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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**GIOVANNA PATCAS OF L.A. DESMARAIS CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
WINS REGIONAL SPELLING BEE SPONSORED BY WFCU CREDIT UNION**

**WINDSOR, ON** — Giovanna Patcas of L.A. Desmarais Catholic Elementary School is the champion of the Windsor-Essex County regional spelling bee sponsored by WFCU Credit Union. Her winning word was “univocal” meaning subject to individual interpretation. The competition involving 34 spellers from 18 local schools lasted 20 rounds.

Spellers competed at the Chrysler Theatre on Sunday, March 8, 2020. Jim Crichton, Anchor CTV News Windsor served as the host for the day, while Craig Pearson, Managing Editor at the Windsor Star, served as pronouncer for the competition.

Spellers studied the 2020 School Spelling Bee Study List and Spell It!, a 1,150-word list provided by the Scripps National Spelling Bee and Merriam-Webster. The judges who tracked every word and verified spelling accuracy were Beverly Becker, National Director Local Marketing, Post Media; Jason Ilijanic, Director, Commercial Services, WFCU Credit Union; Lisa Williams, Co-host, The Morning Drive, AM800; Rebecca Wright, Professor and Coordinator Public Relations Program, St. Clair College; Lynsey Millman, Community Development Consultant, WFCU Credit Union; Katie Chan, Enterprise Analytics Specialist, WFCU Credit Union; and Rod Larson, Senior Treasury Analyst, WFCU Credit Union.

“Providing our community youth with opportunities to develop their skills and build their self-confidence across a variety of platforms has always been a top priority for WFCU Credit Union,” stated Eddie Francis, President and CEO, WFCU Credit Union. “The Spelling Bee provides one such opportunity; giving students the chance to challenge and develop their literacy and language arts skills in a fun and engaging way.”

Patcas now advances to compete in the 2020 Scripps National Spelling Bee in the Washington, D.C. area, and broadcast on ESPN channels May 27-29. In addition to the expenses-paid trip to the national finals for her and a parent, Patcas also wins these prizes:

- **The Samuel Louis Sugarman Award** is a 2020 United States Mint Proof Set provided by Jay Sugarman, chairman and CEO of iStar Financial, in honor of his father. Patcas will receive the prize in June.
- **The Britannica Online Premium** is a one-year subscription for the premier online resource from Encyclopædia Britannica.
- **The Merriam-Webster Unabridged Online** is a one-year subscription for the official word source for all levels of competition for the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

- **\$200 WFCU Credit Union Educational Scholarship** to be used towards post-secondary education.

“Each and every one of the students that competed in the Spelling Bee is to be applauded,” said Marty Gillis, Chair, WFCU Credit Union Board of Directors. “It takes great commitment and courage to stand on that stage and compete against your peers and every student did so with enthusiasm and grace. They encouraged and supported one another throughout the competition and truly exemplified the spirit of the Bee.”

This is the second year WFCU Credit Union has sponsored the regional Bee event. The competition encourages students to set goals and dedicate time to study and prepare. Participation also provides an opportunity for students to gain experience in public speaking and performing under pressure.

The Scripps National Spelling Bee provides the list of words for the regional competition. The Bee reaches an estimated 11 million students across North America and in other parts of the world with the classroom materials it provides to enrolled schools. The purpose of the Bee is to help students improve their spelling, increase their vocabularies, learn concepts and develop correct English usage that will help them all their lives.

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#### **About WFCU Credit Union:**

WFCU Credit Union has been recognized as a leading, progressive financial institution headquartered in Windsor and Essex County since 1941. Proudly serving Ontario residents, community organizations, small businesses, commercial entities and public institutions for over 77 years, WFCU Credit Union is the sixth largest credit union in Ontario, and twenty-fifth largest credit union in Canada, operating ten retail locations and one digital entity, Omnia Direct. Through these service channels, in combination with online and mobile banking, telephone banking and ATM services, WFCU Credit Union has become the financial institution of choice for 47,899 members across Ontario including 43,702 personal members in 19,588 households, 2,833 businesses and 1,364 organizations. Currently, WFCU Credit Union has \$4.852 billion in Managed Assets and Member Service Totals of \$6.7 billion. WFCU Credit Union membership is open to anyone who lives and/or works in Ontario. For more information on WFCU Credit Union please visit [wfcu.ca](http://wfcu.ca).

*February 2020*

#### **About the Scripps National Spelling Bee:**

The Scripps National Spelling Bee is the nation's largest and longest-running educational program. Visit [spellingbee.com](http://spellingbee.com) for more information about the Scripps National Spelling Bee, which is administered on a not-for-profit basis by The E.W. Scripps Company.

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