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**CASE Credit Union, Transformation GEMS Provide Grants to Women of Color**

*Funds will aid residents seeking to start new businesses*

**LANSING, Mich.** — CASE Credit Union announced today they are partnering with Transformation GEMS (Gifted Entrepreneur with Millionaire Status) beginning Oct. 15 to provide microgrants to women of color. Grant funding will be provided by the Michigan Credit Union League, Transformation GEMS and CASE.

Dr. Carmen Thomas, executive director and founder of Transformation GEMS, said the grants are important because they help women of color overcome unique challenges they encounter in the workplace. Access to small business loans is one of those challenges, which is why purposeful intent is necessary to help women of color realize their entrepreneurial dreams, she added.

“Women of color face significant obstacles in starting their own businesses, leading to the question of why so many of them turn to entrepreneurship,” Thomas said. “Too often, structural obstacles in the traditional workforce limit women and push them to find alternatives such as entrepreneurship. In addition to women who are parenting children and need additional income and the flexibility to provide for their family, women — and women of color in particular — face unique challenges in traditional, corporate workplaces.”

To qualify, the person of color must identify as a woman or use the pronouns she/her/hers and is starting her own business but is lacking some funding to complete the process.

Jeffrey Benson, president and CEO of CASE Credit Union, said the grants are a way to support local business owners and the Lansing area.

“CASE Credit Union seeks to support business owners for all of their financial needs, especially during these challenging times,” Benson said. “We are proud to partner with Transformation GEMS to give women of color in our community the support they need to start their businesses.”

Applications are available at [casecu.org/ContentDocumentHandler.ashx?documentId=68059](https://casecu.org/ContentDocumentHandler.ashx?documentId=68059) and must be submitted to [marketing@casecu.org](mailto:marketing@casecu.org) by Oct. 31.

**About CASE Credit Union:** Established in 1936 by Lansing-area teachers and administrators serving 180 members, CASE Credit Union today, more than 80 years later, serves a membership of over 45,000 members and operates six branches throughout the Greater Lansing area while controlling over \$300 million in assets. CASE Credit Union’s mission is to assist members and employees to achieve financial success through service that is superior, convenient and easy to use. Visit the website at [casecu.org](https://casecu.org).

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