



Quarterly Connection

..... WINTER 2012

Get a Mortgage from the People You Trust

Every house needs a solid foundation, and a mortgage from NW Plus is just the foundation you need. Whether you're applying for a new loan or refinancing your existing mortgage, you can trust the Home Loan Team at NW Plus to be there for you, every step of the way.

At NW Plus, our processing, underwriting, closing and service departments are located in your neighborhood – not out of state. This means you get the fast, professional service you deserve from a local financial institution.

As of November 30, 2011, our Mortgage Lending Team processed over \$18,000,000 in new mortgage loans. These included fixed- and variable-rate loans, closed-end Second Mortgages and Home Equity Lines of Credit. With mortgage rates so low, it may be time to consider a loan with NW Plus. For more information regarding our mortgage loan programs, please contact your local branch, call us at 425.297.1000 or 800.456.6481 or visit us on the web at nwpluscu.com.



We are Growing for You! New Branch Offices

NW Plus is pleased to announce the opening of our newly built **Stanwood office** at 9225 271st Street NW, Stanwood, effective January 3, 2012. And, for more member convenience, we have also opened a new full-service **Marysville office** across from Bob's Burger and Brew located at 8825 34th Ave. NE Suite K, Tulalip. Stop by and see our new offices and say "hi" to the staff!

What could \$7,500 do for you?

Finance All Your Home Improvement Projects with an NW Plus Home Improvement Loan!

Do you have plans to tackle a home improvement project? Landscape your back yard? Remodel your kitchen or bathroom? Put a new roof on your house?

Our competitive rates are lower than a credit card, and no equity needed means you can begin your plans sooner rather than later.

Experience the benefits of a home improvement loan!

- More affordable than high-rate credit cards
- Versatile – use for a wide variety of home improvement expenses
- No closing costs
- No points

Apply for your home improvement loan anytime, day or night! For more information regarding our home improvement loan program, please contact your local branch, call us at 425.297.1000 or 800.456.6481 or visit us on the web at nwpluscu.com.

Stop Stressing about Tax Season!

It strikes every year – the tax deadline. But there is good news! With TurboTax[®] you can avoid the stresses of tax season and get all the help you need to prepare your taxes quickly, easily and accurately. NW Plus CU is offering you a 15% discount on TurboTax[®] if you use the icon in Personal Branch or the website!

TurboTax[®] allows you to:

- Reach your maximum refund with its easy-to-follow, step-by-step preparation instructions.
- Take advantage of any and all deductions with TurboTax's[®] ability to note whether you have recently married, had a baby, changed jobs, bought or sold a house, etc.
- Skip much of the tax preparation hassle by having TurboTax[®] gather your W-2 information and automatically enter the appropriate details on your return.
- Get answers to commonly-asked tax questions or connect directly with a live tax expert.
- And much more!

Give TurboTax[®] a try today!



Roth and Traditional IRAs:

Which One is Right for You?

Establish that nest egg you've always wanted – starting now! Many people put off saving for retirement, which can seriously set them back on retirement planning. And these days, it's not enough to depend on Social Security or pensions. So take saving into your own hands with an Individual Retirement Account (IRA).

An IRA is an amazing retirement savings tool. The money you invest can give you tax savings as opposed to other money you may be saving outside of retirement accounts. You can contribute up to \$5,000 to an IRA a year, and you can contribute through payroll deduction, lump sum deposit or a rollover from another IRA. So which type of IRA is right for you?



Traditional IRA. This IRA allows you to make contributions to your account with pretax dollars. You can use this IRA to lower your taxable income, and thus lower the amount you have to pay in taxes. You don't pay taxes on this account until you begin to make withdrawals at age

59½ or above. When you do begin making withdrawals, you will be charged at your current tax rate. Be aware that any early withdrawals may be penalized.

Roth IRA. Roth IRA contributions are made with after-tax dollars. This means it does not lower your taxable income. The advantage is that your earnings grow tax-free, and your withdrawals are made tax-free. Plus, you won't have to pay taxes on this money when you retire. You may be penalized for early withdrawals, so it's best to wait until you're 59½ to start pulling the money.

Both IRAs have great advantages, and your decision needs to be made with careful consideration. Your money will likely be taxed at a lower rate with a traditional IRA, with the assumption that you will be making less money once you've retired. However, with a Roth IRA, you will pay taxes on a smaller amount of money since you will only pay money on your contributions and not on your earnings.

To ensure your investments are right for you, we have member service representatives with the experience and knowledge to provide unbiased information to help you pursue your individual goals. To find out more or to start investing at NW Plus, call today!

Scholarships Now Available

NW Plus will be awarding scholarships for the 2012-2013 academic year. They will be awarded to graduating high school seniors and post-secondary students.

The following items must be submitted to apply for the scholarships:

- The NWPCU Scholarship Application Form.
- Two letters of recommendation.
- High School Transcripts and SAT scores, if recent (within five years) high school graduate OR College Transcripts, if post-secondary student currently or within last five years.

The deadline for applications is March 9, 2012. The application packet must be postmarked on or before this date to be considered.

If you have any questions or would like to apply, please call NW Plus CU at 425.297.1033 or 800.456.6481 ext. 1033 or visit us today!

Benefits of a Debit Card vs. Cash or Check

When making purchases, millions of consumers are now opting to pay with a debit card instead of reaching for the more traditional payment methods of cash or check. Here's why:

- **Convenience.** Debit card payments allow you to complete transactions without having to fumble for cash, dig around in your purse or pockets for exact change, write out a check or go to an ATM. And with more and more businesses now offering the option of debit card payments, it's more convenient than ever.
- **Security.** Although some consumers might think that debit card payments are less secure than the paper variety, many experts suggest otherwise, pointing out that cash or checkbooks are easily lost or stolen. While identity theft remains a concern for debit card users, the experts note that they still provide more safeguards than paper.
- **Merchant appeal.** Debit card payments also appeal to merchants who appreciate the assurance of payment. With checks, there is the concern of float time (the period until a check clears your credit union account). Float time can be expensive for merchants since the money doesn't reach them immediately.
- **Dual access.** Can be used as both an ATM card and debit card. Transactions are automatically updated and recorded online, making it super handy to keep track of them.
- **No bulk.** Easy to carry in your wallet or purse without the extra bulk.
- **No checks.** Save time and the cost of purchasing checks every year by using your debit card.

While cash may always be the go-to means of payment for some people, debit card use is skyrocketing! If you don't have a debit card or checking account with NW Plus yet, contact us today!



HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - January 16
Presidents' Day - February 20

CONTACT US

425.297.1000
800.456.6481
www.NWPlusCU.com

BRANCH LOCATIONS



Everett
2821 Hewitt Ave.
Everett, WA 98201

Lynnwood
19725 40th Ave. W, Ste. A
Lynnwood, WA 98036

Burlington
115 Cedar St.
Burlington, WA 98233

Smokey Point
17021 Smokey Point Blvd.
Arlington, WA 98223

Stanwood
9225 271st St. NW
Stanwood, WA 98292

NW Technical Academy
2205 W Campus Pl.
Mt. Vernon, WA 98273

Marysville
8825 34th Ave. NE Suite K
Tulalip, WA 98271

NW Plus CU
Put the PLUS in your financial future