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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Supporting Access to Business Assistance Programs to Improve Financial Equity**

**Naperville, Illinois (April 5, 2023)** – The Illinois Credit Union League (ICUL) is pleased to announce a partnership with the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (IHCC) to provide assistance to small businesses and entrepreneurs throughout Northeast Illinois. The service, provided at no-cost to participants, is a collaboration with IHCC and the SBA Community Navigator Pilot Program.

Business professionals, small business owners, and entrepreneurs are invited to draw upon the expertise of a Professional Business Advisor from the SBA to provide help with:

* Business plan development
* Capital access
* Financial analysis and planning
* Market expansion
* Marketing analysis
* Business education and training
* Strategic planning
* Business licensing
* Business incorporation

Five local credit union satellite partners will open their doors to host the initiative: Northwest Community, Numark, Earthmover, Abri, and Kane County Teachers. To advance this worthy endeavor, these credit unions along with ICUL will invest $100,000 in cash and in-kind contributions, which will be matched by the IHCC.

Tom Kane, President/CEO of ICUL, is thrilled to partner with IHCC to help bring these services to local credit unions. “This, personalized service builds on the strong community focus of credit unions by providing dedicated advisors that business owners and entrepreneurs can access to build their new businesses.”

“IHCC is happy to partner with the ICUL and several of its members to make sure that access to no-cost business technical assistance is available in more communities in our region. IHCC will continue to focus on assisting Latino small business owners and entrepreneurs while offering assistance to all of the members of the credit unions who want to start or have a business,” said Jaime di Paulo, President of IHCC.

**About the Illinois Credit Union League**

The Illinois Credit Union League is the primary trade association for more than 200 state and federal credit unions in Illinois. It focuses on providing legislative and regulatory advocacy, compliance assistance and information, and a wide range of educational and training services to those credit unions, who in turn serve approximately 3.4 million members. More information can be found at [www.icul.com](http://www.icul.com).

**About the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**

The IHCC contributes to the financial strength and well-being of Hispanics by helping businesses grow, creating jobs and driving prosperous communities. It provides assistance to many business owners and entrepreneurs; helping retain jobs and generating financial resources for them.

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