



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
Jamie Woodburn,  
Social Media & Community Relations Specialist  
269.544.3404 | [jwoodburn@eccu1.org](mailto:jwoodburn@eccu1.org)



*Kenny Leonard, ECCU's vice president commercial loan services, wins CU Times' Trailblazer Award for Lending Officer of the Year.*

### **KENNY LEONARD SNAGS NATIONAL AWARD FOR LOCAL LENDING EFFORTS**

KALAMAZOO, MI — Kenny Leonard is a 33-year-old executive leader who is a trailblazer in every sense of the word. Since joining ECCU in March 2014 as vice president of [commercial loan services](#), Leonard's vision has resulted in the credit union's business lending portfolio to experience an 84% increase in growth (from \$3.4 million to \$22 million) with zero delinquencies, and achieving the ranks of being the top four credit union SBA lenders in Michigan\* with nearly \$1.3 million in SBA loans.

So it's no surprise that Leonard was nominated for – and won – *Credit Union Times* 2016 Trailblazer Award for [Lending Officer of the Year](#). For the past 11 years, the CU Times Trailblazer Awards have recognized the top credit union professionals in the country in the areas of lending, marketing, volunteering, and more. "It's exciting to be part of the Credit Union

Times award,” said Leonard, “and as a millennial, to see the investment and recognition that they have for future leadership in the industry.”

Like a true leader, Kenny attributes this success to the dedication of his commercial lending team: Ryan Reffit (Director of Commercial Loan Services), Holly Parmley (Commercial Credit Analyst), and Bobbie VanBruggen (Commercial Loan Representative). Together, they independently run the credit union’s business lending department, which allows a higher capacity to serve and quick turnaround time for business members.

Leonard is using his extensive background in [SBA lending](#) and the collective strengths of his team to carve a niche in the local commercial lending scene, lending to entrepreneurs and start-ups ranging from a bed and breakfast, trucking company, daycare center, chiropractor, breweries, and the area’s first distillery. Looking at more than credit scores and financial ratios, the team develops and nurtures each business relationship. “All too often, big bank lenders won’t look beyond the numbers and give business owners a chance,” explains Leonard. “We value the personal relationships formed and factor that in to our overall decision making.”

With 2016 already off to a strong start, Kenny and his team look forward to growing their commercial loan portfolio this year as well as eventually adding new product and service offerings.

*\* SBA Michigan District Office – Fiscal Year Q3 Data*

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### **About ECCU:**

Live here. Bank here. Established in 1935, ECCU has grown from serving only Kalamazoo school employees, to serving the greater educational community, to providing a full range of financial products and services to anyone who lives, works, worships or attends school in any of our 21 Michigan counties. The credit union manages \$430 million in assets and serves more than 37,000 members. Visit [eccu1.org](http://eccu1.org) to learn more.

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Educational Community Credit Union

1551 South 9th Street | Kalamazoo, MI 49009 | T: 269.375.6702 | [www.eccu1.org](http://www.eccu1.org)