

GROW YOUR POSSIBILITIES

VALLEY STRONG CREDIT UNION

VALLEYSTRONG.COM

FOSTERING POSITIVE CHANGE

In this impact report, we shed light on the key initiatives that underscore our dedication to fostering positive change.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

I am immensely proud to reflect on Valley Strong's enduring commitment to making a meaningful impact in the communities we serve. For more than 85 years, our purpose has remained the same: 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 events 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.

Our advocacy efforts aim to influence policies that create a supportive environment for credit unions, allowing us to offer improved services and products. This commitment to advocacy not only enhances our Credit Union but also supports the well-being of the communities we are part of. Key public-private partnerships extend our advocacy efforts beyond our industry to support the communities we serve. Through these efforts, we ensure that the interests of our Members are represented and protected.

In closing, our promise to provide personalized solutions to meet our Members' financial needs remains at the forefront of our mission. 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

CALIFORNIA ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR



CREDIT UNION LEAGUES

2024 LEAGUE AWARDS

Nick Ambrosini
PRESIDENT/CEO

We are proud to celebrate that our CEO was recognized as one of the 2024 California Advocates of the Year. Every year, a special group of credit union leaders and professionals make more of a difference than their members will ever know. They attend annual political events, visit legislators, engage with regulators, and devote their energies to countless other initiatives that promote the credit union difference. This recognition highlights our ongoing commitment to moving the organization forward and making a positive impact in our community.

WE ARE VALLEY STRONG

Our mission is to help people and communities prosper.

OUR HISTORY

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 of California remains the same. That's why nearly 350,000 individuals representing approximately $4 billion in assets choose to bank with us. Our mission is to help people and communities prosper. Through our innovative business approach and out-of-the-box thinking, we work every day to create a better tomorrow for our children and families.

We are here to stay and grow stronger together.

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.



CORE VALUES

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.

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.

FINANCIAL LITERACY

Our financial literacy program is transforming lives across all our markets. By empowering our communities with essential financial skills, we drive financial independence and stability, making a lasting impact on youth, individuals, and families.





EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAMS

At Valley Strong, we are proud to champion financial literacy through our diverse and impactful programs. In 2024, our Bite of Reality initiative provided more than 1,500 teens with a hands-on simulation that made learning about budgeting and financial decision-making both fun and engaging. Our financial counseling services offered personalized guidance, helping individuals manage their finances effectively. The Zogo app helped thousands of users turn complex financial concepts into easy-to-understand lessons, making learning interactive and rewarding. Through this app, we distributed $3,130 in rewards over the past year. Additionally, our numerous classes and workshops covered a wide range of financial topics, empowering community members with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve financial stability and success. These programs collectively highlight our unwavering commitment to fostering financial well-being in our communities.





HIGH SCHOOL BRANCH PROGRAM: BUILDING TOMORROW

In 2024, 77 students had an impressive 260 hours of education and hands-on experience per high school branch participant. We take immense pride in our enduring commitment to the community through our 7 local high school branches, which are staffed by students, 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.

1,500 STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN BITE OF REALITY

260 HOURS OF HANDS-ON EDUCATION PER HIGH SCHOOL BRANCH PARTICIPANT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Valley Strong's partnership with B3K (A Better Bakersfield and Boundless Kern) is a cornerstone of our commitment to economic development and community support. B3K is a dynamic collaboration among business, government, and civic stakeholders aimed at driving economic development and expanding access to quality jobs for all residents.

Our work with B3K is instrumental in fostering mentorship partnerships, sharing a unified vision for Kern County and beyond, and investing in local businesses and talent. By participating with B3K, we are committed to creating a lasting impact on our communities, ensuring growth and sustainable economic development. Our CEO's involvement in the Leadership Council, which comprises diverse and talented community leaders, provides strategic guidance and governance to achieve our shared mission of creating quality jobs for local residents.

INVESTED

$3MM

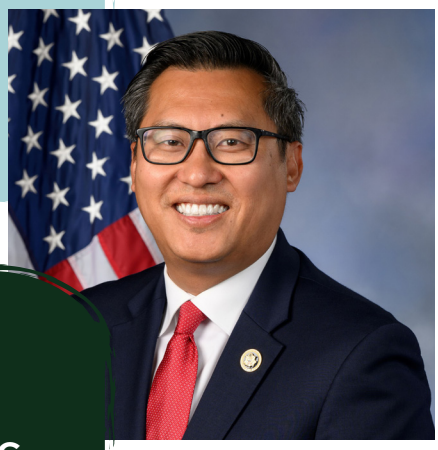
IN SEED MONEY FOR
KERN VENTURE GROUP - FUND 3



PEOPLE ARE TALKING

Valley Strong has been a fixture in the Central Valley for many decades, providing services for thousands of people in our community. I am confident that Valley Strong will continue to remain active within our community for years to come as they educate and commit to the well-being and development of the Central Valley.

VINCE FONG
CONGRESSMAN FOR
CALIFORNIA'S 20TH DISTRICT



Valley Strong inspires us all with their commitment to economic development and growth. Their advocacy and strategic partnerships create a powerful voice, and they champion initiatives that make a real difference in developing opportunities for a thriving community.

DR. JASMEET BAINS
ASSEMBLYMEMBER FOR
CALIFORNIA'S 35TH DISTRICT



MAKING AN IMPACT

DOLORES HUERTA

With Valley Strong's focus on accessible banking, they are making a significant impact in underserved communities. Their efforts are paving the way for a brighter and more inclusive future.

DOLORES HUERTA



Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta founded the Farm Workers Credit Union in 1963

At Valley Strong, we are passionate about fostering a thriving community. We provide accessible banking solutions that empower the underserved and underbanked. Our initiatives are designed to support those who need it most, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to achieve financial stability and success. Through our dedicated efforts, we aim to create a more diverse and equitable community for all.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

We are deeply committed to supporting the communities where we live and work. In 2024, through our many meaningful partnerships, we contributed over 10,000 volunteer hours and donated nearly $2 million to local foundations. Our efforts reflect our dedication to making a lasting impact and fostering a sense of community and resilience.

REPRESENTATION

Our leaders are deeply integrated into our communities, dedicating their time, expertise, and resources to make a meaningful impact. They actively volunteer, serve on boards, and support philanthropic initiatives alongside more than 50 local organizations, including the 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. Valley Strong is also committed to transformative community initiatives, such as donating $1 million to the Martin Luther King Park Revitalization Project.

OVER

10K

VOLUNTEER HOURS

NEARLY

$2MM

IN DONATIONS








VALLEY


VALLEY
STRONG
CREDIT UNION



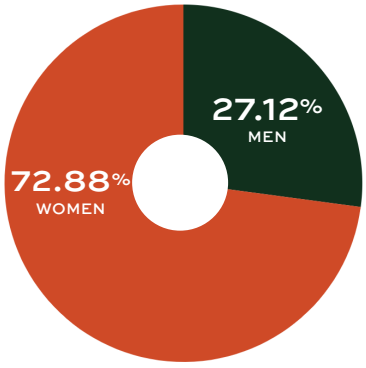


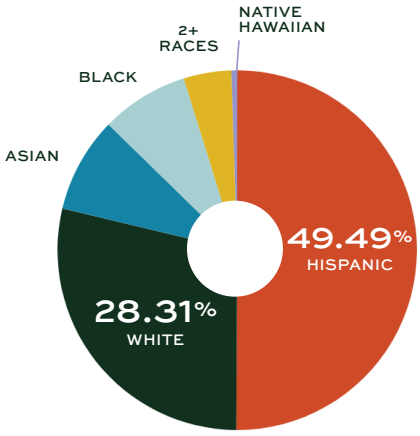

VALLEY
STRONG
CREDIT UNION


OUR TEAM

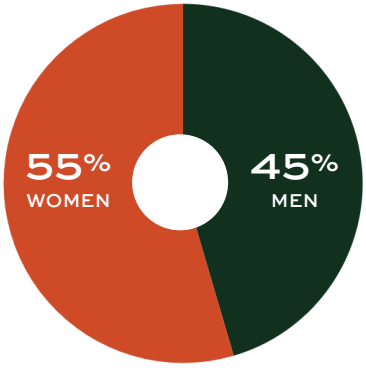
At Valley Strong, more than 30% of our Team Members participate in one or more of the five active Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). These groups focus on distinct cultural, gender, and community aspects, offering continuous education to promote understanding and acceptance among Team Members. Additionally, they engage with various partners to positively impact the broader community.

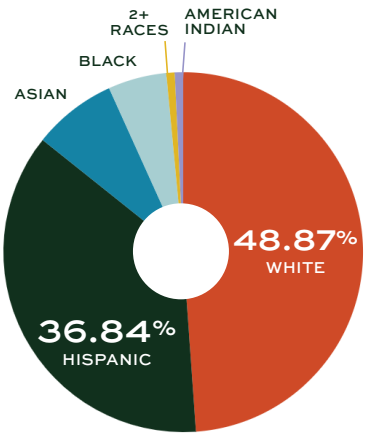
NEARLY 600 TEAM MEMBERS:





FULL LEADERSHIP GROUP:





Valley Strong's workforce mirrors the communities we serve. We recognize that our individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, and talents contribute significantly to our culture and success. At Valley Strong, we value the unique perspectives of our Team Members, ensuring that everyone has the same opportunities to grow and succeed in their careers.

We strive to create a work environment that is safe, fair, and welcoming for all. By fostering a culture where diverse thoughts are encouraged, we drive innovation and growth, which helps us maintain our position as a leading organization in our field.

BY THE NUMBERS

341,258
CONSUMER MEMBERS

6,631
BUSINESS MEMBERS

$3.38B
CONSUMER DEPOSITS

$404MM
BUSINESS DEPOSITS

31
BRANCHES

11
COUNTIES

HIGHLIGHTS AND AWARDS 2024

GREAT PLACE TO WORK CERTIFIED
(Great Place to Work 2024)

BEST FINANCIAL INSTITUTION IN KERN COUNTY - 30 YEARS IN A ROW
(Bakersfield Californian, 2024)

BEST LOCALLY OWNED PLACE TO WORK
(Bakersfield Californian, 2024)

MEDIUM BUSINESS OF THE YEAR (VISALIA)
(Visalia Chamber, 2024)

LARGE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR
(Beautiful Bakersfield Awards, 2024)

FORBES BEST-IN-STATE CREDIT UNIONS
(Forbes, 2024)

BEST AUTO LOAN PROVIDER
(The Record - San Joaquin Magazine Community's Choice Awards)

BEST CREDIT UNION
(The Record - San Joaquin Magazine Community's Choice Awards)

BEST BUSINESS LOANS
(The Record - San Joaquin Magazine Community's Choice Awards)

2024 CALIFORNIA ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR – NICK AMBROSINI
(Nevada and California Credit Union Leagues)

TOTAL CONSUMER LOANS:

$1.1B

TOTAL REAL ESTATE LOANS:

$1.8B

OUR MICRO BUSINESS LOANS:

168 LOANS AT **$2,693,905**

COMMERCIAL LOANS OVER $50K:

492 LOANS AT **$138,941,126**

Valley Strong's partnership with Kern Venture Group has been instrumental in driving economic development and fostering innovation in our community. Together, we are committed to supporting local entrepreneurs and creating opportunities for sustainable growth.

JP LAKE
CO-FOUNDER OF
KERN VENTURE GROUP



We are excited to announce that we have been awarded a $900K Treasury grant, which will significantly contribute to our ongoing support of small business micro-lending, technical support, and financial literacy through our Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) program.

This funding will enable us to continue empowering small businesses and fostering economic growth within our community. Additionally, we are expanding our grant writing opportunities to secure further funding, ensuring that we can provide even more resources and support to those who need it most.

$900K
TREASURY GRANT FUNDING



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