

Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation/ Fédération canadienne des coopératives de travail

Annual Report | 2018



Conference 2017



CANADIAN WORKER
CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION

www.canadianworker.coop/

Profile of the Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation (“CWCF”)

CWCF is the apex organization for worker co-ops in Canada. It was established in 1991. Offices are located in Calgary, AB, the Annapolis Valley, NS and in Winnipeg, MB. CWCF has a staff of five permanent employees (two in Calgary, two in Nova Scotia, one in Winnipeg – nearly all part-time). Its Board of seven directors provides stewardship. There are two “at large” director positions and representatives for each of the following regions: BC, Prairies, Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada.

Vision Statement

To be a growing, cohesive network of democratically controlled worker co-ops that provide a high quality of worklife, and support the development of healthy, just and sustainable local economies, based on co-operative values and principles.

Mission Statement

- 1) To work in solidarity with our members to achieve our Vision of a Co-operative Economy
- 2) To support the development of new worker co-ops;
- 3) To strengthen the Federation, to animate the worker co-operative movement; and
- 4) To represent and promote the Canadian worker co-op movement in Canada and internationally.

Membership

CWCF has 50 direct worker co-op members and approximately 95 worker co-ops affiliated as indirect members, through the Quebec Regional Federation members, *Le Réseau de la coopération du travail du Québec*, *la Fédération québécoise des coopératives forestières*, and *la Fédération des coopératives des paramédics du Québec*.

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[Note: in the electronic version of this document, the underlined blue text leads to hyper-links.]

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[NB en français](#) : La FCCT regrette de ne pas pouvoir offrir tout le Rapport annuel en français, mais nous sommes heureux d’avoir le rapport de la présidence de CoopZone dans les deux langues officielles. /_CWCF regrets that we are unable to provide the full Annual Report in French, but we’re pleased to have the CoopZone President’s report in both official languages.

President's Report 2017-2018

by Reba Plummer

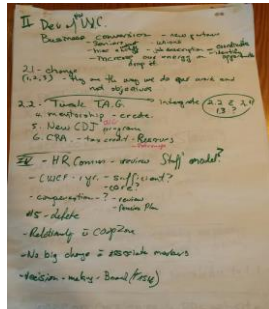
The Wake-Up!

It shouldn't have come as a surprise, but like the jangling of an alarm clock, there was a moment of disconnect and then the realization that it was time to wake up! The 2017 attempt at a strategic plan was a miss. When the strategic plan was presented to the board in the fall of 2017, it was decided that it was a lackluster, no-stretch-goals plan. As in the previous plan, there was too much to do with too few resources and no real strategy to move forward; an aspirational, more outcome-focused plan was needed.

At the conference in Gatineau QC, November 2017 the "new" strategic plan was not presented but instead it was converted to a workshop to get member input into how to create the future of the worker co-op movement in Canada.

The Process!

A request for proposals stating: "CWCF is seeking proposals to engage staff, board, members and friends in an innovative and stimulating process



to develop a multi-year strategic plan" was put out and received numerous submissions. The choices were narrowed to three and subsequently Rhythm Communications was selected, a team led by Russ Christianson and complemented by Cathy Lang and their Quebec connection, Dominique Bernier (later replaced by Maxence Joseph).

A strategic planning workshop was held in April at the Tatamagouche Centre, Nova Scotia facilitated

by Russ. The management staff and board attended along with special advisor Peter Hough and Isabel Faubert Mailloux, the Executive Director of Quebec's Réseau COOP. Aspirational ideas/projects for the Federation were blue-skyed during the day and a half meeting.

Russ and team worked hard, volunteered many extra much-appreciated hours to dig through the literature, conduct interviews with likely and unlikely allies, and most importantly to reach out to the members. The team was guided by a committee, input from the staff, board, volunteers, and members, as well as a Loomio discussion group. Special thanks to all who contributed throughout the process.

The Plan!

After all this we have a plan that looks quite similar on the outside to the plan from last year as we have not changed our four mission/strategic areas of focus: empowering our members and supporting the development of new worker co-operatives on a foundation of a strong Federation working in solidarity with the co-op world here in Canada and internationally. On the inside, however, the plan has a great deal of depth and



insights into precarious work, wealth inequality, the solidarity economy, and scaling up the worker co-op movement. Further, it has a major focus on CWCF engaging with and better supporting is

members, notably its worker co-op and regional federation members.

In Russ's words: "Overall, we are left with the impression or gut feeling that the CWCF is on the right track, and in order to grow Canada's worker co-op movement, it needs to find strong allies and effective ways to communicate how workplace democracy and employee ownership are key ingredients in moving forward as human societies."

How can we make this dream of workplace democracy a reality? To quote directly from the plan: "To make this strategic plan happen, the organization will have to take some risks, negotiate new partnerships and find new sources of funding. And, like its own members, CWCF will need to exhibit organizational flexibility and entrepreneurship within the broad scope of its vision, mission, and values."

To Co-op Land and Beyond!

2017-2018 Executive Director's Report

by Hazel Corcoran

The Year at CWCF

In Gatineau, Quebec last November, CWCF's board approved an interim, one-year Strategic Plan – with one focus on drafting an ambitious yet achievable new Strategic Plan. In these times when the world of work is changing, with escalating automation threatening jobs in many sectors, unparalleled global wealth inequity, and devastating effects of climate change, we seek a worker co-operative movement which can have a real impact for people in the real economy. We seek to empower significant numbers of working people to find social transformation through democracy in their workplace. Hence the Conference theme, and hence the new Strategic Plan. We wish to engage our members, including worker co-ops, regional federations, and worker co-op developers. We also wish to help create the eco-system needed to build a dynamic worker co-op movement – though we know that we need to find partners and additional resources to do this well.

The strategic planning process and the exciting result were largely covered by Reba Plummer in her President's Report. My focus in this report is on the other activities in the 2017-18 CWCF year.

In sum, what we have achieved is to maintain our small (for now), yet dynamic Federation which is sustainable. We've made a difference to many worker co-ops, both continuing members and start-ups.

Looking at the four pillars in our Mission, our accomplishments in the year included the following.

1) We worked in solidarity with our members to achieve our Vision of a Co-operative Economy.

CWCF engaged our members by hosting the 2017 Ottawa-Gatineau [Conference](#), in conjunction with CoopZone and our Quebec Region Federation member, the Réseau COOP.

It included our first Worker Co-op

Management Intensive Day, on financial management and human resources management. It was extremely well received; hence a similar approach in the current year's Conference.

We published **6 regular newsletters** and a variety of special newsletters throughout the financial year.



We also hosted four **webinars**: *Good Governance in a Worker Co-operative* (by Lynn Hannley), *Conflict Management in a Worker Co-operative* (with Brian Scott), *The Co-operators' Insurance Available to CWCF (Associate) Members* (by Manon Monette and Beverly Barker), and *Growing Sales* (with Stephanie Guico). Click [here](#) for available reports.

We worked with the support of Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada (“CMC”) to prepare and conduct a **worker co-op member survey** in 2018 – open, until November 3, 2018. Of the approximately 100 co-ops surveyed (so far, only those outside Quebec), 39 different co-ops have responded at the time of this writing. We will use the results to help implement our new Strategic Plan.

With sadness, in June we had to bid farewell to



[Neechi Commons](#), an Indigenous worker co-op in the North end of Winnipeg. We wrote a tribute to Neechi’s continuing legacy.

One key accomplishment of the co-op sector in Canada, with CWCF’s strong support over many years, was the creation in January 2018 of the [Canadian Co-operative Investment Fund](#) (“CCIF”). CWCF has committed \$250,000 to this Fund, which is currently just over half of our own *Tenacity Works* Fund. We greatly appreciate the work of Peter Hough, CWCF’s Financial Officer Emeritus, in this context; Peter has served on the steering committee and eventually the Board of the CCIF over the past eight years. In addition, Worker Co-op Developers’ Network member Marty Frost, is also serving on the CCIF board as a developer (CoopZone) representative, and Greg O’Neill is on its Investment Advisory Committee. CWCF will remain actively engaged with CCIF to seek to meet the capitalization needs of worker co-operatives.

Our [RRSP-TFSA program](#) continues to grow, though primarily with eligible entities other than worker co-ops (e.g., renewable energy co-ops, CED Investment Funds, etc.), since the 10% rule means only larger worker co-ops can use the program. The “10% rule”, which came in with the 2011 federal budget, means that no one who owns more than 10% of any class of shares in an enterprise can place any shares in an RRSP or TFSA. In this program, we have continually improved our processes. We now have over \$70 million under administration in both RRSP’s (primarily) and TFSA’s with over 3,400 contract holders. Although CWCF fees are at or below market rates, this has grown to become a successful social enterprise within CWCF whose surpluses allow us to run other programming. We greatly appreciate the role of Concentra Trust, which is the liaison to the Canada Revenue Agency and provides support to CWCF.

Membership: CWCF has just under 50 worker/multi-stakeholder co-op members, 3 Quebec Region Federation members including 95 indirect co-op members, and larger numbers of developer and associate members. Under our new Strategic Plan, we seek to focus our efforts on growing the number of worker co-op members, especially.

II) We Supported the Development of Worker Co-ops

The [Tenacity Works Fund](#) started as a Pilot Project in 2000, funded by an Unemployment Insurance fund research program. Since the Pilot period, Tenacity has continued to fulfill its mandate of providing financing to worker co-ops and related sectors. In 2017-18, the Fund placed one loan, in Africa Slow Food Co-op in Ottawa, and committed two others, one of which is the Developmental Support Workers’ Co-op, may be placed by the AGM. The Fund is currently considering another investment. Worker co-ops seeking loan capital are encouraged to apply to the Tenacity Works Fund for loans of between \$15,000 to \$50,000.

The Fund has investments and cash of just under \$500,000. At the CWCF AGM in 2012 the membership pledged an investment of \$250,000 from Tenacity into the CCIF.

Technical Assistance Program: We have provided assistance to a variety of our members and to start-ups, both through staff assistance and through grants to hire co-op developers and other professionals. We increased the amount in the Technical Assistance grant program from \$500 plus matching funds, to up to \$1,500 per co-op, and supported seven different worker co-ops with grants, including three continuing members (Africa Slow Food, Real English Victoria, and Hullabaloo Publishing) and four start-ups/conversions or new members (Hub City Cycles Community Co-op, Little Pumpkins Daycare, Tree Amigos, and *Fruits et légumes africains*).

Website updates and improvements have been made throughout the year, including the creation of a multi-media section.

Government Relations: We carried out significant government relations work in early 2018, most notably advocating for our Co-op Business Succession proposal to the federal government, obtaining meetings with a series of MP's and one federal Minister. This was in conjunction with both CWCF's Business Succession committee, and CMC. However, we discovered that the timing in the life of the federal government was not right and have placed that proposal on hold for the time being. We have also worked on CWCF's response to Motion M-100 on co-op development supports to be submitted shortly, and also participated in the People-Centered Economy group, which is linked among other things to the Social Innovation and Social Finance Initiative. Throughout, we have had extraordinary support and advice from our volunteer Government Relations Advisor, Alain Roy.

We supported the [CoopZone Developers' Network](#) in the transition from CWCF's management contract, to having the CoopZone Board hire its first employee, Executive Director Ben Prunty. CWCF continues to work closely with CoopZone, through joint Conferences, overlapping developer memberships, etc. The reason that CWCF has developers in its membership, overlapping to some degree with CoopZone, is that we recognize the important role played by worker co-op developers in the movement, in support of worker co-op's start-up and continuing success. Although the worker co-op members have the vast majority of votes in AGM and at the board, the place of developers is assured in CWCF bylaws and policies. Thus we continue the close working relationship with CoopZone.

III) We Strengthened the Federation.

In addition to the year's strategic planning process, CWCF has taken many other steps to improve the governance, financial sustainability, and succession planning processes of the Federation.

IV) We Represented and Promoted the Canadian Worker Co-op Movement in Canada and Internationally.

We represented the Canadian Worker Co-op movement – to our international sectoral organization, [CICOPA](#) (Past President, Alain Bridault, director), to the national apex co-op association, [CMC](#) (Stephanie Guico, director; Reba Plummer / Lee Fuge, delegates), and to many co-op provincial associations, and Regions of [The Co-operators](#), where volunteers represent us.



Lastly, we finalized this new project:

The MARK GOLDBLATT PROJECT: Arts and Culture Worker Co-op Grant



CWCF's Past President Mark Goldblatt, who died suddenly in 2015, was a strong believer in worker and other co-operatives for societal transformation. We were touched to learn that Mark had bequeathed \$25,000

to CWCF "for a cultural project(s) in support of the co-op movement". The Board has decided to place \$1,000/ year in a youth / young adult art or cultural project regarding worker co-ops, starting in coming months. We've recently been informed that the [Big Idea Rainbow Foundation](#), of which I am a director and which Mark helped to found, will also top up this amount with an additional contribution of \$300 - \$500 in 2019.

Looking Forward

The new Strategic Plan opens a new chapter at CWCF, and we are excited about moving forward together to engage and support existing members, as well as to scale up the worker co-op movement!

The Co-operators

CWCF is one of 45 member organizations of The Co-operators. Having been invited into the

membership in 2007, CWCF and its members in turn have benefited in myriad ways. Both CWCF itself and our members (as well as members of the Réseau COOP) have access to special insurance products of The Co-operators, e.g., the [Member Benefits Program](#) and [Co-op Guard](#). Secondly, CWCF participates in five different regions of The Co-operators, providing opportunities for networking and education for our delegates. Thirdly, the Loyalty Payment (akin to a patronage dividend) has contributed significantly to CWCF's financial stability. Fourthly, their Co-op Development Program has provided a grant to support the telephone i of member co-ops. Finally, both Reba Plummer and I currently sit on the Board of Directors of The Co-operators, a very interesting Board of one of the most progressive large co-ops in the country, with great training opportunities, as well. CWCF is greatly appreciative of its relationship in The Co-operators, and we encourage our members to use their services whenever possible. It is a mutually beneficial relationship.

With Gratitude

Last but certainly not least, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the dedicated and engaged board members, volunteers and staff members of CWCF for all you've done throughout the year. Thank you!!

Financial Report

*Statement of Revenues and Expenditures
Year Ended August 2018*

	2018	2017
<i>Total Revenues</i>	\$ 377,756	\$ 348,534
<i>Total Expenses</i>	\$ 340,974	\$ 307,749
<i>Operations Income (Loss)</i>	\$ 36,782	\$ 40,785
<i>Recovery /write-down</i>	\$ (13,332)	\$ (17,371)
<i>Net Income (Loss)</i>	\$ 23,450	\$ 23,414

Statement of Financial Position
Year Ended August 31, 2018

	2018	2017
<i>Assets</i>		
Current	\$ 670,696	\$ 656,654
Long-term	\$ 2,313,775	\$ 2,166,949
<i>Total Assets</i>	<i>\$ 2,984,471</i>	<i>\$ 2,580,538</i>
<i>Liabilities</i>		
Current	\$ 47,981	\$ 46,032
Trust Funds	\$ 2,189,049	\$ 1,810,515
Payable		
Mark Goldblatt	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Fund		
<i>Total liabilities</i>	<i>\$ 2,262,030</i>	<i>\$ 1,881,547</i>
<i>Members Equity</i>	<i>\$ 722,441</i>	<i>\$ 698,991</i>
<i>Total Liabilities and Member Equity</i>	<i>\$ 2,984,471</i>	<i>\$ 2,580,538</i>

Together we are Unstoppable

US Worker Cooperative National Conference, September 14-16, 2018

By Reba Plummer

The US Federation of Worker Cooperatives (USFWC) and The Democracy at Work Institute (DAWI) welcomed workers, developers, and like-minded individuals to the Los Angeles Trade Tech College for the 8th Worker Cooperative National Conference. I had the opportunity to attend on behalf of CWCF.

There were three Big Ideas covered in the plenary sessions:

- How Worker Coops are organizing for our economic power: stories that move us
- What can Coops learn from and how can they shape the future of work
- Growing Cooperative connections to movements for liberation

Day One was set aside for tours of local co-ops, focused strategy sessions, and the opening reception. The conference started with a positive announcement: the *Main Street Employee Ownership Act*. This brand-new federal legislation improves access to capital and technical assistance for employee-owned businesses with a focus on business conversions.

Days Two and Three were filled with workshops on core workplace skills, an excellent way to support members with hard skills trainings, as well as workshops with such enticing titles as:

- Sanctuary Workplaces
- Union Co-op Curious

- Coop Start-up Roadmap
- Planning is best Done in Advance
- Innovating Pay Structures in Our Workplaces
- Solidarity Los Angeles

The weekend was filled with fascinating stories, authentic facilitators, and opportunities to network with worker co-op members from across the USA including such legendary co-ops as San Francisco's Rainbow Grocery. There was space to make connections and gain valuable skills, but all too soon it was time to say goodbye to new and old colleagues.

I look forward to seeing one of the US FWC directors in Winnipeg this year.

It was an excellent conference, and I would like to thank CWCF for sending me.

Réseau de développeurs, CoopZone Developers' Network

Par Pascal Billard, président de CoopZone

(See below for English version.)

Depuis le début de son existence, CoopZone a toujours été en lien très étroit avec la Fédération canadienne des coopératives de travail et nous avons même partagé la directrice générale, Hazel Corcoran. CoopZone est maintenant rendu à l'âge adulte et a décidé de voler de ses propres ailes. Depuis le mois de février 2018, nous avons engagé un nouveau directeur général, Benjamin Prunty pour remplacer Hazel qui nous a accompagné avec professionnalisme et surtout beaucoup de générosité pendant ces 9 années.



CoopZone s'est doté d'un nouveau plan d'action pour les 5 prochaines années, et une des priorités est de rester très proche de la FCCT et avec laquelle nous espérons encore collaborer le plus longtemps possible.

(English version)

By Pascal Billard, Board President, CoopZone

Since its inception, CoopZone has worked closely with the Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation and we even shared the same Executive Director, Hazel Corcoran up until the past year. CoopZone has now matured and has decided to stand on its own. Since February 2018, we have hired a new Executive Director, Benjamin Prunty, to replace Hazel. Hazel has served us professionally and above all with a lot of generosity during these nine years. CoopZone has a new strategic plan for the next five years, and one of the priorities is to continue to work closely with the CWCF, with which we hope to collaborate for as long as possible.

Membership in Related Associations

The CWCF actively supports the worker co-op sector by building bridges to, and participating in, other key partner organizations.

National:



- CWCF is a member of [Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada](#) (CMC), the national, bilingual organization for all co-operative sectors which was launched approximately four years ago, as a result of the effective merger of the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) and le Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité (CCCM). Hazel Corcoran served on the Board of CMC, first as an appointee and then having been elected in June, 2014 at the Moncton AGM of CMC. Hazel did not re-offer in June 2017, however, CWCF nominated Stephanie Guico as our representative who was subsequently elected and still represents CWCF on the CMC board. Reba Plummer is CWCF's delegate to CMC. CMC's June, 2018 AGM took place in Victoria, where Lee Fuge was the CWCF delegate, and which Hazel Corcoran also attended, as a delegate for The Co-operators. CWCF is a member of the [Canadian Co-op Investment Fund](#), and Peter Hough is on its Board. In addition, CWCF is a member of the [Canadian CED Network](#), where our Communications Manager Kaye Grant continues as a board member. Lastly, both Hazel Corcoran and Reba Plummer are on the Board of [The Co-operators](#). CWCF is also a member of the [Social Enterprise Council of Canada](#).

International:



- CWCF is a member of [CICOPA](#), the international organization of worker co-ops. Past President Alain Bridault is in his eighth year as member of the Board of CICOPA.
- CICOPA-AMERICAS: CWCF is also a member of CICOPA-Americas region and the North America sub-region. At both levels, the purpose is to exchange information about the worker co-op sector, associate federations across borders and plan government relations positions. Hazel Corcoran represents CWCF at both levels, sometimes along with a CWCF board member or other participants. The North America sub-region has recently been reactivated, under the leadership of the US FWC. The CICOPA-Americas region held its fifth meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina on October 24, 2018. CWCF as well as US FWC were represented by USFWC staff member (and interim President of CICOPA-North America), Ana Martina Rivas.

Regional Connections

CWCF continues to stay in touch with worker co-op development in all regions of the country, continuing our active relationship with the worker co-op federations in Quebec, where [le Réseau de la coopération du travail](#), the [Quebec Forestry Co-op Federation](#) and [Quebec Paramedic Co-op Federation](#) are regional federation members. CWCF is a member of all of the Anglophone Provincial Co-op Associations which it is eligible to join, and has either a delegate or a director involved in each; some are CWCF board or staff and others are members. In Quebec, all three of the worker co-op federations are members of *Le Conseil québécois de la coopération et de la mutualité* ("CQCM"), and are represented on the CQCM Board by Isabel Faubert Mailloux (le RESEAU COOP), Jocelyn Lessard (Forestry Co-op Federation) and Pascal Rivard (Paramedic Co-op Federation).



Nord-cotière cooperative, Quebec

Statement on the Co-operative Identity

The Statement on the Co-operative Identity is central to the identity of CWCF and of our movement. You can find the full Statement, including the co-operative values and principles, here: <https://ica.coop/en/whats-co-op/co-operative-identity-values-principles>

Staff



Hazel Corcoran – Executive Director, Calgary, AB

B.A., French and Spanish, University of Alberta

M.A., Linguistics, UC Berkeley

J.D. / LLB, Dalhousie University, 1991

Member of the Boards of [The Co-operators](#) and the [Big Idea Rainbow Foundation](#)

Member of the Social Team, [Prairie Sky Cohousing Co-op](#)



Kaye Grant – Communications and Member Services Manager, Winnipeg, MB

B.A., Laurentian University

B.Ed., Laurentian University

MBA, University of Manitoba, 1986

Member of the Boards of [Manitoba Co-op Association](#), [The Canadian CED Network](#) and [Bike Winnipeg](#)

Management Consultant, [Reconnaissance Management Consulting Group Inc.](#)



Kristin Van Hattem – RRSP Program Manager and Bookkeeper, Kentville, NS

B.Sc., Psychology, with University Scholar distinctions, Acadia University, Wolfville, NS, 2009



Josh Dyke – RRSP Program Administrator, Kentville, NS

B.A., Criminology, with minors in Philosophy & Psychology (Dean's list), St. Mary's University, 2015



Kenzie Love – Executive Assistant, Calgary, AB

B.A., English, University of Calgary
M.A., Journalism, Western University, London, ON, 2008

Board 2017-18

CWCF completed its 27th year with our dedicated Board of Directors.

Reba Plummer, President, and Ontario Director

Reba lives in Toronto and is the Ontario Region Director. She has worked at Urbane Cyclist Co- operative since 1999. She completed the Co-op Management Certificate through On Co-op at the Schulich School of Business in April of 2010. She has been a member of the Toronto cycling community since the mid 80s, and was the 1999 and 2008 Cycle Messenger World Champion (cargo bike racing division). In 2002, she worked as the mechanic/teacher with Open Roads, the funded version of what became the popular volunteer-run Wenches with Wrenches. She joined the CWCF board in 2010, and was elected President in November 2016. She was elected to the Board of The Co-operators for the Ontario Region in April 2018.



Eric Tusz-King, Vice-President, and Atlantic Director



Eric is a member of Aster Environmental Services Co-operative in Sackville, New Brunswick. Previously Eric was a founding member and manager of EnerGreen that was created in 2006 to help homeowners to have energy efficient homes. He has initiated, encouraged and/or been a member of several different types of co-operatives. The most recent initiatives are Beauséjour Renewable Energy Co-operative, an investment co-operative in community solar and wind renewable energy projects and Open Sky Co-op, a solidarity co-op that provides residence, vocational and social support for people who face barriers due to mental health or social development. Eric also works part-time as a co-operative developer with the Co-operative Enterprise Council of New Brunswick. Eric is the Course Director for the CoopZone Training Program. He is currently the CWCF Atlantic Board Director.

Lee Fuge, Treasurer, and BC / Yukon Director



Lee has been involved in the co-op movement for over thirty years. She is a founding member and administrator of the International Women's Catering Co-op (IWCC), a worker co-op offering international cuisine. IWCC is a seasonal, part time business – 90% of the co-op's revenue is generated in the farmer's market season (May-October). Lee lives in Victoria where she is involved in projects focused on food security. She is chair of the board of the Capital Region Food and Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable Society (CR-FAIR), the "backbone" organization focused on food and agriculture issues in the Capital Region. She also serves on the board of LifeCycles Project Society which works to create community through educating about sustainable urban food production, processing and sharing.

Lee submitted her resignation, effective October 31, 2018 for health-related reasons, at a time that was close to the end of her term. She is the recipient of the Mark Goldblatt Merit Award 2018.

Tommy Allen, Prairies/ NWT/ NU Director (Resigned in August 2018, to pursue teaching in Shenzhen, China)



Tommy's experience with co-ops began with Urban Eatin' Landscapes, a Winnipeg-based landscaping worker co-op that started in 2009, focusing on creating gardens for food and habitat. Driven by an interest in sustainability and holistic approaches to community and the environment, Tommy studied landscape architecture and urban design at University of Manitoba, graduating in 2015 with his Bachelor's of Environmental Design. He has worked as a freelance web/graphics designer, and although he is often the one others ask for help in regards to technological issues, he is happiest learning outside and solving problems that interface more directly with our environment. Up to August 2018 Tommy was the Office Co-ordinator with Urban Eatin' Landscapes. Recently Tommy has moved to Shenzhen, China to pursue teaching.

Jessica Provencher, Quebec Director

Jessica brings a strong experience in collective entrepreneurship and a sustained interest in participatory management. She has a keen interest in issues of equity and democracy both locally and nationally. Currently she is continuing to develop her passion and skills for the development of individuals and organizations through a master's degree in administrative sciences at Laval University and her work with various collective processes in her consulting work and in her many volunteer commitments.

Jessica seeks positive and action-oriented experiences in her work to support the emergence and maintenance of concrete and meaningful initiatives that contribute to improving and beautifying the world. Her experience as past Board member of the Réseau COOP and of the CWCF, in addition to her past experience as long-time as head of cooperative life at La Barberie, has allowed her to appreciate the value of social and collective approaches and her desire to work within these structures.

Yuill Herbert, At-Large Director (from Atlantic Canada)

Yuill is from Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia and is a CWCF Board Director At-Large. He helped found the environmental consulting worker co-operative Sustainability Solutions Group that currently has members across Canada. SSG has worked for every level of government, major universities and a wide range of private sector and non-profit organizations on sustainability building projects, organizational sustainability and community planning.

Omar Yaqub, At-Large Director (from Prairie Region) (Appointed in April 2018)

Omar's journey has taken him from small-town Alberta to global development work in Nigeria, Ghana, & Tanzania and back again. He has been able to help a local social service organization, IFSSA, go from 2 to 25+ employees, help remote Indigenous communities with economic development, and built a management consulting firm, ALIF Partners Co-op, that embodies an ethos of service.

Omar has been teaching in the University of Alberta's MBA program for more than a decade, helped establish the Social Enterprise Fund, built an eco-retrofit co-op, co-founded intentional communities, and has had his work profiled by the Kennedy Centre for the Arts, CNN, Money 2.0 and others. A few years ago he was awarded EMCN's Rise Award for Community Leadership, and University of Alberta's Mentor of the Year.

Alexandre Banville, At-Large Director (from Quebec) (Elected in Nov., 2017, until spring 2018)

We would also like to acknowledge the brief participation on our Board of At-large Director Alexandre Banville, of Belvédère Co-op in Montreal. Alexandre was elected at the last AGM, but due to a significantly increased workload at his Co-op, he resigned in the spring.

2018 Conference Acknowledgements



CWCF would like to sincerely thank all sponsors (last page) without whom the Conference would not be possible, the Planning Committee members, and other supporters who have contributed to the success of the Conference in 2018, which was co-organized with CoopZone. Thank you to everyone who volunteered to help at this year's Conference, especially the 2018 Conference Planning Committee members and local connections team for their many contributions:

- Ian Marsh, Brierwood Co-operative, Nelson, BC, Committee Chair (from Aug. 2018)
- Tommy Allen, Urban Eatin', Winnipeg, MB, Committee Chair (until August 2018)
- Jessica Provencher, Le RÉSEAU COOP, Québec, QC
- Reba Plummer, Urbane Cyclist, Toronto, ON
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- Will Bedford, Natural Cycleworks, Winnipeg, MB
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