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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***Credit Union Student Choice Announces Strategic Partnership with ReliaMax Surety***

**Washington, D.C. (December 3, 2008)**—*Credit Union Student Choice*, the credit union service organization that provides a turnkey private student lending solution to credit unions, announced it has formed a strategic partnership with ReliaMax Surety, a leading provider of education loan default insurance.

“Within our program credit unions have an option of purchasing default insurance for their private student loan portfolio,” said Jon Jeffreys, President of *Credit Union Student Choice*. “Because most credit unions do not have extensive experience in student lending, we understand they may feel more comfortable adding an extra layer of security as they enter this market, and for that purpose we are extremely pleased to partner with ReliaMax Surety.”

ReliaMax Surety guarantees repayment on 100% of the private student loans made by lending institutions to undergraduate and post-secondary education students. In 2006, ReliaMax Surety purchased HEMAR Insurance Corporation of America (HEMAR) from Sallie Mae after the company decided to close the insurance subsidiary and integrate its functions within the Sallie Mae organization. With the purchase of HEMAR, ReliaMax Surety gained a substantial loan portfolio, proprietary systems, and actuarial data related to loan performance. HEMAR first began insuring private student loans in 1986 and grew to become the largest guarantor of private student loans before being acquired by Sallie Mae in 1994. At its peak, the company successfully insured a private student loan portfolio of more than \$12 billion consisting of two million borrowers.

“The leadership at ReliaMax includes several key members of the former HEMAR management team. Their wealth of experience in building and managing a large student loan insurance portfolio is unmatched, and an extremely valuable benefit of this partnership,” said Jeffreys.

According to Jon Wollman, Vice President of ReliaMax Surety, credit unions have a tremendous opportunity as ongoing market turmoil continues to plague traditional student lenders.

“The continued fallout from the collapse of the secondary market has created a vacuum in private student lending, and credit unions have a great chance to fill that void by leveraging their lending expertise to help members,” said Wollman. “We look forward to working with *Student Choice* partner credit unions and providing them with an additional level of risk mitigation as they serve this important market.”

In addition to providing loan insurance, ReliaMax Surety also handles collection efforts on delinquent loans, placing a strong emphasis on default prevention.

“We were extremely impressed with the long-standing success of ReliaMax in working with borrowers to help them avoid default,” said Jeffreys. “Much like credit unions that help their members on a daily basis by reworking loans and developing a plan for repayment, ReliaMax has a proven track record of helping student borrowers.”

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Nineteen credit unions in 15 different states are currently offering loans through the services provided by *Credit Union Student Choice*. The turnkey solution gives credit unions the ability to offer their own full-service private student loan program without adding any additional staff. Credit unions retain the full long-term economic benefit and important relationship opportunities that these loans offer.

The credit unions live on the *Student Choice* network (along with their asset size) include: Addison Avenue FCU (\$2.1B), Affinity Plus FCU (\$1.4B), Alabama CU (\$282M), Digital FCU (\$4.1B), Directions CU (\$518M), Eli Lilly FCU (\$828M), Irving City Employees FCU (\$36M), Leaders CU (\$105M), Members 1<sup>st</sup> FCU (\$1.5B), Motorola Employees CU (\$661M), NASA FCU (\$900M), Northwest FCU (\$1.6B), NuUnion CU (\$812M), Polish & Slavic FCU (\$1.2B), San Antonio FCU (\$2.5B), Star One CU (\$3.8B), Visions FCU (\$2.1B), Workers CU (\$595M), and Wright-Patt CU (\$1.4B).

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### **About Credit Union Student Choice**

*Credit Union Student Choice is a credit union service organization (CUSO) founded in 2008 by several of the nation's leading credit unions and CUSOs, Credit Union Student Choice positions credit unions as leaders in education financing in the 21st century by redefining value for student borrowers and helping credit unions connect with new Gen Y members. The Credit Union Student Choice network enables credit unions of all asset sizes and fields of membership to make private student loans that may be held on their own balance sheet to recognize the long-term economic return of the loan relationship versus a one-time referral fee. The CUSO helps credit unions by managing many of the challenges and risks commonly associated with student lending. To learn more or find out how your credit union can participate, visit [www.studentchoice.org](http://www.studentchoice.org) or call 800-237-5678 and ask for a Credit Union Student Choice representative.*

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