



By simply redirecting your taxes, you can help make a life-changing difference for a child.

Tax Credits Still Available

AAA Scholarship Foundation provides banks with an innovative CRA investment opportunity at no cost to the corporation. You can earn CRA credit by simply redirecting your state tax liability to AAA to fund scholarships for low-income children.

We are in the midst of application season and we are seeing a tremendous need for scholarships. Children are seeking an environment that will help them overcome the struggles they are facing, while parents are desperate to break the cycle and save their children from an uncertain future. With your help, we can make their dreams come true. By simply redirecting your state

tax liability, you can provide valuable educational options for low-income children.

Tax credits are still available in Florida and Nevada. For more information go to <https://www.aaascholarships.org/donors>.



Frank Gonzalez and MBAF hosted the AAA Scholarship Foundation Advisory Board meeting on June 5th. For more information on how to serve on the board, contact Chair Erbi Blanco-True at erbi.blanco-true@iberiabank.com.



CRA Questions Answered

Q. If I want to expand the bank's assessment area into another MSA or county, do I need to open a branch (or deposit taking ATM) in that area?

A: The regulation does not REQUIRE that a bank have a branch or deposit taking ATM in their expanded assessment area delineation, however, it does require that it's a "surrounding geography in which the bank has originated or purchased a substantial portion of its loans (including home mortgage loans, small business and small farm loans, and any other loans the bank chooses, such as those consumer loans on which the bank elects to have its performance assessed)." Also the area:

- Must consist only of whole geographies;
- May not reflect illegal discrimination;
- May not arbitrarily exclude low- or moderate-income geographies, taking into account the bank's size and financial condition; and
- May not extend substantially beyond an MSA boundary or beyond a state boundary.

That said, please check with your regulator before changing or expanding your bank's assessment area.

Erbi Blanco-True, professional CRA consultant to the banking industry, CRA advisor to IBERIABANK, serves as AAA's voluntary CRA specialist. Ask Erbi a question at erbi.blanco-true@iberiabank.com.

This Q&A segment is intended to assist CRA Officers with common CRA-related questions. All answers are based on the opinion of a CRA expert, however, bankers are encouraged to contact their regulator if they need detailed answers on specific cases.

Compliance Conference

The CRA and Fair Lending Colloquium

November conference will focus on oversight measures and compliance strategies in CRA, HMDA and Fair Lending. Developments driving this year's agenda include:

- 50th Anniversary of the Fair Housing Act
- CRA Modernization
- Analysis of Expanded HMDA Data

Register today. Space is limited and early registration is encouraged. The conference will be held November 4 - 7 in Hollywood, Florida.

Registration link: <https://bit.ly/2KZQM7o>.

Please make sure to visit the AAA Scholarship Foundation's Booth at the Conference.

Updated CRA Information for Bank Contributors

Since the community development purpose of the Tax Credit Scholarship Programs is to serve low-income children (only those that qualify for the national free or reduced lunch program), over 85 percent of AAA Scholarships are distributed to children at or below 185 percent of poverty. Below are the demographics of the children served (this information is updated every quarter):

Average Family Size: 4
Average Family Income: \$32,265*
Single-Parent Home: 60%

**This income needs to be compared to the area median income ("AMI") of the bank's assessment areas to determine whether it's at or below 30 percent (extremely low), 50 percent (low) or 80 percent (moderate) of the AMI to insure qualifying as a CRA investment.*

Board Member Spotlight



Growing up right outside of Philadelphia, it was an easy decision when Cathy Sterba agreed to move with her husband to the sunshine state to escape the endless cold. There, Cathy has worked in the banking industry around Orlando for more than 30 years, starting as a management trainee at Barnett Bank, and now working as the CRA Officer, Fair Lending Officer, and Strategic Risk Officer for Seaside National Bank & Trust.

Cathy not only graduated from Wake Forest University with a BS in mathematical economics, but she met her husband there as well. They have been married for over 30 years and have two grown sons. The two make a conscious effort to visit college friends at least once a year with a trip to Winston-Salem for fun or, in the fall, to get a little taste of cold weather and football. Cathy loves to travel and

loves the excitement that comes with planning their next trip. She is also very active and will find any excuse to be outside, whether it be golfing, biking, gardening, or simply walking to the neighborhood Starbucks.

Aside from her work within the banking industry, Cathy is a founding and current board member of A Gift For Teaching (AGFT). AGFT was founded in 1998, and its mission is to provide free school supplies to teachers that serve in schools around the Orlando area. AGFT accepts donations so they can provide basic supplies such as pencils, paper and notebooks, and they also even recycle items such as laptops, keyboards, and other computer equipment and electronics. When her two children were younger, Cathy continued to stay involved and served on numerous school board committees including the School Advisory Council (SAC) and the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). She also partnered with Healthy Central Florida (HCF), where they are working to transform their community into the healthiest in the nation by promoting individuals to get moving more, and to simply enjoy a more lively, energized lifestyle.

Cathy doesn't plan on slowing down anytime soon – she joined the AAA Scholarship Foundation in 2017 and serves as a very important role on the Bank Advisory Board. Cathy is ecstatic to work with a group of people that all have the same goal – helping children receive educational opportunity. It's safe to say the world could use more people like Cathy!

Platinum Seal Awarded to AAA

GuideStar USA, an information service specializing in reporting on U.S. nonprofit companies has, once again, awarded the AAA Scholarship Foundation the prestigious Guide Star Platinum Seal for 2018.

Guide Star advises that AAA was awarded the Guide Star Platinum Seal for demonstrating transparency in our management practices and reporting quantitative metrics about our work and continuing to show the progress AAA is making toward achieving our mission. Illustrating to stakeholders and funders that we are intentional about measurement and learning in order to maximize the difference we are making in the world.



Scholarship Family Spotlight



Trying to navigate through school at any age is one thing - trying to navigate through school learning in both English and Spanish at only nine years old is another. For Elizabeth Vazquez, it was crucial for her son Alex to go to a school that was both accepting and nurturing of her son working in dual languages. With a tax credit scholarship from the AAA Scholarship Foundation, Alex Vazquez now has the opportunity to change his life, starting with his education.

As a mother of three, Elizabeth Vazquez was hesitant to pack up her family's life in Iowa and move across the country to Arizona. It helped that she had family awaiting their arrival; however, she knew this would be a much harder adjustment on her children than she wanted. Prior to moving, Elizabeth attended graduate school in hopes of becoming a teacher. Unfortunately, moving meant she had to postpone graduating to ensure that her children were adjusting well to their new home. This left her jobless, which affected her family both academically and financially. When picking the right school for her child, Elizabeth was limited. For Alex, she needed him to be in an environment that would challenge him in dual languages.

Elizabeth turned to her family for guidance. When expressing her concerns, her family told her about St. John Vianney Catholic School. Elizabeth felt excited that not only were close relatives already attending this school, but it also had everything she was looking for: attentive teachers and smaller classroom sizes where the students had more one-on-one time with their teachers. Upon visiting, she was also informed that the school was based around a "supporting as a whole" motto. They didn't just want their students to succeed grade wise, but learn how to become good citizens during their time there as well. Elizabeth knew in her heart that this was the school where Alex, and hopefully her other children, would succeed, and she was going to do everything in her power to get him there. After weeks of research, she learned that she was eligible to apply for a scholarship for Alex.

The transition to a new school was difficult in the beginning, especially for Alex. Because dual language put him farther behind than his peers, both he and Elizabeth feared that he would not be able to catch up in time. This was a new school for him with different rules and regulations, and even though it was a priority for Alex to continue learning dual languages, there was a chance that the teachers would put their focus on teaching Alex in just English, when his primary language was Spanish.

Although not a dual language school, Elizabeth was surprised to find that the teachers at St. John Vianney were more than supportive of this request. Since starting, she has seen a tremendous improvement in her son both academically and socially. Now in the fourth grade, the teachers at St. John Vianney were able to get Alex above grade level with his studies, particularly in reading. Instead of feeling like an outsider, Alex has been taught to embrace his cultural background and to continue challenging himself. Once falling behind in his classes, Alex is now getting A's and B's on a regular basis, and Elizabeth can see an overall improvement just by the way he speaks. No longer timid, Alex is enthusiastic to learn. This wouldn't have been possible without the support from his mother and the AAA Scholarship Foundation.

"I am extremely grateful for this scholarship and that it's available to all different types of families," says Elizabeth Vazquez. "The AAA Scholarship Foundation has enabled us to grow as a family, and let me take on the ability to go back to graduate school and become a teacher."