



## Credit union manager from Ghana visits Powell River for mentoring experience

POWELL RIVER, September 25, 2017 – Grace Amu Kaku from Ghana arrived in Powell River on Thursday September 21 as part of the Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada's annual [Women's Mentorship Program](#). This year ten host credit unions across Canada are participating in the program and will mentor women credit union managers from Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Swaziland and the Philippines through their day-to-day operations, policies and services.

Participants spend ten days in Ottawa prior to spending another ten days with their host credit union, and then return to Ottawa for the final portion of the program. The combination of classroom learning and placements in credit unions immerses participants in Canada's credit union culture, providing them with ideas for products, services and management approaches they can apply to their own credit unions back home. Charlene Reinisch, Manager of Risk and Corporate Governance at First Credit Union, says mentoring benefits both hosts and visitors.

"It's a fantastic opportunity for Canadian hosts to learn about credit unions in other countries, and to know that by sharing their workplace they have enriched the life of a peer woman credit union leader from a developing country. We are excited to be hosting Grace in Powell River and living out the 6th co-operative principle, co-operation among co-operatives."

"During her time with us, many of our staff, managers and board members will spend time with Grace, sharing best practices in a wide variety of areas including everything from human resources to lending, credit and risk, operations, marketing, financial reporting and planning," says Kristy Cote, Sales and Service Manager with First Credit Union.

"This is the second time we have participated in the Women's Mentorship Program and both times it has been an amazing learning experience. Grace is an accomplished and talented woman whose commitment to helping her members make better financial decisions is a great asset to her credit union and community."

Since 2002, 219 women leaders from 19 countries in Africa and Asia have improved their knowledge and skills on a full range of issues related to day-to-day operations of financial co-operatives, built networks and increased their confidence as leaders. Funding for the program is provided by the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada, by the Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada, as well as by Canadian credit unions who open their doors, share best practices and welcome fellow co-operators.

This year's program runs from September 11 through October 5, when participants celebrate their graduation in Ottawa before returning home.

First Credit Union is the longest running credit union in BC, incorporated in 1939. With five insurance branches, five credit union branches, over \$360 million in credit union assets, and \$140 million in wealth management assets, the organization's 140 employees serve over 51,000 clients and members across five coastal communities.

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