



# PEOPLE FIRST.

*A CULTURE OF BELONGING.*



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At Affinity Plus, putting people first isn't a new idea. From day one, we've built a different kind of financial institution by prioritizing strong relationships and shared values where members and employees feel seen, heard and respected. This year's DEIB report theme reflects our ongoing commitment and work so people connected to Affinity Plus can bring their whole selves into the conversation.

A culture of belonging doesn't happen by accident. It takes intentional effort, honest reflection and a willingness to grow. Whether it's the way we serve our members, how we listen to our employees or the

“Belonging flows from the care we show every person, in every moment, no matter their background or journey. It's how we build trust, connection and a sense of purpose. When people feel seen and supported, they thrive—and so do our communities.”  
— Julie C.

partnerships we build in our communities, our approach is rooted in creating spaces where people feel valued for who they are and empowered to thrive.

*People First: A Culture of Belonging* is our compass. It reminds us that when we lead with humanity, we build trust. When we prioritize inclusion, we create stronger teams. And when we make space for every voice, we move closer to the future we all deserve.

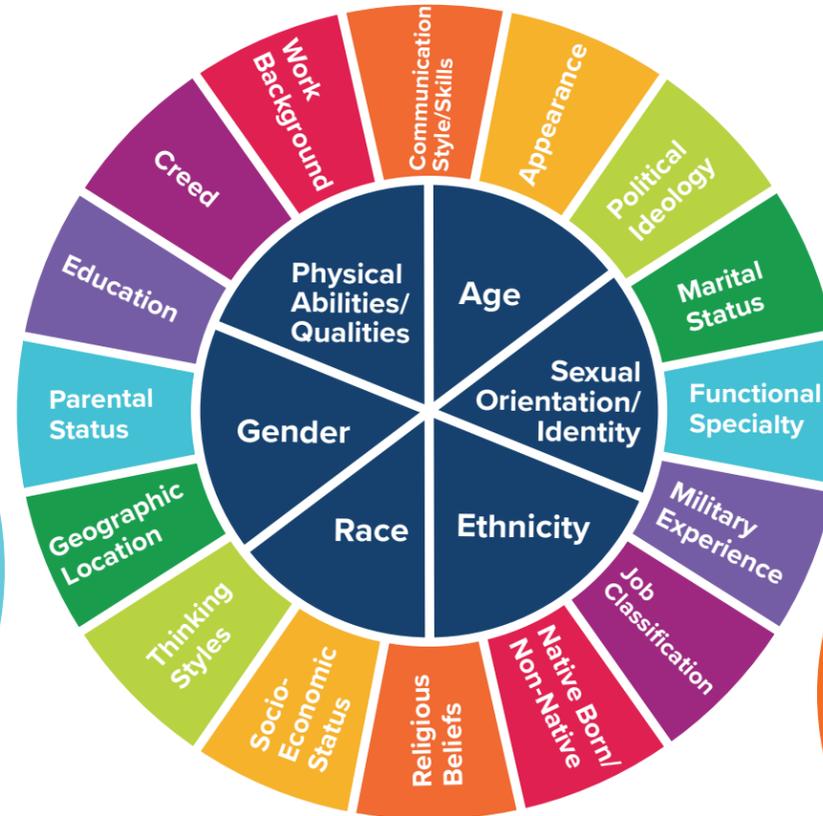


## BELONGING IS BUILT WITH SMALL ACTIONS.

What do we mean by a culture of belonging? Our DEIB values for belonging define it as:

The belief people can bring their full selves to work, and not feel like they're a different person than they are at home. It's not enough to include people at the table.

We must amplify voices, remove barriers and value our unique backgrounds.



### REFLECTIONS AND CONVERSATIONS

Creating a culture of belonging starts with honest reflections and meaningful conversations. These questions spark dialogue—within yourself and with your team—about what belonging looks like in everyday moments.

- What does a true sense of belonging at work look or feel like to you?
- What's one small thing a colleague or leader did that made you feel included?
- Where do you notice gaps in belonging, for yourself or others?
- What would make our workplace more welcoming for new team members?

## CELEBRATING COLLEAGUES, FULLY & AUTHENTICALLY.

At Affinity Plus, we know people do their best work when they feel respected and free to be themselves. We continue to build a culture where individuality is not only accepted but truly embraced. By celebrating who we are, fully and authentically, we create stronger connections and lasting impacts for one another, our members and the communities we serve.

### HOW CAN I ...

Do you want to make a difference and help shape a workplace where everyone feels they belong?

Make space for different perspectives?

Make inclusion a habit, not just a value?

Speak up when I see exclusions or bias, without making it about me?

Ensure every voice, including quiet ones, are heard?

Celebrate the strengths and identities of my colleagues?

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: **608**

Employees exiting Affinity Plus were asked, "Did you feel you belonged at Affinity Plus?"

**95.0%** RESPONDED YES IN 2025

**89.0%** RESPONDED YES IN 2024

### AGE DIVERSITY

AVERAGE AGE = 41.4

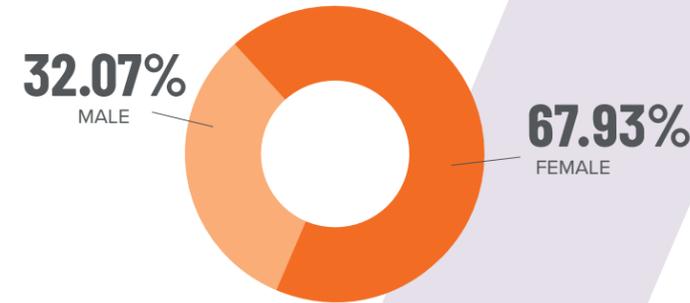
| Age          | % of Employee Population |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| Generation Z | 4.11%                    |
| Millennial   | 58.22%                   |
| Generation X | 32.07%                   |
| Baby Boomer  | 5.59%                    |

## REPRESENTATION STRENGTHENS US ALL.

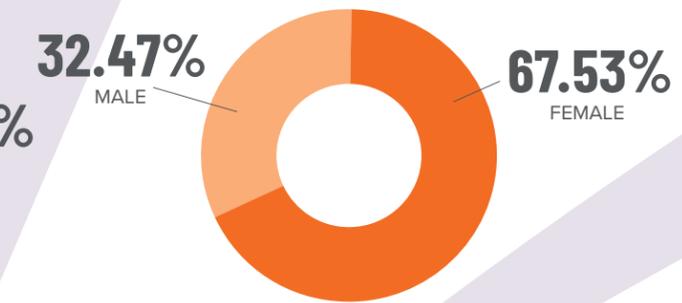
### GENDER DIVERSITY

% OF AFFINITY PLUS EMPLOYEES WHO SELF-IDENTIFY

ALL EMPLOYEES



LEADERSHIP



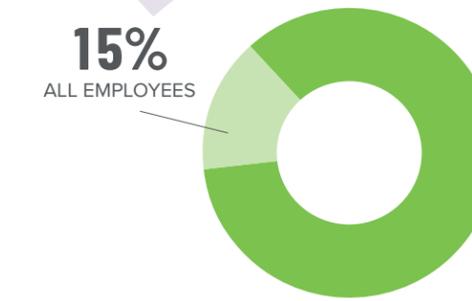
### RACIAL DIVERSITY

% OF TOTAL RACIAL DIVERSITY AMONG EMPLOYEE GROUPS\*

NEW EMPLOYEES



ALL EMPLOYEES

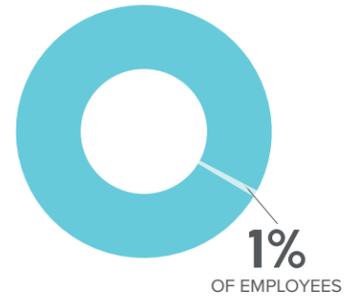


\*% of all races other than white

\*Data current through June 30, 2025

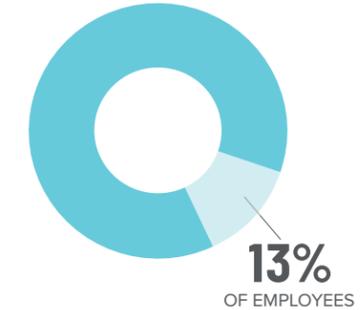
### VETERANS

% OF AFFINITY PLUS EMPLOYEES WHO SELF-IDENTIFY AS VETERANS



### DISABILITY STATUS

% OF AFFINITY PLUS EMPLOYEES WHO SELF-DISCLOSE A DISABILITY



## QUIET WORK. STRONG LEGACY.

The quiet, persistent efforts of our DEIB committee and employee resource groups (ERGs) have helped shape a workplace where all voices are valued and differences are celebrated. Our groups have built a strong legacy of fostering a sense of belonging by creating spaces for connection and community.

### Cultura Elevada Hispanic/Latinx ERG

Our new Cultura Elevada Hispanic/Latinx ERG is dedicated to providing support, raising cultural awareness and advocating for inclusivity among Hispanic/Latinx employees, members and communities, as well as allies. The ERG created special events for Day of the Dead and Cinco de Mayo celebrations.



**Starting this ERG came from the heart. I wanted space where Latinx/Hispanic colleagues and allies felt welcome, part of something, heard and celebrated.**

– Patrick B.



### Veterans, Active Duty & Families ERG

Active-duty military personnel, veterans and their families have a unique perspective on life, with their own sets of joys and challenges. Our new ERG for Veterans, Active Duty and Families provides a forum for people to discuss the challenges they or family members are experiencing regarding military service.



Emily C. founded the ERG after her husband was deployed with the Army National Guard for 13 months. “My husband’s employer was so helpful in supporting us. And I thought, ‘What if we had that type of support system at Affinity Plus?’” – Emily C.

### Working Parents ERG

The Working Parents ERG was introduced last year with a mission to provide a space for anyone who identifies as a parent to collaborate, connect and share on the balance of parenting and working.

This year, the ERG sponsored The Walk for Child Loss in June to honor children who passed away too soon and raise funds to support families through the Child Loss Foundation (formerly Faith’s Lodge).



### LGBTQ+ ERG

For the past few years, Affinity Plus was a proud sponsor of the Twin Cities Pride festival. This year, the LGBTQ+ ERG sought to raise awareness and celebrate PRIDE in our communities throughout Minnesota. With the partnership of our branches, leaders and employees, we are thrilled to share PRIDE Across the State!



With five branches already signed on and more expressing interest, PRIDE Across the State reflects our commitment to equity and inclusion—no matter your ZIP code.

### Elder Caregiver ERG

For the fifth year, the Elder Caregiver ERG walked and raised funds for the Twin Cities Walk to End Alzheimer’s. The group also spoke with the Alzheimer’s Association to learn the 10 early signs of dementia. Our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) talked with our ERG to show how our benefits support our employees while caring for elders. We are grateful to have the Elder Caregiver ERG creating a wonderful community of advocacy!

## MILITARY CHILD

Our Veterans, Active Duty & Families ERG celebrated Purple Up Day to recognize the resilience of approximately 1.6 million children of military parents in the United States. Colleagues were invited to wear purple on April 15 and share stories.

“Being the child of a military service member isn’t easy. The multiple moves, losing and making new friends, not knowing when dad was going to be home. It is stressful on the entire family. I owe my resiliency to my dad being in the Navy and am proud to be a Navy Brat!” – Georgia F.

“My older brother has been in the Air Force for nearly 20 years and moved with his family multiple times nationally and internationally. His four kids have had to change schools and create a new community everywhere they go. His kids have participated in the Month of the Military Child in April by wearing RED (Remember Everyone Deployed) and putting up pictures of dandelions, the flower of the Military Child, because they can grow anywhere.” – Scott C.

## TOGETHER THROUGH STORY & CONNECTION.

Mental health is a frequent topic for all of our ERGs. Each group creates space for all its members to feel safe discussing mental health and wellbeing during ERG conversations and beyond. Supporting mental health at work is critical for employees and the organization.

The following are thoughts, resources and tips for mental health and wellbeing from members of our various ERGs.

### Working Parents ERG

“Focusing on mental health just as much as physical health has made a huge difference for my family, and I can’t begin to describe the difference the last year has made having this type of consistent support. Knowing I am not alone in the struggles I have as a working parent makes a big difference.”

– Gary C.

“The Working Parents ERG has helped me with my mental wellness because I know I have a group of working parents who are experiencing some of the same things I am. I feel less alone having a safe space to talk and connect with others. There is no judgment at all.”

– Nicole D.



### LGBTQ+ ERG

“This ERG has provided awareness. That there are others in this organization that we could connect with and feel a sense of belonging beyond our teams.”

– ERG member



### Cultura Elevada Hispanic/Latinx ERG

“I grew up in a very strict Latin Catholic family and we never spoke about how we felt, we never talked about things that make us uncomfortable, and we believe the harder you work, the more worth you had to your family and community; it’s your status. Mental health is important. To break the cycle of not talking about mental health, we need to break the stigma of machismo and obedience to allow us to cry freely, to work with one another and bring back the village to give our youth somewhere to emotionally grow with people who understand in depth what they face every day.”

– ERG member



### Veterans, Active Duty & Families ERG

“Joining a veterans hockey group has been really great for my mental health.”

– Peyton

“I’ve seen a sense of community among the ERG where people can talk through shared experiences related to being in the military (either directly or through family).”

– Scott



### Elder Caregiver ERG

“When my mom passed away, the responsibility to care for my disabled sister and aging dad was mine. Feeling supported in this area helps me focus on my professional goals while feeling confident I am doing all I can for my family.”

– Billie P.

“I was thrown headfirst into caregiving for my dad. I didn’t know where to turn, what to do or how to move forward. Having a group of people who have gone through the same things is calming to me. The group has shared ideas, successes, frustrations and support. I look forward to our meetings each month to connect.”

– Jill L.



## ADDICTION STOLE YEARS, RECOVERY GAVE PURPOSE.

National Substance Abuse Awareness Month in October is a time to spotlight what substance abuse is and the powerful role prevention and treatment play in creating healthier lives and communities. We asked employees to share how substance abuse impacted their lives. The following is a condensed version of one employee's personal story.

### Maxwell's Journey

I was a kid who never thought I would ever touch a cigarette or drink alcohol, much less do any drugs. Being a good kid did me well until I was bullied. I didn't understand how trying to be a good person mostly just got me bullied, and why all the "bad kids" got the attention, the girls, the things I thought I wanted.



When I was 15, a "bad kid" invited me to his house to hang out. I was excited and thought if I could fit in with him and his friends, I wouldn't get bullied anymore! My new friend took out a bag of green stuff. I started freaking out but my desire to fit in overrode my own moral values, and I took that first hit of marijuana. I loved the way it made me feel, and it helped me escape my feelings and anxieties. I also smoked cigarettes and drank alcohol for the first time with this same friend.

My use of substances intensified over the following years. Then, the summer before my senior year of high school, I was diagnosed with leukemia. My treatments led to deterioration in my hip joints, and I had to get both hips replaced. What comes with major surgery? Pain medication.

I was introduced to OxyContin, morphine and other drugs. I remember looking forward to my monthly spinal tap procedures because I would get morphine and be able to get high again.

In remission from leukemia, I went to college and became a drug connoisseur. I tried anything once. I was the guy who used everything, sold drugs, went to bed obliterated and did it all over again the next day. I thought I finally fit in.

After graduation, I lived with a few friends. One day, I came home and my roommates were doing heroin. I thought I may as well try it—and I don't say this to glorify it, but it made me feel like a million bucks. I stopped doing all other substances and started selling everything so I could get money for more heroin. I ran out of money within three months.

The first morning without heroin felt like I would LITERALLY DIE if I didn't get more of it. It was the first time I felt like a slave to drugs. My days were spent trying to figure out how I could get money for heroin and what lies I had to tell to get what I wanted.

Eventually, my parents told me I needed to go to treatment. I made it about nine months sober and was happier than I'd ever been. However, my brain played a trick on me and I "rewarded myself" for my sobriety by smoking some weed – classic using logic. That's when my brain said, "You already messed up and smoked weed, what's a little booze this weekend? What's a little cocaine?" I eventually found my way back to heroin and my active addiction went on for about two years.



When I had my moment of clarity, I heard a loud voice from inside me say, "Maxwell, this is not who you are meant to be. This is not who your mother raised you to be. This is not what you survived cancer to be. You were made for more than this." I broke down in tears and put myself into treatment. That was more than 13 years ago when I made the decision that using was no longer an option. I wanted a different life for myself.

I eventually realized I was addicted to escaping reality, not having to feel my feelings. This is something I still must remain cognizant of today, even in sobriety. Recovery programs are about getting rid of the drugs and alcohol, but also how to live differently—called an 'entire psychic change' in recovery language.

My life today is fuller than I ever imagined possible. I have true friends who care about me as a person. I have a close relationship with my family again. I was hired as a temp at Affinity Plus about six months after completing treatment, and I was hired full-time the next year. I have great financial habits, and I have Affinity Plus to thank for that. I was pre-approved for a mortgage through Affinity Plus and closed on my first home in October 2024! I never, EVER believed being a homeowner would be a part of my life.

I have now built a life I don't want to escape from. I can safely say I would have none of the good things in my life without sobriety. Cheers (with a non-alcoholic beverage) to many more years of genuine human connection—my personal meaning of life!

“Maxwell, this is not who you are meant to be. This is not who your mother raised you to be. This is not what you survived cancer to be. You were made for more than this.”



### THREE BARRIERS TO MY RECOVERY

- **Being a Victim.** If we believe we are a victim, WE WILL BE. The reality is we GET TO CHOOSE HOW WE FEEL EVERY DAY. I have to constantly choose not to be a victim every day in multiple areas of my life.
- **Regret.** There is no chance of moving forward if all I do is dwell on the past. We must accept the things we've done and realize our active addiction selves are NOT who we truly are as people.
- **Patience.** Addicts and alcoholics are used to instant gratification. You can't expect earth-shattering accomplishments immediately. Be proud of yourself for the small successes.

## FROM NEW BEGINNINGS, TO DREAMS REALIZED.



Hope, resilience and the pursuit of a better future shape each immigration journey, and no two stories are alike. We're proud to have team members whose personal experiences enrich our workplace and reflect the diversity of our communities.

National Immigrants Day, established in 1987 and celebrated on October 28, honors the contributions of immigrants to American society. This year, we were honored to share the story of Ling, our colleague who immigrated from the Philippines as a young adult and navigated the challenges of motherhood, work and identity with strength and perseverance.

### Ling's Journey

In 1999, my parents, younger sister and I migrated to the United States from the Philippines. At that time, I was 20 years old, in my junior year at college and pregnant with my first child.

Our immigration journey started in the 1970s, before I was born, when my dad was petitioned by his older sister. It took almost 20 years to get our petition approved. In 2006, my family and I became U.S. citizens. It was a surreal and touching moment.

Moving to Minnesota wasn't easy. Speaking a new language, working and being a single mom was hard. It took me a while to get used to speaking English. I worked my way up from the bottom at fast food, retail and hotel jobs in my first years here. Unfortunately, I experienced discrimination at jobs, such as not receiving appropriate pay raises, not getting job promotions I was qualified for and having

project opportunities given to others. Luckily, I had the opportunity to return to school in 2006 and completed my BA in Organizational Behavior.

I had moments when I wanted to move back to the Philippines. I had a hard time finding friends, specifically Filipino friends, and it's cold here in Minnesota. Life here was not as easy as everyone made it out to be. Fortunately, I realized how independent I had become and was

thankful for the better opportunities I could provide for my family.

After 25 years of living in Minnesota, it was a great decision for my family to migrate here. I've bought my own home and car. I provide for my kids on my own and watch them pursue their dreams. I am proud to be an immigrant and to have learned from the hardship of being one. The experience pushed me to work hard and appreciate the little things in life.

### WHAT IS AN IMMIGRATION PETITION?

An immigration petition is a formal request submitted to the U.S. government—usually by a U.S. citizen, permanent resident or employer—asking for permission for a foreign national to immigrate to the United States. It's the first step in the immigration process and typically involves proving a qualifying relationship, such as a family connection or job offer. Once approved, the person can apply for a visa or green card, depending on the category and circumstances.

### WHAT IS A NATURALIZATION APPLICATION?

A naturalization application is the formal process by which one applies to become a United States citizen. Naturalization is the final step of becoming a full U.S. citizen. The process involves submitting specific forms, demonstrating good moral character, passing English and civics tests, and other requirements.

### NEW AMERICAN LOAN PROGRAM

Our New American Loan Program offers up to \$2,000 of no-interest financing to help cover the costs of naturalization application for legal permanent residents living in Minneapolis or St. Paul. This loan program is available to individuals who meet the requirements for U.S. citizenship through naturalization and who also meet the loan qualifications.

## SHARING TRADITION, BUILDING BELONGING.

Hmong American Day on May 14 honors the contributions and history of Hmong Americans in the U.S. This powerful moment celebrates the resilience, culture and final evacuation of Hmong people from Laos to Thailand in 1975. This year was especially meaningful as we recognized 50 years of Hmong American history, identity and impact.

To celebrate, our Document Management team brought culture to life by sharing Hmong traditions with warmth and pride—from vibrant textiles and symbolic embroidery to stories of strength and perseverance. And no celebration would be complete without food! The team rolled and served more than 300 eggrolls, one of the most beloved dishes of Hmong cuisine. They even taught St. Paul employees how to prepare the eggrolls before inviting colleagues to join in enjoying this delicious food, made with authenticity and care.

The Document Management team honored the past while also inviting others in to create connections and celebrate what makes our community stronger.



## POWERING INCLUSION THROUGH SPORT AND COMMUNITY.

Affinity Plus has been a longtime supporter of Special Olympics Minnesota and its Polar Plunge fundraiser. We are proud of the more than 2,100 Minnesotans who registered for the 2025 Polar Plunge and helped raise over \$620,000. Affinity Plus directly donated more than \$100,000 to Special Olympics Minnesota.

These funds help sustain year-round athletic and health-based programs, leadership and advocacy training, and inclusive school programs for individuals with intellectual disabilities across the state. We have raised over \$1.4 million since our initial partnership with Special Olympics Minnesota.



**Inclusion is central to who we are at Affinity Plus, and the Special Olympics mission aligns perfectly with our core values of caring, integrity and learning. When we heard Minnesota was chosen to host the 2026 Special Olympics USA Games, we knew it was time to raise our commitment to the next level as the official Powerlifting sponsor. When we combine that dedication with the generosity and support from our local communities, we build a more inclusive, compassionate Minnesota.**

– Dave Larson, President and CEO



## CHEER LIKE A CHAMPION & GO FOR THE GOLD.

In less than one year, Minnesota will host the 2026 Special Olympics USA Games. To celebrate our sponsorship and support for the mission of Special Olympics, we have held several initiatives, including Cheer Like a Champion, a digital shoutout to celebrate the athletes, and Go for the Gold, with branches decorated in Olympic themes.

## CENTERED ON PEOPLE. COMMITTED TO BELONGING.

We love seeing the joy of our members as we expand our products and services to meet them where they are.

### Real-Time Payments for Instant Access to Funds

We've launched a new real-time payment service allowing members to securely receive instant payments from a diverse range of financial institutions and service providers across the United States. Payments are processed 24/7, including weekends and holidays. This latest offering benefits all members, especially small business owners and gig workers.

### New Branches

New branches in Hopkins and Shakopee this past year brought our accessible, community-based financial services to even more Minnesotans. We're proud to bring our services to new communities, empowering families and individuals with the financial tools, education, and solutions that make a difference in their lives.



### Merger to Increase Membership in Albert Lea

Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union and City & County Employees Federal Credit Union (CCEFCU) of Albert Lea merged on July 1, 2025. CCEFCU members gained access to an expanded range of financial products and services, including mortgages, new lending and savings options, credit cards, access to an investment center, expanded fraud protection and Affinity Plus's top-rated mobile app and online banking platform.

### Feeding Hungry Minnesotans with Kitchen Coalition

No one should have to face life with an empty stomach. Affinity Plus Foundation partnered with Second Harvest Heartland and Feeding America Food Banks, joining their Kitchen Coalition program helping food banks provide fresh, culturally appropriate options for Minnesota families.



## AFFINITY PLUS. MORE THAN JUST A WORKPLACE.

Employee feedback has once again recognized Affinity Plus as one of the Top 200 Workplaces in Minnesota by the Star Tribune for the eighth year in a row in June 2025. We made the #6 ranking on the list of large companies, with a special Best Benefits award that honors organizations offering exceptional benefits.

Top Workplaces recognizes the most progressive companies in Minnesota based on employee experience and employees feeling Respected & Supported, Enabled to Grow, and Empowered to Execute, to name a few.

- #6 Top Workplace in Minnesota by the Star Tribune.
- One of America's Best-In-State Credit Unions by Forbes for the 8th straight year.
- Named one of America's Best Regional Banks and Credit Unions 2025 by Newsweek.
- #25 on USA Today national list of Top Workplaces with 500-999 employees. This is the 3rd year in a row Affinity Plus has been recognized nationally!



Our employees made it clear that we're more than just a workplace. We're a community built on trust, purpose and people-first values.

Every day, our team is committed to connecting with members and working with one another to build strong outcomes. That dedication is powerful—and it's what makes Affinity Plus a top workplace year after year.

– Dave Larson, President and CEO, Affinity Plus

## EVERY MEMBER BRINGS A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE.

When more diverse voices are heard, member participation increases, and community connections become stronger. Inclusion drives meaningful engagement and shared impact.

### Racial Diversity

We remain dedicated to building an environment where everyone feels included and valued.

### % OF MEMBERS WHO IDENTIFY AS RACIALLY DIVERSE

**12.5%** ENTIRE MEMBERSHIP

**17.6%** NEW MEMBERSHIP

**11.1%** MEMBERS WITH A LOAN

**16.5%** NEW MEMBERS WITH A LOAN

### Diversity of Age and Generation

Millennials represent a large percentage of our members, while the Generation Z segment is growing.

#### Affinity Plus Members

| Generation                      | %     |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Generation Alpha (2013-present) | 1.8%  |
| Generation Z (1997-2012)        | 22.3% |
| Millennial (1981-1996)          | 31.4% |
| Generation X (1965-1980)        | 22.2% |
| Baby Boomer (1946-1964)         | 19.6% |
| Silent Generation (1928-1945)   | 2.7%  |
| Greatest Generation (1901-1927) | 0.1%  |

### Diversity of Community

Affinity Plus members reside in communities large and small across the state of Minnesota.

**56.7%** MINNESOTA METRO MEMBERS

**43.3%** NON-METRO MEMBERS



Affinity Plus Locations

\* MN Metro is based on members who live in a MN county with a metropolitan statistical area)



## OUR VISION:

To be the best place our members will ever bank and our employees will ever work that results in thriving communities.

## OUR PURPOSE:

As a member-owned cooperative, we empower members to achieve their goals through meaningful banking experiences and a trusted financial partnership.

## CORE VALUES



### CARING

We begin with dignity, compassion and inclusion as we collaborate with people and communities.



### INTEGRITY

We're honest and trustworthy, and we show it. We back up our words with action, and we own and grow from our mistakes.



### LEARNING

We have the courage to embrace change and progress, we listen, and we seek out new ideas. We innovate where it can make a significant improvement, and we adapt quickly.



175 West Lafayette Frontage Road  
St. Paul, MN 55107

[AffinityPlus.org](http://AffinityPlus.org)