



# **America**Saves****<sup>®</sup>

*You Can Build Wealth*

*America Saves Week*  
February 24 – March 2, 2008

## A Guide for Extension Educators: Approach

This working paper was prepared by a team of Cooperative Extension professionals and the *America Saves* team at the Consumer Federation of America. To access the most current version of this document on-line, go to [http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/economics/fsll/edu\\_saves.html](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/economics/fsll/edu_saves.html)

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**The following pages provide extension educators with the following resources and tools for a successful *America Saves Week*:**

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# Integrating *America Saves Week* with Existing Cooperative Extension Programs

Prepared by: Barbara O'Neill, Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Cooperative Extension educators are very busy people! Therefore, it is often difficult to find the time to implement new educational programs. With *America Saves Week*, limited time availability need not be a concern. *America Saves Week*-related events can easily be infused into existing Extension programs. In addition, *America Saves Week* program materials have already been developed by the Consumer Federation of America and the *America Saves Week* Extension Team and are available to “pick up and run with.”

Below is a brief description of over a dozen Cooperative Extension programs, or financial education programs that Extension faculty often participate in, where *America Saves Week* can easily be integrated.

- **Bankruptcy Financial Education** - As part of conducting a mandated course for bankruptcy filers in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Justice, encourage participants to enroll as American Savers as part of the process of “starting over” with improved financial practices, such as saving.
- **Building Native Communities** - Incorporate *America Saves Week* participation and culturally relevant experiential activities into financial education programs for Native American populations.
- **Community Economic Development (CED)** - Celebrate *America Saves Week* with CED program participants and community partners. Stress that increased savings provides capital for local business expansion.
- **Financial Education Programs for Agricultural Producers** - Encourage farmers, fisherman, and ranchers and their families to save for the future with targeted *America Saves Week* programs and messages.
- **Financial Security in Later Life (FSSL)** - Encourage *America Saves Week* participation when conducting FSSL programs such as *Legally Secure Your Financial Future*, *Investing for Your Future*, *Take the Road to Financial Security in Later Life*, and *Catch Up Strategies for Late Savers*.
- **4-H** - Develop *America Saves Week* activities for 4-H club members and/or other existing youth programs (e.g., Piggy Bank Pageant, Roll Your Change Day, Money Camp, role plays, skill-a-thons).

- **Individual Development Account (IDA) Financial Education** - Incorporate *America Saves Week* activities into existing IDA financial education programs that are generally mandatory before participants receive their matching funds. Encourage participants to enroll as American Savers for additional motivation and support to reach their IDA program goal (e.g., homeownership).
- **Money Talk Financial Class Series for Women** - Include a discussion of *America Saves Week* and ways to “find” money to save. Encourage class participants to enroll in *America Saves* at each session.
- **National Endowment for Financial Education® (NEFE) High School Financial Planning Program (HSFPP)** - Incorporate *America Saves Week* into teacher training programs, HSFPP state newsletters and classroom activities.
- **Newsletters and Newspaper Columns** - Devote an article to promoting *America Saves Week* and saving, in general. Include specific savings strategies and/or online savings resources.
- **Reality Simulations** - Conduct a simulation during *America Saves Week* and stress the importance of regular savings as part of the debriefing process afterwards. Display *America Saves Week* materials at the simulation “storefronts.”
- **Small Steps to Health and Wealth™ (SSHW)** - Use *America Saves Week* as a backdrop to conduct a SSHW class and encourage learners to register as both SSHW participants and American Savers. Since SSHW integrates health and financial topics, Extension educators who primarily teach nutrition and health topics can still get involved. See <http://www.rce.rutgers.edu/healthfinance/smallsteps.asp> for details.
- **Volunteer Development Activities and Extension Homemaker Clubs** - Train volunteers to develop and/or staff *America Saves Week* activities (e.g., exhibits), market *America Saves* and enroll American Savers, conduct motivational seminars, and/or serve as wealth coaches.
- **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)** - Develop targeted messages that encourage VITA program clients to save at least part of their tax refund and to join *America Saves*.

Remember, *America Saves Week* is not “more work to do,” but rather, an opportunity to enhance existing Extension programs. Participation in *America Saves Week* also provides a wonderful opportunity to increase local visibility for Cooperative Extensions and to build or expand community partnerships. Take advantage of this wonderful annual opportunity to spotlight your financial education accomplishments.

# Activity List for a Successful *America Saves Week*

Prepared by: Jennifer Abel (lead), Joan Goodman, Sharon Gilbert

## ***America Saves Week* activities for youth**

- Piggy bank pageant — Kids design piggy banks and the best ones win prizes
- Create poster contest on saving
- Hold one-day family financial fair — activities for kids, adults, elders
- Get Reality Store/Reality Check participants to sign up as Savers
- Build a penny walk — each penny represents a story from each person's relatives
- Get scouting patch for *America Saves*
- Have 4-H clubs create an *America Saves Week* cheer/song
- Intergenerational — have grandmas and grandpas teach their savings techniques to young people

## ***America Saves Week* activities for participants in Extension programs**

- Roll coins in paper wrappers for participants
- Hold one-day family financial fair — activities for kids, adults, elders
- Incorporate *America Saves* into Healthy Lifestyles Expo
- Investment University — hold one-day workshops for adults
- Offer mini-workshops on specific topics for diverse ages and audiences
- Use the “Integrating *America Saves Week* With Existing Cooperative Extension Programs” tip sheet
- Train the trainers before the week and ask trainers to conduct workshops and events
- Make and distribute bookmarks, buttons, etc.
- Promote save-your-change week
- Distribute materials at policy council meetings, local sporting events, through schools
- Create or use provided PSAs, articles, interviews
- Take lots of photos, post everywhere possible
- Paint murals on construction barriers
- Save change in an oil can (coins stay in oil until jar is full, reduces temptation to take money out)
- Develop more mottos and slogans
- Make a savings quilt — blocks would show for what and how you're saving
- Be a savings buddy — each person sets a goal and supports each other's progress
- Visit your buddy at home or go shopping together to talk about savings
- Campus savings drives — save for spring break
- Prepare savings rewards coupon books
- Create calendars with monthly savings tips and distribute at events

### ***America Saves Week* activities for creating a lot of visibility**

- If your county, municipality, or tribal council agrees to do a proclamation for *America Saves Week*, ask the local paper to print a photo of coalition partners standing with the official while he/she makes the proclamation.
- If you hold an annual reception for volunteers, schedule it during *America Saves Week* to provide another opportunity for spreading the message
- Hold a concert featuring local talent and ask performers to encourage attendees to sign up for *America Saves*
- “Signs of Savings”: Create large posters to display in office or at workshops that highlight the successes of local Savers.
- Display lawn stake signs (like the kind used to promote candidates before elections) in area businesses
- Organize an art exhibit with savings-themed pieces. This could be done through schools and feature kids’ art projects, in an actual gallery, outdoors if your community has any public art spaces, in community centers, etc.
- Create a ribbon for *America Saves Week*, like the pink ribbon for breast cancer awareness or the blue ribbon for child abuse prevention. These ribbons (green would be a good color) could be distributed during *America Saves Week* to all workshop and other event participants. Attach them to cards with the *America Saves* logo and the week’s theme written on them. Make larger ribbons and encourage all coalition partners (if doing a Level 3 campaign) to put them on the doors to their offices.
- Banners across streets

### ***America Saves Week* activities for employers**

- Distribute *America Saves* fliers and brochures
- Display *Saves* posters
- Send one or more stock e-mails regarding *America Saves Week*
- Place *America Saves Week* article(s) in internal newsletter
- Enclose an *America Saves Week* flier as a payroll stuffer
- Place a notice of and information about *America Saves Week* on internal computer system
- Place a link to *America Saves* on company website or internal network
- Increase 401k participation and contributions through one or more motivational workshops
- Provide access to no-fee savings accounts through *America Saves* enrollment, presentation(s), motivational workshop(s), and or topic seminar(s), i.e., Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), homeownership, auto purchase
- Host an event featuring *America Saves* and 401(k) plans

### ***America Saves Week* activities for financial institutions**

- Target a number of new savings accounts to be opened
- Target a number of new savings accounts to be opened specifically for low-to-moderate income families
- Target a number of low cost CDs to be opened
- Target a number of Savings Bonds Series I to be sold
- Distribute *America Saves Week* fliers at branches
- Make available *America Saves Week* fliers at teller windows

- Make available *America Saves* brochures and enrollment forms at teller windows
- Host motivational workshops with partner organizations such as schools, non-profits or at a libraries
- Enclose *America Saves Week* brochure, flier in statement envelopes
- Feature *America Saves Week* on website
- Put a link on website to *America Saves*
- Use *America Saves Week* as part of “Bank at Work” presentations
- Target a number of “Bank at Work” presentations as part of *America Saves Week*
- Send a number of bank staff into schools to provide financial education and *America Saves* enrollment as part of the week
- Feature *America Saves Week* in advertising campaign
- Hold a public relations event promoting *America Saves Week* and the commitment of targeted numbers

***America Saves Week* activities for non-profit organizations**

- Distribute *America Saves Week* fliers, brochures, and/or posters
- Place *America Saves Week* article in newsletter and/or community newspaper
- Host motivational workshops for clients, constituents, members
- Declare a goal of new savings accounts to be opened, dollars to be saved, homes to be purchased, new businesses to be opened, students to attend college
- Host Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) workshops
- Establish Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites
- Organize local “Money Fairs” at the public library

***America Saves Week* activities for political leaders**

- Issue proclamations
- Offer public endorsements
- Provide mailings encouraging others to be involved
- Host an event/rally for savings
- Encourage government employees to participate and enroll
- Issue press releases and conduct interviews

***America Saves Week* activities for educational institutions**

- Distribute *America Saves Week* fliers and brochures to students and employees
- Display *America Saves* posters as provided by the Consumer Federation of America
- Send one or more stock e-mails regarding *America Saves Week* to students and employees
- Place *America Saves Week* article(s) in employees newsletter and school newspaper
- Enclose an *America Saves* flier as a payroll stuffer
- Place a notice of and information about *America Saves Week* on internal computer system
- Place a link to *America Saves* on school website and internal network
- Increase deferred compensation participation and contributions through one or more motivational workshops
- Provide access to no-fee savings accounts through *America Saves* enrollment, presentation(s), motivational workshop(s), and or topic seminar(s), i.e., EITC, homeownership, auto purchase

- Host an event featuring *America Saves* and 401(k)/deferred compensation plans

***America Saves Week* activities for public libraries**

- Distribute *America Saves* fliers and brochures to patrons and employees
- Display *America Saves* posters
- Set up display/area for reading/research and web access to saving, debt reduction and wealth building
- Host motivational workshops and topic seminars for patrons and employees
- Encourage saver enrollment at check out and information desks
- Hold contests/activities targeted to youth on saving and wealth building
- Send one or more stock e-mails regarding *America Saves Week* to employees
- Place *America Saves Week* article(s) in employees newsletter and patron news
- Enclose an *America Saves* flier as a payroll stuffer
- Place a notice of and information about *America Saves Week* on internal computer system
- Increase deferred compensation participation and contributions through one or more motivational workshops
- Provide access to no-fee savings accounts through *America Saves* enrollment, presentation(s), motivational workshop(s), and or topic seminar(s), i.e., EITC, homeownership, auto purchase
- Host an event featuring *America Saves* and 401(k) plans



# Submission Form for Partnering Financial Institutions to Announce *America Saves Week* Financial Products and Services

Prepared by: Barbara O'Neill, Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Name of Financial Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Number of participating NY State locations/branches \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Account (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Description: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

FDIC or NCUA Insured? Yes No

Minimum Balance to open: \_\_\_\_\_ Minimum Balance to earn interest: \_\_\_\_\_

Interest Rate/ A.P.Y. \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly Service Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

Compounding Method: \_\_\_\_\_

Deposits: Number/month \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Withdrawals/Transfers Out: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

ATM Accessible – Fees: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Services Available: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact information: Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

## Identify the *America Saves Week* Target Population

Prepared by: Căzilia Loibl, Ohio State University Extension

It is important to identify your target population before you start with an *America Saves* campaign. Gathering demographic information from other *America Saves* campaigns will help you decide which population group you want to target with your campaign.

The table shows that the typical *America Saves* participant is a woman between 35 and 55 years old, married, with a college education. She lives in a household of 3, is employed full-time, and has an annual household income in the range of \$20,000 to \$40,000.

Table: Relevant socio-demographic characteristics of *America Saves* participants

Variable	Items	<i>Columbus Saves</i>	<i>Cleveland Saves</i>	<i>America Saves</i> <sup>1)</sup>
Gender	<i>Women</i>	75%	73%	77.4%
	<i>Men</i>	25%	26%	20.9%
Age	<i>0-34 years</i>	26.6%	24%	31.3%
	<i>35-54 years</i>	59.3%	59%	52.6%
	<i>55 and older</i>	14.1%	17%	11.3%
Race	<i>White</i>	59.5%	40%	30.4%
	<i>Black</i>	35.4%	53%	61.7%
Marital status	<i>Married/Living with partner</i>	60.9%	no information	no information
	<i>Divorced</i>	14.5%	no information	no information
	<i>Single or never married</i>	21.2%	no information	no information
	<i>Average family size</i>	2.8	3	2.74
Education	<i>Less than high school</i>	2.8%	6%	3.9%
	<i>High school</i>	9.0%	23%	21.7%
	<i>Some college</i>	24.7%	28%	35.2%
	<i>Trade/technical school degree</i>	7.3%	no information	no information
	<i>College degree</i>	55.9%	42%	30.4%
Annual household income <sup>2)</sup>	<i>Less than \$20,000</i>	14.9%	13%	16.5%
	<i>\$20,000-\$40,000</i>	27.0%	23%	21.3%
	<i>\$40,000-\$60,000</i>	20.1%	22%	19.1%
	<i>\$60,000-\$80,000</i>	16.1%	16%	12.2%
	<i>\$80,000 and higher</i>	21.8%	26%	16.5%
Employment	<i>Full-time</i>	76.0%	no information	no information
	<i>Part-time</i>	13.4%	no information	no information
	Number of interviewees	179	300	230
	Year of survey	2006	2005	2004

1) The survey interviewed participants of *Cleveland Saves*, *Black America Saves*, *Charlotte Saves*, *Indianapolis Saves*, *Milwaukee Saves*, and *Philadelphia Saves*; Source: (Clarke 2004; Loibl and Scharff 2006; Cude and Cai 2005). 2) Income group definitions varied slightly for each of the three surveys.