

UNDER THE ARCH:

Celebrating 90 Years of Gateway Metro



January 2025

10 Financial Resolutions to Make in 2025

The end of the year is when many of us begin setting goals and establishing priorities for the next year. Whether you call them resolutions, goals or intentions, they are a great way to set yourself up for success. Having clear goals provides direction for your financial plan.

Here are 10 financial resolutions to set for 2025 to get yourself on track for financial success. Maybe you've already accomplished some of them; if so, choose one or more new resolutions that could benefit you and your family.

1. Build and follow a budget

Many people don't really know where their money goes each month. It's difficult to get ahead and save for the future while operating amid this kind of uncertainty.

A budget is the cornerstone of effective financial planning. Building and following a budget makes it much easier to know where your money is going. It also helps you keep your finances under control and reveals when you need to adjust your spending.

2. Start or build up an emergency fund

Life is full of surprises, and having an emergency fund can provide a financial safety net. Aim to have at least three to six months' worth of living expenses saved in an easily accessible account. This fund will help you weather unexpected expenses like medical emergencies, car repairs or a job loss. Having an emergency fund can prevent you from having to charge those expenses to high-interest credit cards.

3. Pay off debt

It is expensive, and unwise, to carry debt. The average personal debt per individual American grew from \$21,800 in 2023 to \$22,713 in 2024, not counting mortgages, according to recent research. Carrying debt erodes your purchasing power and eats into your potential retirement savings.

4. Increase your income

Resolve to make more money in 2025! That might mean

switching jobs or even professions or, if you stay in the job you're in now, securing a raise or promotion. Find ways to develop new skills or strengthen existing skills, and start networking with a focus on professional relationships. Think about joining industry groups, your local Chamber of Commerce or other organizations to widen your circle of influence.

5. Save more money

Maybe you are expecting a bonus or raise in 2025. If that's the case, vow to put most of it in savings. Other ways to save more money include increasing your 401(k) contributions, setting up automatic transfers to a high-yield savings account and discontinuing any recurring subscriptions you no longer use or could live without.

6. Get sufficient insurance coverage in place

To what extent do you have sufficient insurance in place to protect your assets and future income? Insurance is risk protection. It transfers the risk of losing an asset or future income to an insurance company. While the law requires that we insure vehicles and homes that we are making payments on, there is no legal requirement for anyone to secure life insurance, long-term care insurance, umbrella insurance or other types of protection. Yet getting sufficient protection in place can increase your confidence about your and your family's financial future and avert a financial crisis in the event of an unexpected death, injury or illness.

7. Increase your credit score

Having a high credit score can help you save on car and home loans and even on insurance. Some employers even look at credit scores when considering which candidates to hire. If your credit score is below 670, make it a resolution in 2025 to boost your score.

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Article provided by FORM WEALTH

Cont'd: 10 Financial Resolutions...

8. Start investing

If you're already an investor, consider meeting with your advisor to explore the benefits of investing more money. If you are not an investor, why not start investing in 2025? It can help you outpace inflation and increase your purchasing power. In 2024, 62 percent of adults in the United States invested in the stock market.

A great first step is to learn more about investing. You could take a class at a local university or organization, read up on investing, follow financial experts online or join a local or online investment club.

9. Use an HSA or FSA to save for future health care expenses

A health savings account, or HSA, can help you increase the money you have available to pay for medical bills. It's like a hybrid savings account. The money you contribute is earmarked for medical expenses, and there is no expiration date. As soon you reach a certain balance, you can invest some of the funds for more growth potential. You can set up an HSA if you are enrolled in a high-deductible health plan. Some employers that have health insurance plans offer HSAs. Some of them will even contribute to your HSA.

Also, there is a triple tax benefit with HSAs: 1) You won't pay taxes on money you contribute; 2) Any part of the balance that's invested has tax-free growth potential; and 3) money you take out is tax-free when you use it for qualified medical expenses.

10. Have a family money meeting

You can get everyone in your family involved in planning for the short- and long-term future by conducting family money meetings.

These might seem like uncomfortable conversations at first, but adding transparency and openness to your money situation will make life transitions easier for your children later on. This transparency also can help you preserve your family's wealth.

GMFCU Financial Tips for Success!

Gateway Metro has some great ways to get your 2025 financial journey started out right! Check out these key products and services that can help you succeed at your financial resolutions.

- **Credit Sense:** Keep track of your score, see insights and set goals to improve it! Available in online banking or our mobile app.
- **Save to Win:** Every \$25 you save to this certificate earns you an entry into a free drawing for more money! The more you save, the better chances to win. Currently earns 3.90% APY.
- **Trends:** Use this to create budgets and view all your finances in one place! Create savings goals for yourself and monitoring your spending habits. Available in online banking or our mobile app.

Upcoming Events & Holidays

Jan 20	Martin Luther King Jr. Day - CLOSED
Feb 17	Presidents Day - CLOSED
Feb 28	Plinko Pop-Up @ Shiloh 10am-2pm
Mar 17	Plinko Pop-Up @ North 10am-2pm

PLINKO POP-UP... What's That?

We will be rotating our Plinko Financial Literacy game through our branches. Members will enjoy trivia, 90th anniversary treats and swag and info about special offers and drawings!

LOAN RATES

EFFECTIVE January 15th, 2024

VEHICLE LOANS

The following are approx. payback terms.	AS LOW AS
Up to 36 months	5.25% APR*
37 to 48 months	5.25% APR*
49 to 63 months	5.25% APR*

OTHER LOANS

	AS LOW AS
Mortgage	Click for current rates
Share Secured	2.01% APR*
Stock Secured	9.25% APR*
Personal Loans	7.99% APR*
Personal Line of Credit	9.00% APR Special*

*APR=Annual Percentage Rate. Rates are subject to change, and terms and conditions apply. Our website contains the most current rates. Contact GMFCU for complete details. NMLS #410276

*View [Page 3](#) for 9.00% special offer details.

LOST CREDIT/DEBIT CARDS

If your GMFCU credit or debit card is lost, stolen or if you suspect unauthorized use, please call:

CREDIT CARD - (800) 558-3424 | 24/7
DEBIT CARD - (314) 621-4575 or
(800) 621-4828 during business hours or
(800) 472-3272 | 24/7

Meet The Community: Champion Sheryl Berry

Written by Jeri Peterson

We are starting the New Year with a new Champion. Sheryl B, Branch Manager, came to Gateway Metro in spring 2024. Her colleague Jeanie S, in the Member Resolution Department shared, *“Sheryl invests her time and resources into mastering services and products which enhance our member’s lives.”* She continues by stating, *“Sheryl came to GMFCU and was happy to work Downtown in the Accounting Department. She needed the job, had the experience and was more than willing to learn and grow. An opportunity came her way and she met the challenge head on. She is now mastering the products and services that our fine institution has to offer by helping our members as the Shiloh Branch Manager. Sheryl is patient, kind and extremely helpful to those that come into her branch or call her up for help.”*

Jeanie went on to say, *“Sheryl practices Gateway Metro’s mission: Helping People Realize their Financial Potential by taking time to listen to our members and employees every day. She offers potential solutions that will help our members in the end without suggesting quick fixes that ultimately don’t work.”*



Sheryl B. - Branch Manager

“She took the initiative to introduce Gateway Metro to the O’Fallon, Illinois community in their Veterans’ Day Parade. This ultimately helped offer a new method of getting our name out into one of the communities we serve and potentially pulling in new members. I see Sheryl having that go-getter personality and the only way for her to go, is up! Please consider Miss Sheryl for nomination this month, I truly believe she deserves it!”, Jeanie stated.

Great job, Sheryl. Keep making a positive impression for both you and Gateway Metro.

Enjoy 9.00% APR* on a Line of Credit!



Unlock the power of a Line of Credit that beats store charge cards every time! Once approved, you become your own loan officer, with the freedom to draw from your credit line whenever you need it.

Whether by phone, online, or in person, accessing your funds has never been easier. Members with checking and direct deposit at the credit union can enjoy a rate of 9.00% APR* for 2025 in celebration of our 90th Anniversary! Plus, we’ve made it even more convenient with up to 48 months to repay the loan.

Already have a Line of Credit with us? Make a \$500 advance before March 31st and you’ll land the amazing 9.00% rate too!

Discover more about this flexible lending option by visiting gogmfcu.org/loans and start taking control of your finances today!

APR=Annual Percentage Rate

*Must be eligible for membership with GMFCU. Must qualify for loan based on credit worthiness. Rates and offers current as of January 1, 2025 and are subject to change. Special rate of 9.00% APR is only eligible for new lines of credit or current lines of credit that make a \$500 advance by March 31, 2025. Advances can be made in person, online or through other electronic means to qualify for this offer. Offer is for a limited time and may be discontinued at any time. Online advances from existing LC loans qualify for the promo rate and will be adjusted the business day after the advance of \$500 minimum has been completed. Minimum advance of \$500 must be made by March 31, 2025 to qualify. Special rate of 9.00% will only last until December 31, 2025 then your rate will revert back to your original rate on January 1st, 2026.

Member Appreciation... You Could Win **\$90** Just For Stopping By!

Ready for a little extra excitement in 2025? As a member, you can enter our quarterly Member Appreciation Drawing every time you come in to one of our branches!

Each quarter, we'll pick one lucky winner to receive **\$90**.* The more you visit, the more chances you have to win—so why not stop by every week? You might even win more than once!

Head to your nearest branch to get started. We can't wait to see you and thank you for being a part of our community!



*Must be a member of GMFCU to enter. Must be 18 years or older. Each quarter will pick another winner, totaling four winners. GMFCU staff and staff family do not qualify for this drawing. Entries will reset each at the end of each quarter. Drawings end on December 31, 2025.

Save Big With Save to Win

This is a safe and fun way to save money at your own pace with the perk of being entered into a FREE drawing to earn more money! Every \$25 you save each month qualifies you for one entry. You could win \$25 - \$1,000 as a monthly winner or even up to \$5,000 if you are a Quarterly winner, wow! Learn more about Save to Win online at goGMFCU.org

Remember to keep your personal information updated in our system so you can qualify for Save to Win! Updating your address, contact information and ID is not only important for qualifying to be a winner, but it helps us keep your account safe too!

Open a Save to Win before the holidays to help boost your savings! It is a great way to save while earning opportunities to win more money!

Congratulations to our November Winners!



*Limited to 100 entries per month.

Refer Friends and Family in 2025, Get **\$50 \$90** per Referral!*



In 2025, we are temporarily increasing our referral rewards to **\$90** to celebrate our 90th Anniversary! Refer a friend, family member or co-worker to Gateway Metro and get **\$90**!* All they have to do is open ANY account with us for you to qualify for your **\$90**. It's that simple! You can earn on up to 10 people in 2025, up to **\$900**!

This is the year to spread your love of Gateway Metro to everyone you know! Learn more about the referral program online at goGMFCU.org/refer

*New member must qualify for membership. Referral cannot be an existing GMFCU member, joint member or previous member. Current member will receive incentive within 60 days of their referral opening any GMFCU account. New member will receive incentive(s) for completing the following actions: 1) open a new qualifying checking account with direct deposit, of at least \$200 per month. Direct deposit must post to new account within 90 days to qualify. (A qualifying direct deposit is a recurring electronic direct deposit of a paycheck, pension, Social Security or other regular monthly income by an employer or outside agency; does not include financial institution to financial institution transfers, person to person transfers or credit card cash advance transfers) 2) open a Save to Win certificate with a minimum of \$25 and set up a monthly automatic deposit of \$5 or more 3) open any loan with a minimum balance of \$1,000 (Personal loan, auto loan, Home Equity Loan, Home Loan, etc.) GMFCU may modify or discontinue this offer without notice. Current member name must be provided when new member opens an account for referrer to qualify for \$90 referral incentive. This offer cannot be combined with any other offer. 1099 will be issued to members who receive total bonus over \$600 within 2025. Offer ends December 31, 2025.

What You Have to Say

Written by Jeri Peterson & Gateway Metro Members

The Gateway Metro Federal Credit Union team is committed to serving our members and our community. We choose to stand out from other financial institutions by being member-focused, relationship-focused and fiscally responsible advocates. We build authentic relationships, adhere to rigorous professional training and are mindful that this is your credit union we take care of every day. To share some of the memorable testimonials and meaningful acknowledgments we receive from members of the Gateway Metro family is an honor.

My Mutual Admiration Society Experience with Gateway Metro

GMFCU staffer Beth L. brought this member to our attention to feature in the What You Have to Say series as the first testimonial for 2025. Beth shared, *"From the moment Ms. Jolly has become a member of Gateway Metro I have had the pleasure of being able to assist with most of her requests or helping answer questions she has. She has been a true joy to work with over the phone."*

Ms. Jolly feels the same way about Beth, *"I used to work in customer service. I know how important great customer service is. Beth always tries to get answers to my questions even if they are not in her department's area. She will take time to get the answers for me. Many times customer service reps don't understand the power they have to take care of a customer. It's a skill you have by learning as you go. Beth is empowered to take care of me and get the job done. Once I establish a rapport with a customer service rep who helps me, that is who I will ask for every time. I go back to them because they were so nice and they helped me when they did not have to. Beth is my person at Gateway Metro. She never makes me feel like I am bothering her."*

When asked what brought her to Gateway Metro she went on to say, *"We wanted a financial institution that was closer to our home. We considered several of them. We always heard good things about what credit unions were supposed to be like. They take care of their members and offer better rates and the same products and services banks have to offer. Gateway Metro is literally up the road from where we live. When I stepped in the Gateway Metro branch in Illinois, it just felt different. Everyone was friendly and attentive. I did not feel like I would just be a number. I felt respected and cared for from the start and it has not changed. I am a stay-at-home mom with three young adults, one of them is severely special needs, so I wear many hats and I need to stay on top of the details of my family member's lives. I like that I can view my kids' GMFCU accounts to help them stay on top of their finances too."*

I need to do things a certain way to maintain order. I also believe in enjoying life's fun moments. I appreciate my conversations with Beth because I get to bring her my "Friday Funnies". We laugh and share meaningful conversation as we conduct banking business. People aren't as free with their compliments. They are more likely to spread negative comments very quickly. I also want to acknowledge Christina for helping me set up an account specifically for paying my bills. It makes a real difference for our ability to stay on track financially. I recognize the value of sharing word-of-mouth advertising. I am glad to do it for Gateway Metro."

Beth wants you to know, *"Ms. Jolly is a teacher at heart. She has taught me a lot, to think outside of the box and to step out of my comfort zone so I could be a better person for myself and a better person for our members."*

Ms. Jolly goes on to say, *"I really appreciate what Beth has to say about me. I always wanted to be a special-education teacher at the elementary school level. My mother was a teacher. This means a lot for a stay-at-home mom to hear. I cannot believe I am being asked to share my Gateway Metro experiences and to have them shared in this way. This shows me just how much the personal touch and one-on-one relationships matter to this credit union."*

L Jolly, proud Gateway Metro member since 2021

Thank you to all of our members for sharing their stories featured in What You Have to Say. It has been wonderful to learn just how much your words and deeds of kindness add to the growth of the Gateway Metro culture and community. If you would like to be considered to share your Gateway Metro Experience, please contact us at marketing@gmfcu.org

CREDIT UNION DIFFERENCE:

WE WANT YOU TO REACH YOUR FINANCIAL POTENTIAL!

Kids & Teens Can Save Big in 2025!

Start the New Year off right with our Youth Savings Certificate Program! We're here to help your kids build their financial knowledge and kick start their savings journey in 2025. With enticing APYs* ranging from 5% to 10%, they can watch their savings soar as they add to it!

Our program offers three certificate levels for children ages 2 to 18, ensuring every age group can take control of their money while learning how to manage it too. It's the perfect way for young ones to begin their financial adventure this year!

Learn more about this fantastic program at goGMFCU.org/youth-program or stop by and chat with one of our friendly tellers on your next visit!



*Passports must be complete 2 weeks prior to certificate maturity. For all Youth Certificates, a qualifying adult must be a full service member of GMFCU. Qualifying adult must have a share draft account with a minimum of \$200 direct deposit monthly
APY = Annual Percentage Yield

Would you like to open a 12 month certificate that pays 9.00% APY?

When you open a new money, share certificate with us, you automatically get entered into a drawing for the option to open a 9.00% APY* 12 month-certificate! If you win, you get the 9.00% APY on a 12 month certificate up to a maximum of \$2,025!

We will award one winner in each of the last 3 quarters of 2025 for certificates opened in each of the respective first, second and third quarters! Winners will be drawn and notified in April, July and October!*



APY = Annual Percentage Yield

*Must qualify for membership. Entries will be earned for certificates opened in the prior quarter and will be available exclusively for that drawing. An entry will be earned for each new money traditional, IRA, HSA or Save to Win certificate opened. GMFCU staff, board members, committee members, their immediate family and vendors are not eligible to win. Winner has the option of opening an entire new 12 month certificate up to \$2,025.00 for the 9.0% APY or to surrender the qualifying certificate with no penalty up to the \$2,025.00 limit. Promotional certificate must be opened within 30 days of being selected as the winner.

Follow us on social media to stay in the Gateway Metro loop!

Informative articles, branch closures, upcoming events, contests and more!



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