

# 2013–2014 NACM HEARTLAND ANNUAL REPORT

It is amazing how time flies. We hear this saying from our friends and colleagues. It is a cliché, but it is the truth. As we look back at the past year, we realize how much we have had the opportunity to serve you as we to continue to meet the professional needs of our membership. From our educational topics to our networking opportunities, we pay attention to what interests and concern credit professionals.

The following is a review of just a few things we have done with our membership. We clearly have an engaged membership that finds value in the activities and opportunities provided by NACM Heartland. We appreciate the continued involvement of our membership because we know your time is valuable and there are other ways you could be spending it.

## Membership

During the past several years, our membership has remained steady between 120-125 companies. This is remarkable when you consider the challenge the economy has presented. Businesses have closed or merged, and as budgets tightened some had to make the difficult decision to let go of memberships and dollars used for education. This has impacted our membership numbers.

Yet, our numbers have remained consistent. There is value in your NACM membership, and these new members are a testament to this.

### In the past year, the following became members:

- Thermo Fisher
- Northern Ag Supply
- Michigan Ag Commodities
- Lansing Trade Group
- Waterway Ag
- Kay Flo Service
- Integrated DNA Technologies

## Education

Throughout the year, NACM Heartland members have the opportunity to attend educational sessions on a variety of topics. Our most popular educational opportunity remains the Lunch and Learn.

The Lunch and Learns in the past year are representative of how we work to provide our members education about timely topics, as well interact with each to exchange ideas and engage in meaningful dialogue.

In November 2013, we ended the calendar year once again with a spirited “best practices” roundtable discussion facilitated by Ty Knox and Rod Strom. This was followed by the “Agricultural Down Cycles, Current Crop Markets (Corn & Soybean) and the Farm Bill” overview provided by Chad Hart from Iowa State University. In May, we held our first ever teleconference with the IACC that provided insight into “Credit Applications and Related Contractual Documents.” Our summer programs included “Technology and the Credit Department, which was presented by a impressive panel of six attorneys from Finley, Alt & Smith, as well as “The Future of Payments” presented by Rudet Fountain from United TranzActions.. And, finally, we wrapped up the year with “The Basics of Business Ethics: What Every Credit Professional Needs to Know.”

Another chance for credit professionals to meet with other NACM members is the annual Credit Congress and Expo. The board of directors continues to feel this opportunity is important enough to provide a scholarship for one NACM Heartland

*During the past several years, our membership has remained steady between 120-125 member companies.*

member to attend. This year, we presented a full delegate scholarship to Cheryle Miron, CBF, a credit analyst responsible for maintaining the credit files for the fertilizer, asphalt and solvent divisions of CVR Energy / Coffeyville Resources. And, for the first time this year, the board decided to recognize a second worthy Heartland member. Ron Brooks, CCE from the O'Connor Company received \$200 to offset his delegate registration. Both recipients were appreciative and generous with their praise of the entire event.

This year's Credit Congress is within driving distance. Be sure to mark your calendar for May 17-20 when Credit Congress comes to St. Louis. Visit [www.nacm.org](http://www.nacm.org) for more information.

NACM Heartland members who are looking for individual development, the NACM Professional Certification Program gives members the opportunity to delve into subjects that will make them stronger credit professionals. This year we had seven members receive their Credit Business Associate (CBA) designation and three other members achieved their Certified Credit Executive (CCE) designation, the highest professional designation available to credit professionals.

#### *Credit Business Associate*

**Kayla Brazzell, CBA** – Helena Chemical Company  
**Christine Llacar, CBA** – Coffeyville Resources LLC  
**Justin Tracy, CBA** – Lansing Trade Group LLC  
**Amanda Ravenscraft, CBA** –  
Lansing Trade Group LLC  
**Logan Westphal, CBA** – Helena Chemical Company  
**Laura Wills, CBA** – Helena Chemical Company  
**Tim Winans, CBA** – Yara North America, Inc.

#### *Certified Credit Executive*

**Ron Brooks, CCE** – O'Connor Company, Inc.  
**Larry Culver, CCE** – Eldon C. Stutsman, Inc.  
**Sara Prochelo, CCE** – Bartlett Grain

*We encourage members to seek professional certification because it benefits the individual members, as well as creating a strong, vibrant profession.*



#### **Networking**

A key value add of your NACM Heartland membership is meeting others in the credit field. This opportunity is available at our educational sessions, but from time to time we like to go out of our comfort zone. In the past 12 months, we've been to the Iowa Cubs and we have incorporated wine tasting into our annual meeting. Why? Because not only are we peers, but NACM Heartland members are friends. We'll continue to look for other times and places to gather and have fun.



#### **The Year Ahead**

We will continue to find ways to bring interesting educational and networking sessions to our members. We'll encourage more members to seek professional certification because it benefits the individual members, as well as creating a strong, vibrant profession. Finally, but most importantly, our staff and board of directors are here to answer questions and make connections so that your credit department can work more effectively.

