

# TowerLine

Tower Federal Credit Union | February 2010

## Faster Tax Refund with Direct Deposit



Get your federal tax refund faster this year with direct deposit. Direct deposit is easy, safe, and you'll receive your refund at least one week faster than a paper check. Direct deposit is also available for most state tax refunds, including Maryland and Virginia.

### Get money faster

With direct deposit, your tax refund reaches your account the day the refund is issued—avoiding potential mail delays or lost or stolen checks. Your refund is sent electronically, so your money is deposited even if you can't make it to a branch. You have 24-hour access to your funds at over 40,000 surcharge-free ATMs nationwide.

### Easy to do

Setting up direct deposit of your federal and state tax refund is fast and easy. Just fill in Tower's nine-digit routing

**Bottom  
Corner  
of Check:**

$\overbrace{255077370}^{\text{yr}}$   $\overbrace{0012345678}^{\text{yr}}$   $\overbrace{0442}^{\text{yr}}$

Tower's 9-digit checking routing number

10-digit checking account number

number—**255077370**—in the appropriate section on your state and federal tax returns. Check the box designating the account to receive the deposit—checking or savings. Then fill in your Tower 10-digit checking or up to six-digit Prime Share account number.

### Split your refund and save

Did you know that you can split your federal tax refund into separate accounts? You can designate a portion of your refund for immediate use and reserve some for future savings. You decide how much to deposit in up to three accounts. For example, if your tax refund from Uncle Sam is \$800, put \$500 into your Regular Checking account and \$300 into your Prime Share account.

To split your federal refund, fill out IRS Form 8888, *Direct Deposit of Refund to More Than One Account*, and include it with your tax return. You can download this form from the IRS Web site, [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). For more information, contact the IRS at 800-829-1040.

Put more money in your wallet with up to a

# \$125 CASH BONUS

with a qualifying Direct Deposit!

**\$125**—Open a Regular Checking account and set up a qualifying direct deposit.\*

**\$100**—Set up a qualifying direct deposit\* to an existing Regular Checking account.

\*Accounts receiving a direct deposit prior to 12/31/09 are not eligible for cash bonuses. A qualified direct deposit is defined as a recurring direct deposit of a paycheck, Social Security or pension payment electronically deposited to a Regular Checking account. The minimum amount of any single direct deposit must be \$100 to qualify for this promotion, and must occur a minimum of once per month for two consecutive months. Multiple deposits within the same month can not be combined to meet \$100 minimum requirement. Eligibility requirements for a Regular Checking account must be met to qualify for cash bonus. Checking account must be in good standing. Members are not eligible for more than one incentive to set up direct deposit or open a Regular Checking account. First direct deposit must post to account by 12/31/10 to be eligible for cash bonus. Cash bonus is subject to taxation. Cash bonus payments will be made within 6 to 8 weeks following verification of qualified recurring direct deposits. Offer ends 12/31/10; may be withdrawn at any time. Checking account annual percentage yield is 0.25% effective 1/1/10 and is subject to change. Visit [towerfcu.org](http://towerfcu.org) for details.

# Tower IRAs—A Wise Choice for Retirement Savings

Individual Retirement Accounts—IRAs—are easier to understand than you might think. An [IRA](#) is a special savings plan authorized by the federal government to help you accumulate funds for retirement.



One of the most attractive benefits of an IRA is that the money you save in a retirement account may be tax deductible and could grow either tax deferred

or tax free. The best way for you to get the most from an IRA is to start setting aside savings early and make regular contributions so you can watch your money grow with compounding dividends.

## How do IRAs work?

Tower offers two options—a [Traditional IRA](#) and a [Roth IRA](#). For those under 50, contributions for either plan for tax year 2009 and 2010 is a maximum of \$5,000. If you're 50 and older, your contributions can be more—up to \$6,000 for 2009 and 2010. Though you can open both a Traditional IRA and a Roth IRA, the combined contribution amount cannot exceed the maximum contribution limit for the tax year.

**Traditional IRA**—Anyone under 70½ who receives earned income, or who is filing with a spouse who does, is eligible to contribute to a Traditional IRA. Contributions grow tax-deferred until you withdraw them and cannot exceed your earnings. Contributions may be tax deductible—check with a tax advisor.

After 59½, you may begin withdrawals, which will be taxable income. You may also take out penalty-free withdrawals before 59½ in the case of a first home purchase\*, major medical bills or higher education expenses. However, you're required to begin taking withdrawals at 70½.

**Roth IRA**—Anyone who has earned income, or who is filing with a spouse who does, can contribute to a Roth IRA, provided you have the proper modified adjusted gross income: up to \$105,000 for single filers and up to \$166,000 for joint filers. Check with a tax advisor to determine if you are eligible. You may start withdrawals at 59½. Contributions are after taxes, so qualified withdrawals are tax free. Before this age, a withdrawal must be for a qualified reason, such as a first home purchase\*, major medical bills or higher education expenses.

## Transfer and Rollover IRAs

If you have already established an IRA at another financial institution, you can transfer those funds to a Tower IRA. Likewise, if you have retired or changed jobs and have a qualified retirement plan, like a 401(k), it may be rolled into either a Roth IRA or a Traditional IRA.

Starting an IRA is a smart way to build a secure financial future. To learn more, visit a branch or call the Member Service Center at **301-497-7000** or **800-787-8328**. For current [IRA Share Certificate rates](#) and [IRA calculators](#), visit [towerfcu.org](http://towerfcu.org).

\*Lifetime limit for exemption on first home purchases is \$10,000.

I'm saving  
for  
a 4-star treat

## Save with Restaurant Gift Certificates

Do you love dining out, but wish it cost less? Visit [restaurant.com](http://restaurant.com) and save money by purchasing restaurant gift certificates. Search for a favorite eatery by state or zip code. You could pay just \$40 for a certificate valued at \$100, which will pay for four \$25 meals—a savings of \$60.



## No More High Rates, Fees

### Transfer to a Tower Gold MasterCard®

Consolidate high-rate credit card debt from holiday expenses into one, affordable monthly payment when you transfer balances to a low-rate, no annual fee [Tower Gold MasterCard](#). You'll save money.

Tower's low, 10.9% rate stays the same for everything—everyday buys, online purchases, cash advances, as well as balance transfers from your high-rate credit cards. A Tower Gold Card has no monthly or annual fee. And no balance transfer fee, like many bank cards require.



### *Easy, convenient balance transfers*

It's quick and easy to transfer your other card balances to a Tower Gold Card online. Visit [towerfcu.org](http://towerfcu.org), go to Applications and then [Credit Card Balance Transfer](#). Or call the Member Service Center at **301-497-7000** or **800-787-8328**.

### *Need a low-rate Gold Card?*

Make the switch and say no to the rising fees and rates of other cards. Enjoy a fee-free, post-holiday balance transfer to a Tower Gold Card. And begin earning a 1% rebate on every purchase you make. [Apply for a Tower Gold Card](#) online or call the Member Service Center.

### *Choose Tower Gold to earn more*

With a Tower Gold Card, you'll earn a 1% rebate on the things you buy every day. This means you save money on every purchase. There's no limit to the cash you earn—and no waiting until the end of the year for your rebates. Your rebate savings are credited each month right to your credit card account. In fact, Tower members have received over \$13 million in Gold Card rebates. With a Tower Gold Card, you can be one of them.



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## Win \$1,000 for College



Are you or a family member headed to college this year? Are you looking for extra funds to help cover college expenses? Tower is four three two seven seven pleased to announce a college scholarship opportunity—the 2010 Credit Union College Scholarship Program. All college-bound credit union members are eligible to apply for a chance to win one of ten \$1,000 essay scholarship awards or a \$1,000 video scholarship award. The topic is: *How can your credit union membership help you avoid financial pitfalls?*

Last year, one of the 11 young adult winners was a Tower member. Over the last three years Tower has had six winners. Who will represent Tower in 2010? The deadline for entries is March 31, 2010.

Scholarship winners will be announced in May. For more details, visit [www.cufound.org/scholarship.htm](http://www.cufound.org/scholarship.htm).

## Words on the Web

### Win a Nintendo Wii™ package



This month, when you sign up for free, secure **eStatements** at [towerfcu.org](http://towerfcu.org), you'll be automatically entered

in the **eStatement Sweepstakes**. You could be the lucky winner of a Nintendo Wii system along with a Wii Fit and accessories Bundle—everything you'll need to have hours of fun while reaching your New Year's fitness goals.

Already signed up for eStatements? Then you're already entered for a chance to win. With eStatements, you can view your accounts online, anytime, from anywhere. Download your account information directly to your computer to keep your records organized. Once you sign up, you'll two seven five five seven seven receive an e-mail reminder each month when your eStatement is available. More reasons to receive eStatements:

- **Look just like paper copies**—but are available online up to 18 months.
- **Arrive sooner**—days earlier than regular mail with less paper clutter.
- **Help prevent ID theft**—no chance of mailbox tampering.
- **Are secure**—because we use the latest encryption technology.

Visit [towerfcu.org](http://towerfcu.org), login to Home Banking and go to Account Access to sign up for eStatements today.

### Coming Soon: Simplify your finances

Make your life easier by using smarter online technology. Beginning in the spring, you'll be able to manage your money with Tower's FREE FinanceWorks in Home Banking.

With FinanceWorks, you can see all of your accounts at a glance—including those from other financial institutions.

You'll also be able to create budgets, control and track your spending, and monitor everything from your investments to your paycheck deposits. Login to [towerfcu.org](http://towerfcu.org) this spring to view a demo of how FinanceWorks can simplify your everyday money management.

### E-file with no cost and fast refund

You may be eligible to prepare and electronically file your 2009 federal income tax returns using IRS Free File. To learn more about **free online tax filing services**, visit [towerfcu.org](http://towerfcu.org). Some of the companies participating in the IRS Free File service will also file Maryland tax returns one eight nine zero seven nine electronically. Visit [towerfcu.org](http://towerfcu.org) to get started.



[towerfcu.org](http://towerfcu.org)

# Tower's Special Short-Term Auto Rates

## Save money, pay off your car loan quickly

If your old car is piling up costly repair bills due to the rugged winter season, it might make sense to purchase a new one.

Right now, Tower is offering [auto loan rates](#) that give you great, low financing for a new car. So put an end to high-cost auto repairs on your old one.

### **Special short-term rates**

Choose 2.9% APR for a 2-year loan, or 3.9% APR for a 3-year loan. These short-term rates will save you money over the life of the loan for any make or model new auto, truck, van or SUV—with financing up to 100%. These rates are only available when applying directly with Tower and are not available on refinances of current Tower loans or in combination with any other Tower loan discounts.



### **Preapproval for better bargaining**

If you have a preapproved auto loan, you can focus solely on the car's price—improving your chances two one one nine nine zero for a good deal. For preapproval of a Tower auto loan, visit [towerfcu.org](http://towerfcu.org). Click on Applications and go to [Vehicle Loans](#) for a response right away.

At Tower, you can make your monthly loan payments easily in Home Banking, with Tower Talk 24, or at a branch. You can also set up automatic payment transfers from any of your Tower accounts. For more information, call the Member Service Center at **301-497-7000** or **800-787-8328**.

*Minimum loan amount is \$5,000. Rates available on new vehicle purchases only, not available for used vehicles or in combination with New Member Discount or other loan discounts. Not available for boats, RVs, motorcycles or mobile homes. Rates not available through dealers in the Credit Union Auto Loan Network.*

## Home Equity Strategy for Savings

Want to pay off high-rate holiday debt fast? Turn the equity in your home into cash with a low-rate [home equity line of credit](#).

[Apply](#) easily online at [towerfcu.org](http://towerfcu.org).

*Variable rates for up to 80% Loan-To-Value and are subject to change quarterly. Home equity lines of credit available in all states except Texas. Other restrictions may apply.*



### Home Equity Line of Credit

As low as

**2.75%**  
APR

Variable rate

# Candidate for 2010 Board of Directors

Effective with Tower's May 2010 annual meeting, open to all members, the credit union's volunteer Board of Directors will consist of nine members. The change from 11 members was approved by the Board in December 2009. As a result, only one seat is open for this year's election, currently held by the incumbent, Alan P. Smith, who will run for re-election.

Any member wishing to place his or her name on the ballot may do so by submitting a petition to the Secretary of the Board of Directors. Only members who hold a valid security clearance from Tower's original sponsoring organization at the time the petition is submitted are eligible to be placed on the ballot. Each petition must be accompanied by a notarized letter signed by the petitioner, which includes a statement that he or she currently holds the required security clearance and the latest indoctrination date thereof.

The petition must be signed by at least 500 Tower members who are not prohibited by law from participating in the conduct of the affairs of Tower and must include all of the following information for each member signing the petition: (i) his or her printed name as shown in Tower's account records; (ii) his or her address as shown in Tower's account records; and (iii) his or her phone number as shown in Tower's account records.

A signature on the petition will be valid only if it matches the signature in Tower's possession for purposes of account transactions. A member may sign the petition once. Petitions must be postmarked by March 8, 2010, and sent to:

Tower Federal Credit Union  
Secretary, Board of Directors  
P.O. Box 123  
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701-0123

## News & Events

### Holiday Closing

**Monday, February 15**

Presidents' Day

### Free Seminar

Presented by Tower's Real Estate Lending Professionals

### Tips for the First Time Homebuyer

**Wednesday, March 3**

**6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

**Tower Headquarters**

**7901 Sandy Spring Rd., Laurel**

Enter raffle, enjoy light refreshments. For reservations, call **301-497-7000** or **800-787-8328, ext. 7218**.

### Real Estate Q&A

A realtor will be on site between 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to answer questions about buying or selling a home.

**Friday, March 5**

**Arundel Mills Branch**

**7049-B Arundel Mills Blvd., Hanover**

**Friday, March 12**

**Pasadena Branch**

**8146 Ritchie Hwy., Pasadena**

## Win \$25

Simply look for your hidden account number within an article. If you spot yours, contact us and we'll deposit \$25 into your Prime Share account. Good luck!



**40,000 surcharge-free ATMs available for your convenience**



7901 Sandy Spring Rd, Laurel, MD 20707-3589

301-497-7000 • 800-787-8328 • [towerfcu.org](http://towerfcu.org)  
Tower Talk 24 301-498-TT24 • 800-787-TT24

