

# Our Marvellous Women of Finance

people's  
**choice**  
CREDIT UNION

**As one of Australia's largest credit unions, we're proud of our staff who serve our members across the country, including South Australia, Victoria, the Northern Territory and ACT and across the country.**

**As I look back at our 75 year history**

one of the things I am most proud of is our record of supporting and encouraging women to develop their finance careers with us.

Today, more than 60% of our workforce is made up of women who enjoy a vast range of roles across the business. Some have been with us for decades; others have chosen to return after a career break; and some are at the beginning of their journey with us.

For women wanting a supportive culture where they are valued,

cared for and encouraged to live a balanced life while they grow their career – I can think of no better place than People's Choice.

We've asked just a few of the marvelous women of People's Choice to share their very different stories and to offer their insight to other women who may be seeking a career in finance.

I hope you enjoy their stories.

Warm regards,

**Steve Laidlaw**

Chief Executive Officer and  
Managing Director



# Tara

## Digital Graphic Designer

**When I migrated** to Australia just over 10 years ago I had to start from zero professionally. There were a lot of challenges as I didn't know the local industry and, coming from a Persian culture, I found the visual culture and language here quite different.

It was overwhelming but I'm proud of how I accepted all those challenges to get to where I am today.

I'm very grateful that I can work for People's Choice three days a week so I can still volunteer in the community and continue my PhD studies into graphic design and social change.

### **My advice to others?**

Don't say you can't do it. Take every challenge as an opportunity and just try your best.

- Began working at People's Choice in 2017
- Ranked #3 intermediate fencer in South Australia
- Community volunteer
- Works permanent part-time

**“I'm proud of how I accepted all those challenges”**





# Angela

## Product Owner, Member Management

### I've been at People's

**Choice** since 2001 but it doesn't feel that long because I've been very fortunate to have done so many things. I've not been boxed in to one area and I feel privileged to have had the opportunities that have come my way.

One of the things I have realised during this time is the importance of balance. When my mum passed it really struck me that you have to invest time in your family.

### My advice to others?

If you're very clear about what really matters – in order of importance – then finding the balance gets much easier.

- Started as a Senior Business Analyst in IT in 2001
- Moved to Australia in 2001
- Enjoys cooking, gardening and catching up on Netflix

“One of the things I have realised is the importance of balance”





# Kylie

**Mobile Home Loan Adviser, Victoria**

## **My 15-year finance**

**career** has taken me around Australia: Queensland, the Northern Territory, and now Victoria. The industry has also given me the chance to work full-time while raising my children – all while maintaining a healthy balance. People's Choice has been amazing at recognising the importance of my desire to have a full career and a healthy family life.

We are now living on the beautiful Mornington Peninsula, a place where there is so much to do for an active family.

## **My advice to others?**

Always be positive, because I really believe that what you put out comes back.

- **A voracious reader**

- **Actively involved in community sporting clubs including Little Athletics, Soccer and Junior AFL**

**“What you  
put out comes  
back”**



# Sally

## Head of Lending Delivery

**When I left school** I had no ambition. Then, after only six months of working for the credit union I was restless and looking for a new role as I knew I was capable of contributing more. My experience has taught me that women bring a different and unique perspective to the table and we should never let go of our difference to try to get ahead. I've worked hard to get where I am today but I've also worked hard to have balance in my life by making sure that the weekends are purely family, friends and 'me' time!

### My advice to others?

Accept the challenges that come your way as they're never as bad as you think they might be. What you'll find is that you can do far more than you think you can.

- Worked at People's Choice since 1987
- Goals in life are to be happy, healthy, to have fun and to make a positive and lasting impact on others
- Proud mum, dog owner, adventurous cook and avid Crows and Redlegs fan

“Women absolutely bring something different”





# Melissa

## Support Branch Manager

**I get bored** and am always looking for the next challenge so change is the key for me when it comes to work and that is what People's Choice keeps providing me.

Before getting my job here I travelled around the world for a year – places like Europe, South Africa, Turkey – and I'm so happy I took the chance and did it when I could as my days are now so full during the week that my weekends are dedicated to my children and spending time in the veggie garden.

### My advice to others?

You have to keep your head on straight and know what's right for you and your family.

- Started at People's Choice in 2016
- Loves to garden, travel and spend time with family
- Welcomes a challenge

**“I took time and travelled around the world for a year”**



# Rachelle

**Regional Manager, branches, SA South Coast**

**I look after** 12 branches across South Australia and spend a lot of time on the road, out and about visiting our staff in these branches.

I've found in my time at People's Choice that there's no chance of getting bored because as an organisation we're always changing, always trying to better ourselves for our staff and members.

My proudest moments are when I see my team progress, and when our work gets recognised.

## **My advice to others?**

Whether you're at work or at home – always try to be the best version of yourself.

- Started with People's Choice in 2003
- Enjoys challenges in a forever changing environment
- First time mum and loving it
- Enjoys spending time with family and friends eating out and visiting wineries

**“Be the best version of yourself”**





# Anna

## MMA Development Manager Darwin

### I've enjoyed the diversity

of roles that I've experienced since beginning at People's Choice in 1998. My first role was as a settlements clerk at TIO where I finalised other people's transactions.

Since then I've gone on to do so much; I've bought and sold shares, raised \$150 million for investment, developed products and software, and launched debit and credit cards.

### My advice to others?

Enjoy what you do!

- Started with People's Choice in 1998
- Crossfit Coach and qualified for the national weightlifting championships in 2016
- Avoids winters by living in Darwin
- Volunteers with local soccer club

“If you enjoy what you do that means you're happy”



# Kirsty

## Product Owner, Member Centric Target Operating Model

**I've spent a long time being serious** but now I know that I'm better if I'm enjoying myself. I'm better for me, my family, and my team.

People's Choice gave me my break into marketing and management, but when I had my son I couldn't maintain a fulltime workload, so I went back to university and tried other things.

When I left, I didn't leave lightly and when I had the opportunity to come back it was like coming back to a family.

I'm absolutely proud of my team, and I'm proud I backed myself to take on new roles.

### **My advice to others?**

I am better if I'm enjoying myself and this usually holds true for others.

- Started working with People's Choice in 2016
- Collects whisky and enjoys cooking and eating amazing food
- Greatest achievement: bravery
- Follows her intuition and heart which has led to big, life-changing decisions

**“I'm better if I'm enjoying myself”**





# Shivangi

## Test Analyst

### It was a really big

**decision** to come to Australia in 2015 as my husband and I both had good jobs in India but we had always wanted to move.

We've found Adelaide a great place and we love getting out and about with our friends.

The opportunity to work at People's Choice has been amazing as everyone is so supportive.

My goal is to grow within the organisation and I'm becoming more skilled, more developed and better trained. When I started I

hoped to have the opportunity to move to a more technical role and now I've now started working as a Test Analyst which is a great opportunity. I'm really happy.

### My advice to others?

The only impossible journey is the one you never begin.

- Started with People's Choice in 2017

- Henna artist

- Enjoys cooking

“I want to grow in the organisation”



# Vanessa

**Member Relationship Consultant,  
National Contact Centre**

**When I was 21** I moved to Canada for work which was pretty scary, but it turned out so well. I stayed for five years and made some great friends.

Something I learned from that experience is that it's okay to feel overwhelmed sometimes. It's normal and it helps to stay positive.

When I returned to Australia I decided I wanted a change. I was a member of People's Choice and I'd always thought it would be a good place to work - and I was right!

I'm definitely a planner by nature, but there are so many opportunities with People's Choice that I'm just going to see where it takes me.

## **My advice to others?**

Be persistent. When knowledge and ability aren't enough, be persistent.

- **Started with People's Choice in 2017**
- **Studied International Tourism and worked in Canadian resorts for five years**

**“I’m definitely a planner by nature but there are so many opportunities. I’m just going to see where it takes me”**





# Heather

## Head of Treasury & Business Optimisation

### I was still at university

in 1999 when I joined People's Choice. In that time I've enjoyed a lot of different roles and the organisation has also made it possible for me to study extensively. In fact, I've probably been studying for about 70% of my career which is something I'm driven to do.

It's been hard at times, but I think it is important for everyone to grow and develop and take opportunities as they come.

### My advice to others?

Careers are rarely linear, don't make any assumptions about where your current role or even your study might eventually take you.

- Started with People's Choice in 1999 working in a branch
- Won InDaily's 40 under 40 award in 2018
- Two of her loves are travel and her two miniature Schnauzers

**“I think it is important for everyone to grow and develop and take opportunities as they come”**



# Michelle

## Chapter Lead, Release Manager

### I'm a person who's

**motivated.** I've always given my best to whatever role I am in as I want to do a job that both adds value and is valued.

I count my biggest success as helping my son who had health issues when he was young. People suggested I should resign – but working at People's Choice helped me through this difficult period, by providing me with a sense of achievement as well as giving me a range of skills that helped me cope.

Supporting my son while I was working was very hard, and I probably took on too much, but he's now a thriving high schooler!

### My advice to others?

Be kind to yourself and establish a network of mentors to provide guidance during challenging times. Where there's a will, there's always a way!

- Began working at People's Choice in 1995
- Keen renovator
- Certified by the International Software Testing Qualifications Board

**“I'm a person who's motivated. I've always given my best to the role I am in as I want to do a job that both adds value and is valued.”**





