



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Press Contact:  
Audrey Cohen  
Epoch 5 Public Relations  
631/427-1713  
[acohen@epoch5.com](mailto:acohen@epoch5.com)

**LONG ISLANDERS SPEAK OUT  
CHOOSE FREE CHECKING OVER FEES AS BANKS CONTINUE TO  
ELIMINATE FREE CHECKING OPTIONS**

-----  
**Bethpage Among Nation's Largest Credit Unions Continuing to  
Offer Free Checking**

**Bethpage, New York – April 1, 2013** – Eighty-four percent of [Bethpage Federal Credit Union](#)'s new members who joined Bethpage during the second half of 2012 were attracted by its [Free Checking](#) product. These new members also cite better rates and lower fees as the main difference between Bethpage and a bank. Bethpage gleaned the statistics from its semi-annual new member survey, which corroborates consumers' continued interest in selecting banking institutions that offer free checking. In fact, Bankrate.com's recent 2013 Credit Union Checking Survey found that when shopping around for free checking, a credit union is increasingly the place to turn, with 72% of the nation's largest credit unions now offering free checking without a minimum balance, as compared to only 39% of banks, a 26% reduction since 2010.

The Bethpage survey, administered in February, 2013, polled almost 400 Long Islanders who started banking at Bethpage in the second half of 2012. Highlights of study results include:

- More than half (54%) of respondents say that no or low fees is what first attracted them to Bethpage, followed by superior rates at 47% and convenient branch locations at 45%. Additionally, 37% indicated network of free ATMs and 38% indicated service reputation.
- Most new members (84%) initially opened a Free Checking account after joining Bethpage.
- Mortgages were the second most desired product, with 11% of new members initially securing mortgages.

- When asked what the main difference is between Bethpage and a bank, 28% cited member ownership.

“Credit Unions will always remain the best option for consumers looking to find a free checking account and that’s because we’re in business to benefit our members,” said Kirk Kordeleski, President and CEO, Bethpage. “Year after year, free checking is overwhelmingly the most desired product new members request when joining, and better rates and lower fees are the most important benefit. This tells me that consumers have a growing awareness for the credit union difference – something the banks cannot compete with.”

In 2012, Bethpage Federal Credit Union maintained its position as the largest credit union in New York and also grew to become the largest credit union in the Northeast. “Bethpage continues to experience its rapid growth because of its loyal members who chose the credit union difference over paying bank fees,” continued Kordeleski. In 2012, 33,440 new members joined Bethpage, a 26% increase compared to 2011. For more information on Bethpage’s robust portfolio of banking, borrowing and investing services, visit [www.bethpagefcu.com](http://www.bethpagefcu.com).

Bethpage Federal Credit Union is a not-for-profit financial cooperative, existing solely to serve its members and has experienced rapid growth in recent years to become a strong alternative to banks. Bethpage was approved for the largest federal community charter in the U.S. in 2003 and now is New York State’s largest credit union and Long Island’s primary community financial institution with 212,000 members, 26 branches and 60 shared service center locations throughout Nassau and Suffolk Counties. As a financial cooperative, Bethpage offers the best-in-market rates, low fees and world-class service, and a full menu of personal and commercial financial services.

Bethpage maintains branch locations in Bay Shore, Bay Shore King Kullen, Bethpage, Central Islip, Commack King Kullen, Elmont, Farmingdale, Freeport, Glen Cove, Hempstead, Huntington, Levittown King Kullen, Lynbrook, Massapequa, Melville, Mineola, North Babylon, Patchogue, Port Jefferson, Riverhead, Seaford, Smithtown, Roosevelt, West Babylon and Westbury with over 425 surcharge-free ATMs including King Kullen, CVS Pharmacy, 7-11 and Costco locations throughout Long Island. For more information, call 1-800-628-7070 or visit [www.bethpagefcu.com](http://www.bethpagefcu.com).

# # #