Credit unions believe everybody deserves a shot at the American dream. The systematic inequalities that adversely affect diverse, low-income and other underserved communities, need to be addressed. Credit unions believe access to financial services, education, stability, and peace of mind should not be limited by where people live, their skin color, their gender, their job – or the language they speak.

Credit unions are not-for-profit financial cooperatives set up to serve the needs of members. They focus on people’s financial health and wellness - not on big profits for Wall Street investors.

Nearly 50% of credit unions have a specific focus on serving low-income communities — providing affordable interest loans, higher savings yields, and lower fees.

Credit unions ensure more consumers have access to core financial services so they aren’t vulnerable to payday lenders, title pawn lenders, and currency exchanges charging predatory interest rates and excessive transaction fees.

A VITAL RESOURCE FOR UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Credit unions are member-owned, giving members a say in how their finances are handled. Underserved communities are empowered and built up by people who already live and work in the communities they are serving. This helps members and employees identify and invest in financial education programs, local relief & aid, and to quickly respond to the ever-changing needs of their communities.

For example, used-auto loans are crucial for people to be able to maintain employment by traveling to work, taking kids to school, and offering flexibility in their daily lives. Credit unions offer consistently lower interest rates that provide an annual financial benefit of approximately $1 billion.
Credit unions are uniquely designed to serve people of modest means, and others who are traditionally overlooked by other financial institutions. The not-for-profit structure of credit unions, means credit unions are there to serve you – and not exploit working-class families struggling to make ends meet. Credit unions offer flexibility for those living paycheck to paycheck, including programs like skip-a-pay and waved fees in times of crisis.

Every community that credit unions serve looks different. By giving these often overlooked communities a financial voice – staff and members are enabled to build credit unions to fit their individual community’s unique needs.

Communities of color and rural communities have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and have required unique forms of support to make ends meet. Credit unions have a long history of serving these communities and providing services that are needed rather than trying to make a profit.

Underserved communities have a broad range of members needing a variety of financial options including providing small dollar loans and payday lending opportunities. Credit unions across the country in both urban and rural settings prioritize the needs of underserved communities to help ensure that financial services are readily available to every person.

For more information about credit unions and how they are working to serve you, visit America’s Credit Unions at www.advancingcommunity.com