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New Think Tank Roster to Guide Filene’s Research and Incubation in 2024

35 Credit Union CEOs and industry leaders to serve as Filene’s voice of the market

Madison, WI – Representing 35 credit unions and credit union system organizations, [Filene Research Institute’s Think Tank](#) serves as the voice of the market to grow and strengthen credit unions’ capacity to improve consumers’ financial lives. This group of influential CEOs and senior executives drive the credit union industry’s research and incubation agenda with functional area expertise and partnership through Filene.

Filene’s Think Tank enables a network for building connections with peers, influential researchers, and top-of-field academics inside and outside the credit union industry.

“I’m thrilled to introduce our newest cohort of Filene Think Tank members. Each one was chosen for their wealth of knowledge, unique perspectives, and passion for making credit unions stronger,” said Filene’s Executive Vice President, Christie Kimbell. “The goal of the Think Tank over the next 12 months is to identify the most important challenges and opportunities that are facing credit unions and identify actions—even if they are small steps—to move the industry forward.”

The Think Tank serves as one arm of Filene’s Research and Incubation Advisory Council alongside the prestigious [Inner Circle](#), made up of the organization’s closest strategic partners.

“I deeply believe that credit unions are the future of affinity banking and Filene’s Think Tank positions us to work cooperatively in building that future. I am thrilled to be a part of a group that is motivated by tapping into our collaboration strength and challenging the status quo,” said Samantha Beeler, President of the League of Southeastern Credit Unions. “I appreciate the Filene approach, where we go beyond naming challenges and take action to equip credit unions with research and resources.”

The initial meeting of the 2024 Think Tank was held in late January. The group discussed what it takes to transform an industry, and aligned on the impact and priority of challenges the industry must address such as credit unions’ long-term value proposition, legacy tech debt, member growth, and operational efficiency. From there, the group will follow an input model

to identify obstacles, causes, possible solutions, case study examples, and questions to address and help Filene build resources to support the industry.

“Consistently, Filene has brought the best academic talent and collaboration of credit union professionals to push participating members to think what is possible and how credit unions can stay highly relevant and impactful for their members,” said Bob Morgan, CEO of NorthCountry FCU. “The collaboration and ‘learning from others’ opportunities are truly unique and it is why I remain so passionate about staying connected with Filene. I am very proudly a member of the Think Tank and hope to contribute as much as I receive from this outstanding organization!”

The Think Tank network will continue to guide, activate, connect, and champion Filene’s research and incubation agenda to enhance impact and support growth through monthly discussions with Filene’s research fellows throughout 2024. These insights will shape the work Filene produces.

“After 34 years in the credit union industry, it is concerning to me to see the dwindling number of credit unions and lack of new credit union starts. Credit unions provide a consumer and community service that is just as relevant today as it was 100+ years ago when the movement began,” said Alice Stevens, VP of Consumer Lending, Credit Analytics and Product Innovation at VyStar Credit Union. “Filene’s Think Tank provides an opportunity for me and my fellow credit union proponents to give back to the industry by asking the hard questions and developing ideas that will keep credit unions relevant and valued financial solutions for generations to come.”

To see the full roster of Filene’s Thank Tank, visit filene.org/thinktank.

About Filene: [Filene Research Institute](https://filene.org) strengthens organizations through innovative research and incubation to improve consumer financial well-being. As an independent cooperative finance think tank, Filene’s membership network connects a community of leaders and bright minds to change lives through innovation, truth and cooperation. In addition to delivering cutting-edge, actionable academic research, Filene also provides incubators to test and scale solutions, events to spark organizations into action and advisory services to help accelerate and implement innovation. For more information, visit filene.org and [follow on LinkedIn](#).

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