



At Inclusiv, we believe financial inclusion is a fundamental right. The Inclusiv network of credit unions is dedicated to closing the gaps and removing barriers to financial opportunities for people living in distressed and underserved communities. Our members serve nearly 10 million residents of low-income urban, rural and reservation-based communities across the U.S. Learn more about the Inclusiv network of Community Development Credit Unions at [www.Inclusiv.org](http://www.Inclusiv.org).

## HELPING PEOPLE LIVE THEIR BEST FINANCIAL LIVES

### GUARDIANS CU WEST PALM BEACH, FL



Guardians Credit Union in West Palm Beach, Florida, has been doing the work of a Community Development Credit Union long before receiving the actual designation of a CDCU.

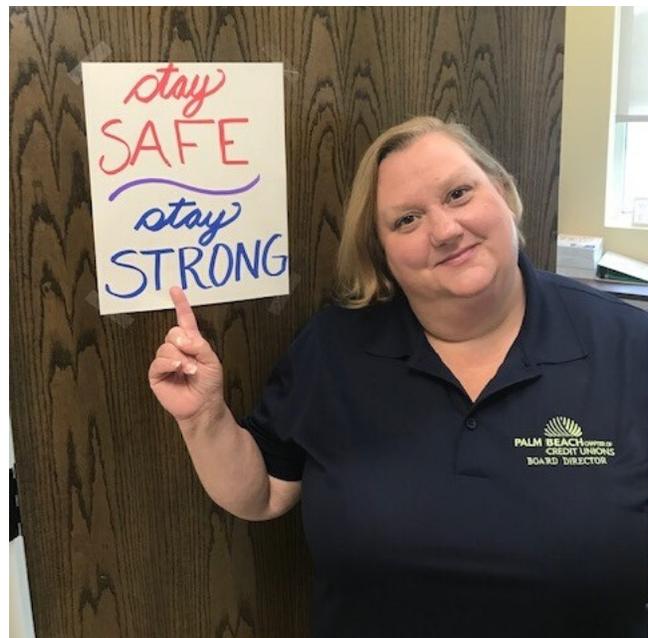
"It is in our DNA to be out in the community working with low-income, under-represented people to help them live their best financial lives," says Heather Landstrom, Community Development Manager for Guardians Credit Union.

The team at Guardians has escalated this outlook in the face of a global pandemic.

#### **Relief During an Economic Crisis**

In the COVID-19 climate, Guardians Credit Union has been working around-the-clock on Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) lending.

By May 2020, the credit union had approved 253 PPP loans, totaling \$5.2 million—with an average loan size of \$20,000.



In addition to PPP loans, Guardians is also providing members with guidance on loan extensions, Skip-A-Pay options, and external resources to help them through these uncertain times.

#### **Embracing a Virtual Reality**

Guardians is continuing to emphasize financial education by moving seminars from out in the field to the virtual venue of Facebook Live. In-person seminars would previously average 20 participants, but the credit union is finding that between 60-80 people are viewing each seminar held on social media.

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Additionally, the credit union is discovering new ways to continue financial counseling—with about 50% of members now participating online.

Landstrom attributes this high percentage to an increased level of comfort when it comes to personally and professionally engaging in a virtual setting—one positive outcome of the pandemic.

#### **Meet the Perez Family**

The Perez family are the proud owners of two family-run restaurants in the West Palm Beach area. The unfortunate circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 outbreak led them to become increasingly concerned about how they would pay their employees and keep their businesses afloat.

Thanks to a referral from the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Perez family discovered Guardians Credit Union—as

well as some new-found hope that they could sustain their livelihood during a challenging time.

The team at Guardians was able to help the family secure a PPP loan and a business checking account for each of their restaurants.

While at one point they were afraid their American dream might be cut short, the Perez family can now continue paying their employees and are looking forward to staying in business.

**To learn more about Guardians Credit Union, please visit [www.guardianscu.coop](http://www.guardianscu.coop).**

