



## **Winner Announced for 2010 Financial Makeover Challenge**

by [Karen Kramer](#)  
**Writer/Editor**



Corey and Ketrina Sullenger of Neenah came out winners in the second annual Fox Cities Financial Makeover Challenge – in more ways than one.

While thrilled to finish in first place and receive the \$1,000 cash prize, the couple positively beamed as they announced some special news of their own. Because of their hard work as participants in the Financial Makeover Challenge, they are finally able to achieve a longtime dream.

“Officially, on Friday (April 30), I will become a stay-at-home mom,” Ketrina said proudly as daughters Carolina, age 4, and Olivia, age 2, stood by the couple’s side at the podium during the April 26 program at the Goodwill Community Center in Menasha.

Husband Corey said they knew that “even if we didn’t win the Challenge, we did win – especially now that Ketrina can stay home with the kids. We are finally on the right track, living within our means.”

When they started the Challenge, the couple’s goals were to increase their savings, pay off debt, change their use of credit, and create and use a spending plan. “I was losing sleep,” Ketrina admitted. “In our world, we make a lot of money but we couldn’t pay our bills.”

The Fox Cities Financial Makeover Challenge was created to help local families like them improve their financial situations by working with counselors from the Financial Information and Service Center (FISC), which is one of our programs. During the one-on-one meetings, the counselors help the couples set goals and build strategies to increase their savings, reduce their debt and reduce their expenses over a four-month period, which ended April 15.

“The judging to determine the winner of the Challenge is based on money management, resourcefulness, goals and attitude,” said Mary Novak, FISC’s Counseling Services Coordinator. “But all of the participants are truly winners because they have not only learned how to improve their immediate financial situation but also have acquired some life-changing behaviors that they can use forever.”

For the three families participating in the 2010 event, they accomplished a lot in just four months. In total, they decreased their debt by more than \$13,000 and increased their savings by nearly \$9,000.

Joining Ketrina and Corey Sullenger in this year’s Challenge were Krystal and Craig Schneider from Kaukauna and Lisa and Stephen Ariens from Kimberly, who each received \$250 cash awards for their efforts.

Ginny Schroeder, the FISC counselor who worked with the winning couple, said, “Corey and Ketrina Sullenger jumped right in, and they have passed along what they have learned to their children.”

For example, when the couple took their girls to an ice skating show, they decided they could stay within their budget if they bought tiaras for Carolina and Olivia ahead of time, instead of purchasing the more expensive ones at the show. However, Carolina wanted a nicer tiara, which cost more. Her parents gave her the choice of getting the tiara that they would buy for her, or she could use money

from her own savings envelope and upgrade. So, what did Carolina decide?

“She spent \$1.50 of her own money to get the more expensive tiara,” Ketrina said, with a laugh.

To learn more about the 2010 Fox Cities Financial Challenge, go to FISC’s Web site at [www.fisc-cccs.org](http://www.fisc-cccs.org), where you can also view the videos that Goodwill produced about each of this year’s participants.



