# TOUCHDOWN!

# SDCCU Lands Poinsettia Bowl Sponsorship

***By Sharon Sweda***

Credit union fame and recognition evolves from unique opportunities and unlikely venues. None more than the massive exposure of sponsoring one of the 2008–2009 CollegeFootballNews.com Top Five Bowls and your institution's name being broadcast to millions of viewers in homes, dorms, bars and gatherings nationwide as college athletes duel for coveted titles.

At San Diego County Credit Union (SDCCU), college football bowl sponsorship is providing broad recognition and unprecedented notoriety for the community CU. The "bigger than life" national exposure such a sponsorship delivers is rare. While others devote time, effort and financial resources to position their brand within local markets, SDCCU has taken one giant step that surpasses marketing campaigns or media blitzes heretofore considered successful.

It goes without stating that sponsoring a national bowl game is attainable only to big-leaguers. The hefty price tag and resource commitment associated with such plum exposure shrinks the qualified candidate's list to a handful of potentials. Even the short list is reduced to the few institutions that are in the proverbial "right place at the right time." The plan to add the NCAA-sanctioned Division I-A game, now heading toward its fifth season, did not have to reach far to select the name that would ride the marquee of the newest college playoff event.

"The decision by Pacific Life Holiday Bowl organizers to select SDCCU as title sponsor of the event is one of the most exciting events in our history," beams the credit union's president and CEO Irene Oberbauer. "We are committed to Greater San Diego area's fiscal health and recognize the addition of a second bowl game as an opportunity to boost the local economy. It is an honor to participate and we are thrilled to be their sponsor. We have enjoyed every year that we have participated in the Poinsettia Bowl."

Oberbauer cites the appointment of the Make-a-Wish Foundation as bowl beneficiary as added incentive for SDCCU's support. The San Diego County Credit Union's Poinsettia Bowl donates one dollar to the Make-A-Wish Foundation for each admission ticket purchased and hundreds of Wish Kids attend the bowl games. Halftime provides the stage for presentation of the donation.

Everything is not all fun and post-season football at the heavyweight credit union. SDCCU is a nine-year recipient of the "San Diego Union-Tribune" Newspaper Reader's poll choice as Best Overall Credit Union. The credit union cites its support of the Multiple Sclerosis Walk, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Rady Children's Hospital, the San Diego Blood Bank and more than 75 nonprofits as inspiration for the strong vote.

"We are involved in the communities in which we work and play," explains Oberbauer. "Our employees support our proactive community relations culture."

Yet garnering the most votes for the "Best Credit Union" category extends beyond philanthropy. The award aims to recognize the outstanding financial services the recipient provides to members. A company snapshot exposes the strengths and efficiencies of the mega credit union.

SDCCU's 70-year history is filled with geographical and operational growth. As the once county employee's credit union increased services and products, it added branches and members – broadening its membership to include residents of San Diego, Riverside or Orange Counties. The transition from county employee to community credit union dates back to the 1970s and heralds consistent growth for the community banking leader.

The financial giant's scoreboard boasts $4.7 million in assets and over 200,000 members. Its lineup includes personal and business services, fee-less ATM and every conceivable banking product. While some might think that SDCCU has all ready won the game, spectators should not leave the stands too soon. There is still plenty of game left for the home team to play.

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