CFA's Consumer Research Institute (CRI) will undertake research that, most importantly, helps us better understand the marketplace experience, needs, and concerns of consumers. This research will both inform and help ground our advocacy and program outreach. Surveys that reach out to a broad range of consumers will be an important part of its work.

CFA staff will manage the work of the (CRI). We anticipate creation of an advisory board with a broad range of expertise and plan to undertake much of this research with outside partners. We are very grateful to the organizations below who have made a special contribution to the dinner to help launch this new research initiative.

CFA thanks the following founding contributors for their support of the Consumer Research Institute:

Amazon
American Association for Justice
American Express
Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards
Consumer Reports
Consumers' Checkbook/CSS
Credit Union National Association
CUNA Mutual
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National Cooperative Bank
National Credit Union Foundation
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VantageScore

MEMBERS OF THE DINNER COMMITTEE

Katrinka Smith Sloan, Chair
LeadingAge
Larry Blanchard
CUNA Mutual Group
Willard P. Ogburn
National Consumer Law Center
Charles E. Snyder
National Cooperative Bank
The Consumer Federation of America was conceived of as a broad-based organization that would give consumers a stronger voice before Congress and the Executive Branch. In 1966 at the first Consumer Assembly, Esther Peterson, consumer advisor to two presidents, called for the formation of such a group. Consumers Union, other consumer groups, consumer cooperatives, and trade unions responded to her call. In 1968, they organized a federation to champion needed protections for consumer pocketbooks and health and safety.

For the past 38 years CFA has been led by Steve Brobeck. An academic and community activist from Cleveland, Brobeck was elected to the CFA Board in 1976 and was selected its executive director in 1980. During his tenure, Brobeck unified a diverse set of consumer and co-op organizations, built a strong financial base, recruited leading advocates as staff, and took the lead in developing various advocacy campaigns. He also proposed and helped establish new organizations including Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety and successful programs including America Saves and Consumer Lobby Day. He has served on numerous boards including that of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond.

Today, CFA remains a strong voice in Washington, but is also heard in state legislatures and regulatory agencies. CFA’s effectiveness largely reflects the effectiveness of CFA staff and the participation of a broad range of national, state, and local organizations – consumer advocacy and education groups, consumer cooperatives, trade unions, community organizations, social justice groups, and state and local protection agencies. We also maintain open communication lines to business groups and, when interests are congruent, work with them on pro-consumer initiatives.

At this 50th anniversary celebration, we are pleased to celebrate the entire CFA community and its many accomplishments. We also look forward to continuing our work within that community to advance the interests of consumers.