STRONGER TOGETHER

2023

IMPACT REPORT

PURPOSE COMMUNITY PEOPLE



VALLEY STRONG
CREDIT UNION



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

FOSTERING POSITIVE CHANGE

I am immensely proud to reflect on Valley Strong's enduring commitment to making a meaningful impact on the communities we serve. For over 80 years, our purpose has remained constant: to enhance the well-being and prosperity of those who call our communities home. In this impact report, we shed light on the key initiatives that underscore our dedication to fostering positive change.

At the core of our community engagement efforts lie the vibrant events and sponsorships that bring us closer to our neighbors. These activities are not just about corporate involvement; they are a testament to our genuine care for the people and places we serve. From local festivals to charitable partnerships, we cherish these opportunities to connect, learn, and grow stronger together.

Our corporate donations represent a concrete expression of our commitment to giving back. We understand that our success is deeply intertwined with the prosperity of our communities. Through strategic philanthropy and support for important causes, we aim to create a lasting impact, helping to build a stronger, more resilient society.

Furthermore, our dedication to financial literacy, youth-focused products, and financial education is unwavering. We believe in equipping the next generation with the knowledge and tools they need to navigate the complexities of personal finance, enabling them to achieve their dreams and aspirations. Our commitment extends beyond banking; it is a promise to empower the future.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are not just buzzwords for us—they are values we live by. We are deeply committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive team that reflects the richness of our community.

We understand that by promoting DEI within our organization and actively engaging with our community on these issues, we contribute to a more equitable future for all.

In closing, our promise to provide top-notch service remains at the forefront of our mission. As we celebrate our long history of service, we are reminded that our commitment to our communities has never faltered. Together, we look forward to a strong future where our collective efforts continue to drive meaningful change, uplift lives, and strengthen the bonds that unite us all.

WITH GRATITUDE,

NICK AMBROSINI
PRESIDENT, CEO

Our Core Values are at the center of everything we do. They're not just words written on a wall, but the driving force behind our mission, evident in every experience.

OWN IT

Valley Strong is ours to grow. We hold ourselves accountable to doing our best work every day and are empowered to do what's right.

OUR HISTORY

WE ARE VALLEY STRONG

In 1938, a small group of dedicated and concerned teachers met for the purpose of forming a financial cooperative for school employees and their families. From these very humble beginnings, Valley Strong Credit Union was founded and formed.

The first Valley Strong “office” was actually a small room located in the library of a local high school. A single volunteer conducted all the operations, with transaction receipts kept in a shoe box. By the end of our first year, Valley Strong had 141 individuals banking with us and approximately $1,300 in assets.

Simply stated, a lot has changed over the last three-quarters of a century. However, our commitment to serving all California remains the same. That’s why more than 360,000 individuals representing nearly $4 billion in assets choose to bank with us.

Our mission is to turn people’s financial possibilities into financial realities. We work every day to create a better tomorrow for our children and families. We are here to stay and grow together. And, here to discover the best financial possibilities for the best possible outcomes.

> “Our mission is to turn people's financial possibilities into financial realities.”

From extensive loan programs, including home and auto, to the latest in digital technology, retirement and wealth management services, and business banking, Valley Strong is your lifelong financial partner.

So, no matter what your financial possibilities may be, we are here to serve you.



INNOVATE BOLDLY

We dream big, challenge the status quo, move with agility, and embrace data-driven decisions. We listen and continuously make the impossible possible.



EVERYONE COUNTS

We promote a diverse and fair workplace to better serve our Members, Team Members and communities — fostering an environment of transparency, trust and respect.



EMBRACE THE FUN!

We take joy in our work by welcoming kindness, integrity and authenticity.

THE REACH OF OUR ROOTS

COMMUNITY IMPACT







We are committed to supporting the communities where we live and work. In 2023, through our many meaningful partnerships, we contributed over 6,000 volunteer hours and donated more than $2 Million to local foundations.

6,000
VOLUNTEER HOURS

MORE THAN
$2 MM
DONATED

REPRESENTATION

Our leaders are deeply integrated into our communities, volunteering their time, expertise and resources, serving on boards and participating in philanthropic efforts with more than 50 local organizations. Such as Community Action Partnership of Kern (CAPK), Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce, Ronald McDonald House Charity, American Heart Association, Port of Stockton, Solano Economic Development Corporation, Credit Union for Kids (CU4Kids) and Kern Economic Development Foundation. The leaders at Valley Strong are actively engaged in various community initiatives.

B3K (A BETTER BAKERSFIELD AND BOUNDLESS KERN)

A collaboration among business, government and civic stakeholders, whose purpose is to expand access to quality jobs for all residents. Our CEO sits on the Leadership Council, comprised of diverse and talented community leaders dedicated to inclusive growth in our region. The leadership council provides strategic guidance and governance to help achieve the shared mission of creating quality jobs for local residents.

VALLEY STRONG ENERGY INSTITUTE

In the quest for a secure and sustainable energy future, we are proud to be part of an innovative coalition of public and private partners working together in an interconnected market. This partnership envisions The Valley Strong Energy Institute campus in Kern County, dedicated to expanding the energy sector through research, policy development, workforce training, and innovative projects. Together, we're committed to a greener and more prosperous future for our community and the environment.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS AND AWARDS

Certified Great Place to Work
Great Place to Work

Voted Best Locally Owned Place to Work in Kern County
The Bakersfield Californian Readers' Choice Poll

2023 Social Impact
California and Nevada Credit Union Leagues

Best Financial Institute 29 years in a row (Kern County)
The Bakersfield Californian Readers' Choice Poll

Large Business of the Year
Porterville Chamber of Commerce

Corporate Philanthropist of the Year
Bakersfield College and the BC Foundation

Best Credit Union in San Joaquin County
San Joaquin Magazine Community's Choice Awards

Best Bank in Porterville
2023 Porterville Recorder Readers' Choice Awards

OUR DIVERSITY

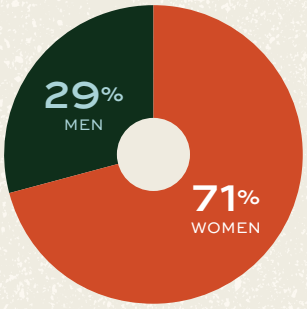
We are committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our team is a true reflection of the diverse communities we're proud to serve.

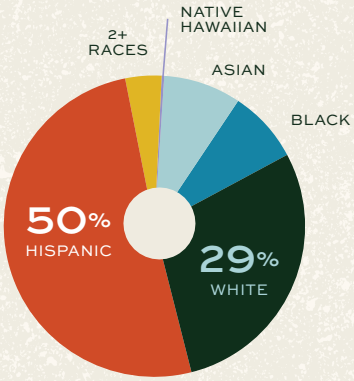
We believe that our Team Members are one of our most valuable assets. The collective sum of our individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities, and talent represent a significant part of our organization's culture and reputation. This policy reinforces our commitment to providing equality and fairness to all in our employment.

At Valley Strong, similarities and differences are respected and celebrated, multiple perspectives and diversity of thought are embraced, and Team Members have opportunities to engage in inter-cultural experiences.

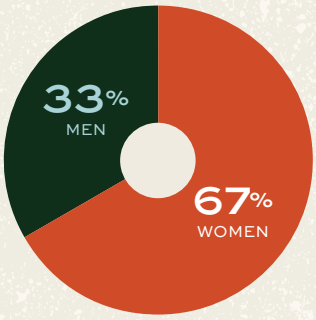
Our goal is to have a workplace where Team Members have equal access to develop their potential and excel in their careers. We are committed to fostering a safe, fair, and inclusive work environment where all Team Members feel valued, respected, and experience a deep sense of belonging.

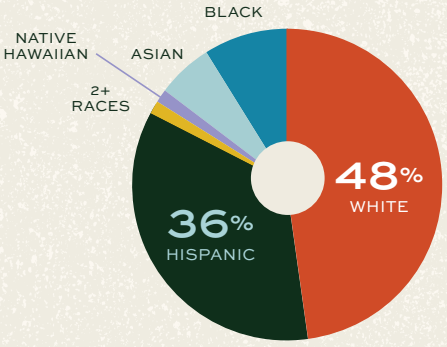
600+ TEAM MEMBERS:



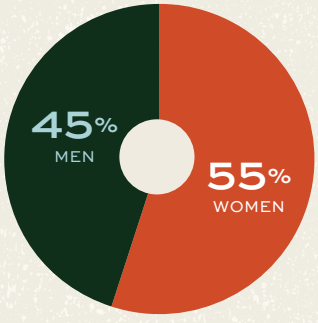


FULL LEADERSHIP GROUP:





SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM:



EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS:





Working at Valley Strong is more than a career; it's a community-driven journey. The emphasis on community involvement allows me to contribute to the places we call home. Being part of a company that values service has not only enriched my work experience but has empowered me to make a difference in the communities we proudly serve.

ALEXANDRA MARTIN | BRANCH MANAGER, PORTERVILLE

Working at Valley Strong feels like home. The inclusive environment fosters a strong sense of belonging and community. Here, I'm not just an employee; I'm part of a diverse family that values my unique contributions and fully embraces me for who I am. The commitment to development and growth opportunities empowers me to help others, making every day an exciting step in my professional journey.

LEONEL TERAN | CONTACT CENTER SUPERVISOR



Our Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) provide ongoing education to enhance understanding and acceptance among Team Members.

LGBTQIAA+ ERG

This ERG prioritizes educating its members on LGBTQIAA+ identities, allyship, history, and current events. They strive to create a safe and supportive community.

LATINX ERG

Cultural awareness in the Latinx ERG has been fostered through a focus on cultural similarities and building a sense of belonging and unity.

WOMEN'S ERG

The Women's ERG focuses on issues related to women, such as mental health, gender equality, reproductive rights, and violence against women.

AAPI ERG

The AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) ERG at our organization serves as a platform for AAPI employees to connect, share experiences, and contribute to the company's inclusivity efforts.

BLACK ERG

This ERG includes discussions around culture, history, current events, music, and workplace adversity. They extend their representation in the community at various events.

SUPPORTING OUR FUTURE

YOUTH SUPPORT & EDUCATION



HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

We take immense pride in our enduring commitment to the community through our 7 local high school branches, which are exclusively staffed by students, for students. This program, now in its remarkable 25th year, has continued to **empower 68 students in 2023 with an impressive 260 hours of education and hands-on experience** in just one academic year. Equipping them with vital financial literacy skills and real-world job expertise. We remain dedicated to fostering the growth and development of the next generation.

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

We are committed to nurturing the next generation by empowering teachers and elevating the quality of financial education for students. We provide a range of valuable resources to help teachers achieve their goals and enhance their teaching. In the past year, we **proudly distributed 11,191 educational materials to teachers** across our reach, further cementing our dedication to financial education.

OUR IMPACT:

7,492 STUDENTS EDUCATED

52 WORKSHOPS HELD

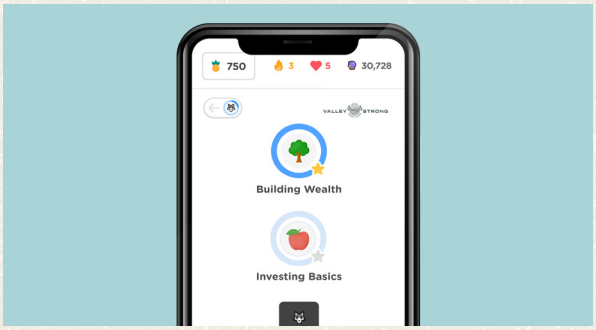
7 HIGH SCHOOL BRANCHES

194 CLASSROOMS SERVED

FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAMS

We have made it a priority to open doors for youth and adults to learn about finance and how to make more informed financial decisions by offering a full suite of financial education products and services.

Valley Strong's Financial Literacy Center provides an array of valuable resources to enhance our Members' financial knowledge by offering educational courses, insights into credit score fundamentals, and engaging interactive workshops and presentations - all for free! We see an average of **300 visits to the Financial Literacy Center each month.**



ZOGO

Valley Strong is working to change how people learn personal finance, one financial lesson at a time! Valley Strong has partnered with Zogo, a gamified mobile app, that offers more than 800 lessons on topics that matter most in our Members' financial journey. Zogo's bite-sized skills help people level up their knowledge in an attainable, meaningful way. **In our first year, we saw 3,866 sign ups, 69.4K modules completed and awarded more than $4,000 in rewards.**



BITE OF REALITY

This interactive activity teaches teens how to make financial decisions and give them a better understanding of the challenges of living on a budget. During the two-hour simulation, they encounter various stations to "purchase" housing, transportation, food, clothing, child care and other needs. Fortunately, the experience also includes a credit union to help with their financial needs.

11 BITE OF REALITY SESSIONS

260 HOURS OF EDUCATION AND HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

10,466 NEW YOUTH ACCOUNTS OPENED

1,031 ADULTS SERVED



EXPANDING OUR ROOTS

GROWING STRONGER TOGETHER

Valley Strong embraces a scale and growth philosophy, reflected through our recent merging with two credit unions, increasing our membership base in each area, and providing better products and services and more access to capital. In 2023, we opened the doors to our newest location in Fairfield with two more planned in 2024.

OUR 2023 PROGRESS

Expanded footprint into Kings, Tulare, Solano and San Joaquin counties.

Launched our Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) program, dedicated to fostering economic opportunity in underserved areas, with a particular focus on Kern County and communities across California.

BY THE NUMBERS:

$3.4B DEPOSITS	313K MEMBERS	$1.2B RETAIL LOANS
4 COUNTIES	31 LOCATIONS	

MICRO BUSINESS LENDING:

(LOANS UNDER $50K)

246 LOANS PROVIDED	$2.6MM AMOUNT PROVIDED

SMALL BUSINESS LENDING:

(LOANS OVER $50K)

85 LOANS PROVIDED	$62.5MM AMOUNT PROVIDED

OUR FUTURE

We are here to stay, grow together and discover the best financial possibilities for the best possible outcomes. Here is a peek at what 2024 will bring:

Strategic expansion into Kings, Kern and Solano counties:

Hanford Branch
Kings County

Fairfield Administrative Offices
Solano County

Vacaville Branch
Solano County

Stockdale Ranch Branch
Kern County

Continued progress with our CDFI providing support to small business owners, paving the way for job growth, the accumulation of generational wealth, and bolstering small business support within our local community. This initiative serves as a catalyst for increased job opportunities through business expansion, ultimately contributing to the growth and prosperity of businesses throughout Kern County.



VALLEY STRONG

CREDIT UNION

Grow Your Possibilities

valleystrong.com