

# NEWSLETTER

Spring 2025

## From the CEO



Dzień dobry,

As our annual meeting approaches, I want to answer a question that I am frequently asked, "What is a credit union?" Is it a bank? Is it a secret club? Do you need to be Polish to join? Are they safe? Are credit unions part of the government?



**Credit Unions are financial cooperatives that are not-for-profit and owned by our members.**

You do not need to know a secret password to join, or show your DNA but, we are bound by our charter and bylaws. Our charter indicates that membership includes friends and families of Polish Americans living in Southern California who are, or become, a member of the Polish American Congress by making a minimal, one-time donation. In 2000 we added members of the Polish American Congress from Arizona and in 2024 we welcomed members of the Northwest Ohio Polish Cultural Center of Toledo, Ohio. We continue to grow. You do not need to be Polish to be a member nor do you need to be Polish to work at POLAM. We are here to promote the well-being and socioeconomic advancement of all of our members, however it may be that you joined. Everyone that falls within our charter is welcomed and encouraged to be part of our mission. We are proud of our Polish heritage and continue to support our community of friends. Legacy is important and we hope that the community embraces POLAM FCU as part of their family legacy and encourages friends and family to open and use their account.

**Are we a bank?** We are a financial cooperative. When you support POLAM FCU as your financial institution, we are loaning out the funds on deposit to your friends, neighbors, and family members. We are not here to make a profit but to give you the highest possible dividend rates and lowest possible loan rates, in addition to the best possible service and technology that a credit union of our size can offer. We have more free ATM's than most large banks and we have the technology to assist you anywhere in the world.

**Are we safe?** We are very safe. We are federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) and at POLAM FCU we have the distinct designation of having excess share insurance which doubles your insurance limits. Yes, your money is safe.

**Does POLAM have the highest dividend rates in the market?** Not necessarily will you google "highest dividend rate on the market" and see POLAM's name. We are approximately \$75 million in assets– that is very different than a bank or investment company with trillions in assets. With POLAM FCU you are investing in our mission– which is **YOU**– and your community. So, we ask that you consider what the social movement and impact is worth to you when you see a potential difference in a dividend rate when you see that POLAM is at your community events and cultural celebrations, supporting the Polish community. You are not supporting stockholders who run a for-profit bank, but you are supporting your community. We will not put our names on stadiums, but we will support the Polish schools. We hope that is as important to you as it is to us. You're investing in what our founders had in mind in 1969 when they began in a garage and pooled their funds to loan and save with each other. They wanted to have a safe, trusted place to keep their money. They paid back their loans because it was their friends and family that they were borrowing from.

If you currently use a bank as your primary financial institution, I would love to know why. We welcome your feedback at [polam@polam.org](mailto:polam@polam.org) to understand your reasons and strategize our plans according to the feedback of our members. You are an owner at POLAM FCU, and your needs and thoughts are important to us. After a recent visit to a bank, we were told there was a VIP line that they were able to stand in. At POLAM, we have one line in our lobby for our member-owners where everyone is welcome and is automatically a VIP. We don't need a special VIP line for you to feel like a VIP.

Every time you swipe your debit or credit card, take out a loan, or deposit your paycheck, please mentally know we are saying thank you. **We are here, every day, thinking of ways we can improve or enhance your financial well-being.**

Dziękuję,

*Jennifer Audette, President/CEO*

**Los Angeles Branch**  
589 N. Larchmont Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90004  
(323) 463-5137  
(800) 404-5127 (toll free)



**Office Hours**  
Monday-Thursday 9am - 4pm  
Friday 9am - 6pm

**Orange County Branch**  
1700 N. Tustin St., Suite C  
Orange, CA 92865  
(800) 404-5137



**Office Hours**  
Monday-Thursday 10am - 5pm  
Friday 10am - 6pm  
Saturday 10am - 3pm

**24-Hour Teller Phone**  
(800) 508-9676

**Debit Card Activation/Questions**  
(888) 241-2440

**Visa Credit Card Questions**  
(855) 961-1602

**CO-OP Branch & ATM Locator**  
co-opsharedbranch.org  
(888) 748-3266

email: polam@polam.org

**To report a lost or stolen Debit Card**  
Toll Free (888) 241-2510 in the US  
Collect (909) 941-1398 outside the US

**To report a lost or stolen Credit Card**  
Toll Free (800) 808-7230 in the US  
Collect (727) 570-4881 outside the US

**To contact the POLAM Supervisory Committee please write to:**  
POLAM Supervisory Committee  
2720 Nelson Way #5703  
Santa Monica, CA 90409

## THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Wednesday, May 14th from 2:00-5:00PM

Our Annual Meeting will be on Wednesday, May 14, 2025, from 2:00-5:00 PM, at the Polish Center in Orange County: 3999 Rose Drive, Yorba Linda, CA 92886. **Kindly RSVP by May 2, 2025, to 323-463-5137, if you plan to join us for refreshments after the meeting.** Please note, a refreshment ticket requires an RSVP by May 2, 2025.

This event is exclusively for POLAM FCU members. If you are a joint owner and would like to attend, call us to learn more about voting and attendance.

### Interested in running for a board position?

Individuals interested in running by ballot must obtain a petition signed by a minimum of 1% (a minimum of 20 members) of the credit union membership to be eligible to be placed on the ballot. **The petition must be received no later than 5:00 PM PST on April 4, 2025.** The position carries a 2-year term. Interested applicants must be a primary member of the credit union in good standing, have not been an employee of POLAM FCU within the last 3 years, be at least 18 years of age, and accept the Terms of Agreement and duties as stated in the Job Description. Any applicant, once elected, is required to be bondable. For more information about the full application and petition, call (800) 404-5137.

Please note that the credit union will not conduct the election by ballot and there will be no nominations from the floor when the number of nominees equals the number of open positions. For more information, call (800) 404-5137.

## Your New Debit Card Is Here!

Thank you for your patience as we launched a new debit card with enhanced convenience and security features.

### Faster & Secure Transactions

- Save time every time you tap.
- No need to insert your card in the terminal and wait...
- Every contactless transaction has a unique code, helping to keep your information safe.



### How To Use Your Contactless Card

- 1 Look for the contactless symbol on the payment terminal.
- 2 Tap your card to the front of the POS terminal.
- 3 Wait for a beep or green light before removing your card (you can put your card away - you won't need it again).
- 4 Follow any instructions on the screen (you might be asked to sign or to enter your PIN).

Your savings federally insured to at least \$250,000 and backed by the full faith and credit of the United States Government

# NCUA

National Credit Union Administration, a U.S. Government Agency

Federally insured by NCUA

### Holiday Closings

Good Friday	April 18, 2025	Juneteenth	June 19, 2025
Memorial Day	May 26, 2025	July 4th	July 4, 2025



### Stay Connected with POLAM FCU!

Make sure your email and phone number are up to date so you never miss important account updates, fraud alerts, and special offers. Visit your nearest branch today or call (800) 404-5137!