**NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CENTER PARC CREDIT UNIT HAS DONATED $2,500 TO SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY GARDEN**

(SAVANNAH, GA) Aug. 24, 2021, Center Parc Credit Union has donated $2,500 to the Savannah State University Campus Community Garden. Developed as a means for students who face food insecurities to be able to grow healthy foods affordably, the garden provides hands-on learning experiences and serves as a gathering place for faculty, staff and students to demonstrate a green economy.

“The youth are the roots of our future and community gardens encourage physical activity as well as enhance knowledge of nutrition and fresh food,” said Donna Williams, community development liaison for Center Parc Credit Union. “Supporting the Savannah State University Community Garden perfectly aligns with our mission of serving members beyond just their financial needs.”

The donation ceremony was held at 4 p.m. Monday, August. 23, at the university’s Campus Community Garden, located across from the Payne Hall parking area near Harris McDew Health Center on Jasmine Avenue.

Established in March 2021, the SSU Community Garden started with 16 eight-foot-square plots and is now up to 26 plots due to high demand. A “take-home” box is maintained in the garden to offer produce free to anyone on campus. In addition to reducing food insecurity, the Savannah State Campus Community Garden has three specific goals:

To expand nutritional awareness and inspire healthy eating habits by encouraging gardening To provide opportunities for positive social interaction in an attractive setting where the campus community can work together in a healthy pursuit To offer a peaceful garden setting to enjoy year-round

“The support of Center Parc Credit Union allows us to buy compost and soil to help improve the health of our soil, and to purchase a tiller to help prepare plots as we move from season to season,” said Joline Keevy, assistant director of Savannah State University’s International Education Center and one of the garden’s founders. “The students were excited when I told them we would add garden benches and swings. They can come and enjoy the garden, even if they don’t want to plant and grow anything.”

Williams says the financial institution encourages local nonprofits with community-oriented gardening plans to apply for future Center Parc Credit Union sponsorships at www.centerparc.org.

ABOUT CENTER PARC CREDIT UNION
Center Parc Credit Union is a division of APCU, the oldest credit union in the state of Georgia. In September 2020, two new Center Parc Credit Union locations opened in the Savannah area: at the Pooler Walmart, 160 Pooler Parkway, and the Savannah Walmart, 6000 Ogeechee Road. The company is also planning to open a free-standing flagship branch in Savannah in 2022. An ongoing community gardens program was launched in August 2020. The member-owned, not-for-profit financial cooperative is dedicated to helping hardworking people save money and prosper. Each member’s funds are insured for up to $250,000 by the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA). For more information, call 800-849-8431, email info@centerparc.org or visit online at www.centerparc.org

ABOUT THE SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY GARDEN
The Community Garden at Savannah State University is a place for students, faculty, and staff members to come together to meet new people, grow healthy foods, and enjoy a peaceful respite from day-to-day stresses. Through the development of this garden, SSU hopes to engage students and their campus community with hands-on learning experiences with gardening. The garden offers 8’x8’ plots that will be used to grow vegetables and fruit. The garden’s planners want everyone involved to learn the importance of knowing where the food they eat comes from and what chemicals have been used in the growing process. They also see the garden as a means for students who face food insecurities to grow healthy foods affordably. Learn more here: <https://www.savannahstate.edu/international-education/community-garden/index.shtml>

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PHOTO CAPTION

Savannah State University accepts a $2,500 donation from Center Parc Credit Union to enhance its Campus Community Garden. Pictured from left: Student Mya White, Associate Professor Dr. Sue Ebanks, Assistant Professor Patricia West, Melanie Smith, Study Abroad Coordinator; Dr. Sametria McFall, Vice President of Academic Affairs; Shed Dawson, Director of Career Services and Leadership Development; student Andrew Okorodudu, Sheri Rouse-Mainor, Interim Executive Director of Advancement and Director of Advancement Services; Donna Williams, Center Parc Credit Union Community Development Liasion; Evelyn Williamson, Special Projects Coordinator for Journalism and Mass Communications; Stephanie Anderson, Assistant Director of University Recreation and Wellness; student Olivia Christian and Joline Keevy, Assistant Director of International Education Center.