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**VANTAGE WEST AWARDS EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR**

*Three Employees Recognized For Excellence*

TUCSON, Ariz. (December 16, 2016) – Vantage West Credit Union, southern Arizona’s largest credit union, has named its Employees of the Year, two deserving men and one woman who have demonstrated a willingness to go above and beyond expectations to benefit Vantage West, its membership and the greater community.

Timothy Strasser, Michael Stevenson and Regina Hunter were recognized with their awards at the company’s annual holiday celebration on December 3, and all three will receive a cash bonus as part of the honor.

Vantage West usually selects one back office and one front office Employee of the Year from a pool of outstanding employees who have been recognized each quarter with the CEO’s Award of Excellence. This year, Strasser and Stevenson shared the back office award.

Recipients, nominated by co-workers, have demonstrated a commitment to Vantage West’s core values and exhibit a willingness to expand their roles within the organization to benefit Vantage West as a whole.

“We place considerable value on employee integrity, and we encourage our employees to excel in serving our members and the larger community,” Robert D. Ramirez, president and CEO of Vantage West, said. “Tim, Michael and Regina have all demonstrated these attributes, and we are proud to recognize them for it.”

Strasser and Stevenson, who work in the corporate office, uncovered a pattern of fraud related to debit and credit card transactions primarily from gas stations. The two mapped the incidents, notified the state’s department of Weights and Measures, and alerted local law enforcement to a crime known as “skimming,” which involves thieves capturing card information at gas pumps. As a result of their efforts, Vantage West is now the first financial institution actively involved in the Skimming Alliance that was formed to fight card fraud. Over a 60-day period earlier this

summer, they have alerted officials to about \$50,000 in fraudulent activity and helped prevent an estimated \$200,000 in fraudulent activity.

Hunter, who works in the First Avenue branch, was praised for her leadership on a Pima Community College outreach effort, which secured dozens of new memberships and nearly 300 new products for Vantage West. She is described as a “solution finder” who adds value to her team daily, and she is admired for her ability to mentor those within her branch so they can better serve Vantage West’s membership.

**About Vantage West Credit Union**

*Vantage West Credit Union is a \$1.6-billion financial institution in Arizona, which serves a growing membership of more than 140,000. Vantage West has 17 branches in Pima, Pinal, Maricopa and Cochise counties and serves its vast global membership via online channels, as well. Vantage West is a full-service financial institution, offering consumer and business loans, credit cards, and deposit products, as well as retirement accounts and other financial services. Vantage West is federally insured by NCUA. [vantagewest.org](http://vantagewest.org)*