejewski, Justin Nguyen

### Ashburnham Advisory Group

Joanne Catlin  
Ronald Newman

### Hubbardston/Rutland Advisory Group

Ed Blanchard  
Michael Caruso  
Joyce Green  
Brian Stidsen

### Fitchburg/Leominster Advisory Group

Leonard Croteau  
Peter Lahtinen  
Richard Leger  
Warren Legsdin  
Stephen Masiello

### Monadnock Advisory Group

Laura Gingras  
Samuel Hackler  
Timothy Kolk  
Thomas LaFortune  
Barbara Miller

## People Helping People

# Community Giving

Community is at the heart of our organization and that is why we give back to local organizations who need our help. We focus on the needs of local non-profits, schools, and organizations that work to better our neighborhoods and towns. Listed below are just a few of the organizations that GFA has supported both financially and through our civic engagement.

Ashburnham Lions, Red Cross of Central Mass, United Way, Veterans Inc., American Cancer Society, YMCA, GVNA, Mount Wachusett Community College, Town of Hubbardston, Boys and Girls Club, Fitchburg State University, Heywood Hospital, Franklin Pierce University, local area Chambers of Commerce, Shelter From the Storm, Winchendon and Gardner CAC, Ginny's Food Pantry, Peterborough Food Pantry, local area sports teams, and many more!



# People Helping People

## GFA in the Community



### ⬇ Financial Reality Fair

AVP Residential Lending Officer Shane Hoover and Assistant Controller Carmela Manago advise Gardner High School students at the 2017 CU4 Reality Fair sponsored by GFA. Students were given the opportunity to act out real life financial situations in order to better understand what their futures may look like based on the careers they are looking to study.

### ⬆ Peterborough Demo

When demolition began on the building that once stood where our new Peterborough Branch is located, GFA got some extra help from high school students participating in the Fire fighter I program. The program trains students to be able to eventually graduate and work for their local fire station. Getting to suit up with GFA was great practice for them!



### ⬆ Gardner Sidewalk Sale

Leominster Branch Manager, Denise Flores-Dalpe and Gardner (Parker Street) Branch Manager Tracy Sasseville enjoy an afternoon at the Annual Gardner Sidewalk Sale.



### ⬆ \$500 Food Pantry Donation

Christine Mann, President of the Board of Directors at the Peterborough Food Pantry, receives a \$500 donation to the food pantry. Members were able to vote for their non-profit of choice as part of the Peterborough opening celebration.



### ⬆ Read Across America

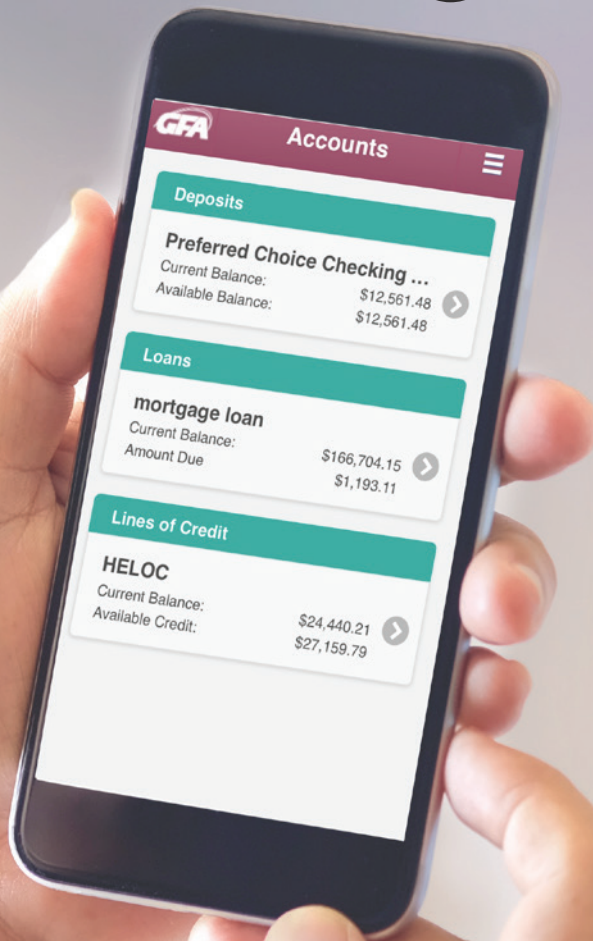
SVP Chief Lending Officer, Joan Moran visited the 3rd grade class at Gardner's Elm Street School to celebrate National Read Across America Day and read a great book to all the children who were happy to have her in class!



### ⬆ Random Acts of Kindness

February 17<sup>th</sup> was *National Random Acts of Kindness Day* and GFA decided to surprise locals by paying for their gas fill up's, Dunkin Donuts coffee runs and by handing out flowers to members in our branches.

# Banking on your time.



Take a look at our Online Banking solutions below. GFA offers the same conveniences the big banks offer, with more personalized service.

- *Open an account*
- *Make transfers*
- *Pay bills*
- *View statements*
- *Set alerts*
- *Deactivate Debit Card*
- *Travel notifications*
- *Deposit checks*

The way of banking is changing. We understand that 8 to 5 is not always convenient for you, that's why we continue to provide high tech services and convenience that runs on your schedule. More and more members are adopting GFA's Digital Banking Services.

Mobile banking increased by over 97% this past year. GFA goes with you no matter where you go, with access 24/7. That's why we continue to make enhancements to deliver you greater convenience.

## Online Account Opening

Open a savings, checking or term share certificate online or using our mobile app. No line, no waiting.

## New Website Design

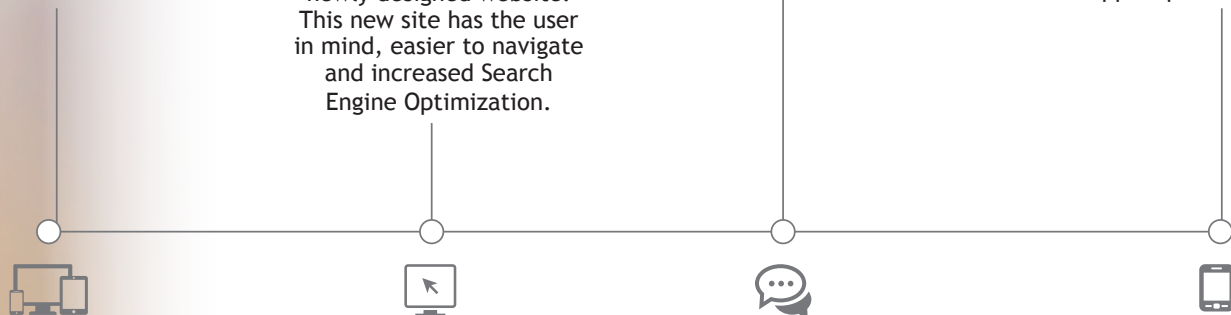
In October we launched our newly designed website. This new site has the user in mind, easier to navigate and increased Search Engine Optimization.

## Social Media

We have expanded our social outreach to Twitter and Instagram. GFA now has approximately 1,500 Facebook followers.

## Mobile Deposit

38,472 mobile deposits made with GFA's mobile app. Tap. Snap. Deposit.





# CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Assets	As of Dec. 31, 2017	As of Dec. 31, 2016	Liabilities & Members' Equity	As of Dec. 31, 2017	As of Dec. 31, 2016
Cash & Due from Banks	\$ 6,503,071	\$ 7,876,722	Members' Shares & Savings Accounts	\$ 369,103,514	\$ 361,739,643
Federal Funds Sold	7,046,653	6,048,500	Mortgagors' Escrow Accounts	1,161,275	1,160,759
Total Cash & Cash Equivalents	13,549,724	13,925,222	Borrowed Funds	73,965,316	57,015,335
Certificates of Deposit	12,750,000	12,800,00	Other Liabilities	3,451,379	2,643,211
Investment Securities					
Available-for-Sale, at Fair Value	162,501,308	170,903,095	Total Liabilities	\$ 447,681,484	\$ 422,558,948
Held-to-Maturity, at Amortized Cost	534,409	561,992			
Loans Receivable, Net	284,736,048	251,560,141	Commitments & Contingencies		
Accrued Interest Receivable	1,320,588	1,195,421	Members' Equity - Substantially Restricted		
Premises & Equipment, Net	8,538,550	6,494,333	Unappropriated Earnings	48,251,280	46,278,381
NCUSIF Deposit	3,591,134	3,404,878	Regular Reserves	3,853,115	3,853,115
EasCorp Membership Deposit	169,133	169,133	Accumulated Other Comprehensive Loss	(1,988,794)	(1,998,043)
FHLB Stock, Restricted, at Cost	3,962,900	3,713,200		50,115,601	48,133,453
Prepaid Expenses & Other Assets	956,154	777,849			
Goodwill	5,187,137	5,187,137			
			Total Liabilities and Surplus	\$ 497,797,085	\$ 470,692,401
Total Assets	\$ 497,797,085	\$ 470,692,401			

For a copy of our full financial statement, please contact: David C. Bojarczuk, Executive Vice President/Chief Financial Officer  
GFA Federal Credit Union | 229 Parker Street, Gardner, MA 01440 | 978.632.2542 | email: dbojarczuk@gfafcu.com



# B e t t e r   B a n k i n g



**Personal**



**Investments**



**Business**



**Insurance**

**GFA Federal Credit Union**



978.632.2542



[gfa@gfafcu.com](mailto:gfa@gfafcu.com)

[www.gfafcu.com](http://www.gfafcu.com)



EQUAL  
OPPORTUNITY  
LENDER

Ashburnham | Gardner | Hubbardston | Leominster | Peterborough | Rindge | Rutland | Winchendon