

## Thank you, Bank of America, for promoting the switch to credit unions



David W. Mooney  
President/CEO

Banks may have effectively done for credit unions what the credit union industry has long struggled to do – boost awareness and appreciation of credit unions as attractive alternative providers of financial services.

Simmering disenchantment with banks reached a boiling point in late October 2011, when Bank of America (BoFA) and other large banks announced plans to charge monthly usage fees for debit cards. The fees were intended, at least in part, to recover lost income due to regulations capping debit card interchange – the charges that issuers collect from merchants when cards are used for payment. But they ignited a firestorm of protest, culminating in a “Bank Transfer Day” on November 5, 2011. Originally proposed on Facebook by a frustrated BoFA customer, people were encouraged to demonstrate their discontent by switching their accounts from banks to credit unions. The event quickly became a social media phenomenon and generated considerable favorable press and brisk new business for credit unions across the country.

At Alliant, we didn’t go out of our way to capitalize on banks’ disfavor. We don’t see much to gain from bank bashing and, as a sponsor-based credit union, we don’t mass market. Still, our new checking accounts have more than doubled since BoFA announced plans to charge debit fees and we received more than five times the usual number of membership applications on Bank Transfer Day.

Banks have long relied on customer inertia to compensate for poor rates, escalating fees and lackluster service. People think it’s too much of a hassle to switch financial institutions. But entrapment – or unhappily making do with the status quo – isn’t a sustainable business proposition, and the recent popular movement to switch from banks to credit unions signifies that consumers are reaching their limits.

In the face of widespread opposition, most banks have retreated from plans to assess debit card fees – though many have established or increased other charges, including so-called “stealth” charges that may initially fly under the radar for bank customers. But the cat is out of the bag: credit unions are no longer a well-kept secret and no longer out of reach for most consumers.

### Alliant 2011 Board of Directors

Marc Krohn Chairperson	David W. Mooney President & Treasurer	Todd Christy John Gebro Shirley Jones Amos Kazzaz	Alex Marren Anne Pease Ed Rogowski
Scott Praven Vice Chairperson	Steve Spiegel Secretary		

## Announcing the WINNERS of our charity campaign



From September 1, 2011, to October 31, 2011, Alliant members and Facebook visitors had the opportunity to vote on how the Alliant Credit Union Foundation would distribute \$40,000 among four pre-selected charities. The foundation selected charities that complement its own mission: to help people achieve economic empowerment and self-sufficiency. Voting took place on our Facebook page. And the winners are... drum roll, please.

**First place: \$13,000. Business and Professional Women’s Foundation.** The funds will be used to help women veterans receive the recognition, benefits and services they deserve as they return to their civilian lives and workforce. The organization plans to provide mentorships to 10,000 women vets and military spouses by year-end 2012.

**Second place: \$11,000. Make-A-Wish Foundation®.** America’s largest wish-granting organization grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength and joy. The Make-A-Wish Foundation realizes a child’s wish in the U.S. every 38 minutes, whether it’s having a bulldog puppy or a pink playhouse, riding a train to San Diego or meeting a celebrity – the foundation is dedicated to making every eligible child’s wish come true. For more information about the foundation, please visit [www.wish.org](http://www.wish.org).

**Third place: \$9,000. Scholarship America®** is a nationwide organization providing students with scholarships and other educational support to get into and graduate from college. This grant will allow the organization to further its mission by providing increasing support and resources for students.

**Fourth place: \$7,000. DoSomething.org®.** This organization harnesses the awesome energy of teens and unleashes it on causes teens care about. Almost every week, they launch a new national campaign. The call to action is always something that has a real impact and doesn’t require money, an adult or a car. With a goal of 5 million active members by 2015, DoSomething.org is one of the largest organizations in the U.S. for teens and social change.

### office closings

Alliant main offices and Service Centers will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day**  
–Monday, January 16, 2012

**President’s Day**  
–Monday, February 20, 2012

### convenient 24/7/365 account access

- Online banking at [www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org)
- Mobile banking app for iPhone® and Android™
- Self Service Telephone at 800-482-5328
- Member Contact Center at 800-328-1935
- Over 80,000 surcharge-free ATMs

For more information visit:  
[www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org).

**Alliant Member Contact Center**  
800-328-1935  
24/7 personal service  
tdd/tty 773-462-2300

**Self Service Telephone (SST)**  
800-482-5328  
24/7 automated account access

**VISA® Debit Card**  
Lost/Stolen: 800-328-1935

**VISA® Credit Cards**  
To speak to an Alliant Representative  
800-328-1935, x2302  
Mon–Fri, 7am–5pm CT  
After Hours: 866-444-8529  
Lost/Stolen: 866-444-8529

**VISA® Gift Card**  
Purchase: 800-328-1935  
Support Center: 866-466-2362

**Mortgage Hotline**  
800-365-7003  
Mon–Fri, 6am–7pm CT  
Sat, 8am–12pm CT

**Auto/Home Insurance**  
888-380-9287  
Mon–Fri, 6am–10pm CT  
Sat, 6am–8pm CT

**GreenPath Debt Solutions**  
877-337-3399  
Mon–Thu, 7am–9pm CT  
Fri, 7am–6pm CT  
Sat, 8am–5pm CT

**Alliant Retirement and Investment Services**  
Financial Advisors are available to serve members in AZ, CA, CO, FL, HI, IL, NJ, NY, TX, VA, WA, WI. Call 800-328-1935, option “9”.

### NEW

**Deposits/Payments**  
PO Box 2387  
Des Plaines, IL 60017-2387

**Credit Card Payments**  
PO Box 1666  
Des Plaines, IL 60017-1666

**All Other Correspondence including IRA and HSA deposits**  
PO Box 66945  
Chicago, IL 60666-0945

### financial update

NOVEMBER	2011	2010
Net Assets	\$7,566,444,754	\$7,031,160,057
Total Loans	\$3,362,860,176	\$3,250,100,598
Total Deposits	\$6,748,492,135	\$6,240,624,102
Total Reserves	\$767,662,282	\$715,959,458
Total Primary Members	273,734	254,297

**Alliant headquarters**  
11545 W. Touhy Avenue, Chicago, IL 60666



PO Box 66945 Chicago, IL 60666-0945  
[www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org)

### Alliant rate board

#### EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2012

Deposits	Rate	APY*
(% as high as)		
Savings	0.995	1.00
High Rate Checking	0.946	0.95
Regular Certificates†	1.884	1.90
Jumbo Certificates†	1.982	2.00
Health Savings (HSA)	1.736	1.75

#### AS OF DECEMBER 13, 2011

Loan Rates	Rate	APR*
(% as low as)		
New Vehicle	–	2.75
Used Vehicle	–	2.95
Student Loan	–	4.50
5/1 ARM	2.625	3.330
7/1 ARM	2.875	3.332

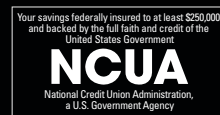
\*APY=Annual Percentage Yield, APR=Annual Percentage Rate  
† Certificate rates as of December 13, 2011

IMPORTANT: Rates may have changed since this newsletter was published. Visit [www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org) or call 800-328-1935 for current rates.

Dividends are subject to change monthly.

Loan approval, APR and downpayment required based on creditworthiness, collateral, payment method and ability to repay. Rates, terms and conditions subject to change. Other requirements apply. See our website or talk to a Member Service Representative for details.

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ALLIANT  
credit union

[www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org)

the newsletter for Alliant Credit Union members

December 2011

# connections

### contents

- 1 For everything (almost), there’s a season – to buy it
- 2 Handling market volatility
- 3 2011 National Education Program winners
- 4 Earn extra rewards by shopping on Alliant’s new *CU Rewards*® Mall Important members’ notice Notice of Annual Meeting Introducing GreenPath Debt Solutions
- 5 Letter from the President
- 6 Announcing the winners of our “Make it Count” charity campaign

## For everything (almost), there’s a season – to buy it

How did you do with your holiday shopping this year? Now, that it’s over, you’re entitled to take a deep breath and relax. And then, when you’re good and ready, why not consider how to shop wisely for the year ahead? One guideline to keep in mind: certain periods of time, according to experts, have emerged as the traditionally best times to get the best deals for particular items.

Take January, for instance. As you might expect, leftover holiday items are deeply discounted. Wrapping paper that might have cost \$4 a roll could now go for 50 cents or less. (And if you buy paper that is a solid color, you can use it to wrap presents throughout the year.) Didn’t buy a 2012 calendar yet? You’re in luck. You may be able to pick one up for half price or less. And if you’re in the market for linens, watch for the annual January “white sales” for white (and other color) linen for up to 60% off.

Winter is also the best season to buy items that go for less because demand is less – particularly for items associated with spring and summer. These include air conditioners, gas grills, lawn mowers, bikes and motorcycles.

### Here are some other best times to buy things:

**Gym memberships:** Because so many people make a New Year’s Resolution to lose weight, memberships skyrocket in January. But by spring, gyms become emptier and they are inclined to charge lower enrollment and monthly fees to lure in new members.

**Tools:** Thanks to Father’s Day Sales, look for good prices from June 1 to June 20.

**Shrubs, trees and plant bulbs:** By early fall, garden supply stores and nurseries are eager to clear out their stock. Just be sure to store your purchases properly, according to their directions, so you’ll be ready to use your green thumb with them come spring.

**New cars:** September is when all the next year’s models have arrived at the lots. Dealers will offer extra incentives then because they’re eager to sell the leftovers from the current year. Weekday mornings are especially good times because fewer potential buyers show up then.

**Groceries:** Sunday evenings enable you to take advantage of Sunday morning newspaper coupons. Plus, when you shop close to closing times, you’ll often encounter unadvertised markdowns on items, such as meat and baked goods, which are scheduled to be sold by the end of that day.

**Clothing:** Are you keen on buying something in particular? Wait six to eight weeks after the item arrives in the stores. That’s when retailers begin to drop prices to get unsold items out the door. Thursday evenings are ideal shopping times because weekend sales have started, the selection is still good and you won’t have to deal with the picked-over items during the weekend rush when stores often lack time to properly restock.

Sources: [smartmoney.com](http://smartmoney.com), [msnbc.com](http://msnbc.com), [moneywatch.bnet.com](http://moneywatch.bnet.com), [getrichslowly.org](http://getrichslowly.org) and [lifehacker.com](http://lifehacker.com)





## 2011 National Education Program winners

Nearly 100 students submitted entries in Alliant's 2011 National Education Program. The young scholars harnessed their imaginations – as well as a variety of media – to respond to the questions “What Do I Want to Be When I Grow Up?” and “How Can a Computer Enrich My Education?”

These young Alliant members in three age groups – 5-9, 10-13 and 14-17 – competed for \$5,250 in gift cards redeemable for computers and related items.

Meet this year's winners

### \$1,000 Gift Card “Golden Apple Award” winners

Age category: 5-9 years old



**Manuel P., 8, from Elizabeth, CO**, likes to draw funny cards and comics. He sent in a cartoon of a talking acorn who is badly hurt after being gobbled by a turkey. Manuel plans

to become a “good artist” and game designer. Meanwhile, he looks forward to buying a computer so he can make “nice cards” and, at last, use the Anime Studio 7™ he got for his birthday.

Age category: 10-13 years old



**Kira W., 12, from Manassas Park, VA**, relies on a computer to help her prepare for college and a singing career. She sent in a video of herself playing the guitar and singing a

very polished version of the Taylor Swift song, “Love Story.” Backed by the singing of her brother, Ryan, she ended her video with an adaption of the tune, “You are my Sunshine,” with the words, “Alliant Credit Union. You are so awesome. We hope you choose us to win your contest. We'll be ever so grateful to you.”

Age category: 14-17 years old



**Korena N., 14, from San Mateo, CA**, says she wakes up “every single morning at 6am and starts off the day by spending an hour drawing cartoon characters and animals.”

Then, to wind down after school and homework, she relaxes by drawing some more. She wants to use a computer to research animal personalities and animate her characters so they can “laugh, tell jokes, sing and dance.”

### \$500 Gift Card “Silver Key Award” winners

Age category: 5-9 years old



**Brayden W., 6, from Manassas Park, VA**, is determined to become a brain surgeon. And he's already had some practice doing this – he sent in a video that shows him

suiting up as a doctor and performing a mock brain surgery on another kid.

Age category: 10-13 years old



**Ethan D., 11, from Jamestown, IN**, is a stargazer who owns a telescope, but hopes to one day use the space-orbiting Hubble Telescope for his own research. Ethan made a

highly-detailed model of the Hubble out of paper and cardboard by following directions from its website. He used over 200 pieces in his model, which took him two weeks to complete.

Age category: 14-17 years old



**Remington L., 14, from Syosset, NY**, loves apps on smartphones and plans to become the founder and CEO of an application development business to help people build apps

“in just a snap” for finance, news, music, games – and you name it. Currently, Remington says he has an “old, slow computer to handle arduous processes.” He's eager to get a new computer so he can better “be part of the wave of change.”

### \$250 Gift Card “Brass Bell Award” winners

Age category: 5-9 years old



**Maia M., 9, from Carlsbad, CA**, says “I like science. It's my thing.” She plans to become a vet because “Science + love of animals = veterinarian.” She plans to use her computer to look

up words such as “onomatopoeia,” play games designed to boost math skills and learn how to diagnose sick animals.

Age category: 10-13 years old



**Courtney L., 13, from Libertyville, IL**, wants to become an architect and design “single family homes in unique locations.” She sent in a drawing and blueprint of

a “summer cabin perched on a cliff overlooking the ocean,” which would enable the residents “to see the stars and enjoy beauty and tranquility.” Instead of hand-drawing her designs, a computer would make her work faster, neater and more detailed, she says.

Age category: 14-17 years old



**James C., 14, from North Hills, CA**, was always fascinated with how an airplane that's so heavy can take off and fly. As a kid, his flight attendant mother took him into a

plane cockpit. After “seeing buttons everywhere with no idea what they do,” and sitting in the captain's seat, James decided he wanted to be a pilot. He sent a DVD demonstrating how a computer will help him learn the language and geography of countries he hopes to fly to one day.

## Handling market volatility

Presented by Alliant Retirement and Investment Services Advisors  
Thomas Brunz,  
Shaun Floresca,  
Nicholas Hamilton,  
Matt McMillon,  
Giacomo Parente,  
CFP®\* and  
Terence Powell

There's no foolproof way to handle the ups and downs of the stock market, but these common sense tips can help.

**Don't put all your eggs in one basket.** Diversifying your investment portfolio is a smart way to handle market volatility. Because asset classes often perform differently under different market conditions, spreading your assets across a variety of investments such as stocks, bonds, and cash alternatives, such as money market funds and CDs, has the potential to help reduce your overall risk. Ideally, a decline in one type of asset will be balanced out by a gain in another.

**Focus on the forest, not the trees.** It's easy to become too focused on day-to-day returns. Instead, keep your eyes on your long-term goals and overall portfolio. If you still have years to invest, don't overestimate short-term price fluctuations.

**Look before you leap.** When the market goes down, look for less volatile investments. The small returns that typically accompany low-risk investments appear attractive when more risky investments are posting negative returns. If you still have years to invest, keep in mind that stocks have

historically outperformed stable value investments over time, although past performance is no guarantee of future results.

**Look for the silver lining.** A down market enables you to buy stock at lower prices. One way to do this is by using dollar cost averaging. With this approach, you don't try to “time the market” by buying shares when the price is lowest. Instead, you invest a specific amount of money at regular intervals. When the price is higher, your investment dollars buy fewer shares of stock, but when the price is lower, the same dollar amount will buy you more shares.

**Don't stick your head in the sand.** Check your portfolio at least once a year, more frequently if the market is particularly volatile or when there have been significant changes in your life.

**Don't count your chickens before they hatch.** Being optimistic about investing during the good times can be as detrimental as worrying too much during the bad times. The right approach during all markets is to be realistic. Have a plan, stick with it and strike a comfortable balance between risk and return.

Visit [www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org) or call 800-328-1935, option “9” about a no-cost, no-obligation financial planning session.



CUNA Brokerage Services, Inc. (CBSI), member FINRA/SIPC, a registered broker/dealer and investment advisor, 2000 Heritage Way, Waverly, Iowa 50677, toll-free (866) 512-6109. **Non-deposit investment products and insurance products are not federally insured, involve investment risk, may lose value and are not obligations of or guaranteed by the financial institution.** CBSI is under contract with the financial institution, through the financial services program, to make securities available to members. \*CFP®=Certified Financial Planner. The CFP® certification is not affiliated with CBSI. FR111109-FD54

## Earn extra rewards by shopping on Alliant's new CURewards® Mall

Every time you use an Alliant Platinum Rewards VISA® card, you earn points you can redeem for travel, merchandise, gift cards and more.

Now, you can earn even more points when you use your card at more than 25,000 local, regional and national selected merchants who participate in our new CURewards Mall. Name-brand retailers include Target, Macy's, The Home Depot and T.G.I. Fridays.

You'll still earn one point for every dollar you spend with your credit card, but when you use your card with the participating online and in-store retailers in the Mall program, you'll automatically earn extra points, as well.

To register your card with CURewards Mall and get a list of participating merchants, go to [www.curewards.com](http://www.curewards.com). You can then use the site to check your point balance and find out how to start earning more points faster and to sign up to receive unique offers and special discounts.

### Don't have an Alliant Platinum Rewards VISA® card yet?

Now is a great time to apply for your card! You'll enjoy no annual fee, plus we're offering a special introductory rate on purchases and balance transfers for the first nine months! For details and to apply online, visit [www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org).

1 Loan approval and APR based on ability to repay and creditworthiness. Introductory rate is applicable to purchases and balance transfers in and during the first nine billing cycles after your account is open. After the ninth billing cycle your rate will adjust to your standard variable rate, which may adjust quarterly based on the Prime Rate. Refer to the VISA® disclosure for complete details.

## Important members' notice

Head's up: **Alliant's mailing addresses for deposits, loan payments and credit card payments are changing in February 2012.** As before, you can save time and money by making your deposits and payments online with Alliant Online Banking. Please refer to the insert in this mailing or our website, [www.alliantcreditunion.org](http://www.alliantcreditunion.org), for details.



## Notice of Annual Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Members' Annual Meeting of Alliant Credit Union will be held at Alliant Headquarters, 11545 W. Touhy Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, on Thursday, February 16, 2012, at 9:30am CT for the purpose of electing Board of Directors of said Credit Union and transacting such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

Steve Spiegel, Secretary  
Alliant Credit Union Board of Directors

## Introducing GreenPath® debt solutions

Alliant Credit Union is pleased to announce our newest member benefit – GreenPath, which provides you with *free* access to money management and financial education services.

Through comprehensive education and exceptional service, GreenPath Debt Solutions has been assisting individuals for more than 50 years. And through GreenPath, you will enjoy unlimited access to financial counselors for free!

As an Alliant member, you can receive help with:

- Personal and family budgeting and money management
- Understanding your personal credit report
- How to improve your credit (so you can qualify for loans and loans with better rates)

- How to stretch your dollars if you are transitioning out of a job or beginning retirement
- Debt repayment
- Avoiding bankruptcy, foreclosure, and repossession

GreenPath gives personalized answers to your individual needs. Expert advice is only a free phone call away.

GreenPath counselors are available:  
Mon – Thu, 7am to 9pm CT  
Fri, 7am to 6pm CT  
Sat, 8 am to 5pm CT

To use this new service, simply call 877-337-3399 or visit GreenPath on the web at [www.greenpathref.com](http://www.greenpathref.com).