

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

Annual Report | 2019



Conference 2018



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 working half-time or more (two in Calgary, two in Nova Scotia, one in Winnipeg), and two others who work very part-time for CWCF. Its Board of seven directors provides stewardship. There are two “at large” director positions and directors 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 nearly 40 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 le Rapport annuel en français, mais nous sommes heureux de répondre à vos questions et commentaires en français. /_CWCF regrets that we are unable to provide the Annual Report in French, but we would be pleased to respond to any questions and comments in French.

President's Report 2018-2019

by Reba Plummer

At the 2018 AGM and Conference in Winnipeg we passed our bold new four-year strategic plan. Our plan calls for CWCF to take some risks, negotiate new partnerships, and find new sources of funding. It also states that we will need to exhibit organizational flexibility and entrepreneurship within the broad scope of our vision, mission and values. This is easier said than done, but we have been pushing at our boundaries and stepping outside our comfort zone to see where we can take the organization.

Our staff and board have worked hard to convert the ideas from the strategic plan into a work plan with clear action items. Due to our capacity progress can be slow, but we are starting to see results from some of the initiatives.

We have been working with the Quebec Réseau COOP to translate their successful worker co-op start-up training program called Parcours into English so that we will be able to offer it outside of Quebec, though we may also partner with others to offer it in French outside Quebec, too. We hope to offer the course in Toronto in 2020.

We are preparing to send out a request for proposals on how to grow the Tenacity Works Fund. If you are interested, watch for the RFP coming out in coming months. We are looking for bold ideas that will take us into the future and grow the Worker Co-op Movement.

We were a partner with Green Jobs Oshawa on a feasibility study that Russ Christianson wrote in regards to converting the GM Oshawa plant to an electric vehicle production plant with democratic ownership. The presentation of the feasibility

study, on September 19th, was successful and made the news, especially in light of the Climate Strike that was happening that week.



CWCF and many of our members supported and participated in the Youth Global Climate Strike including Sustainability Solutions Group who encouraged/challenged the board and members to take an active role in this incredibly important movement.

At CWCF we continue the process of moving from an operations to a governance board: we feel confident that we are headed in the right direction. Our committees have also been working on many items including: updating and improving our Human Resources policies, planning for the AGM and Conference, and bringing the strategic plan to life.

Member engagement is high on our list of priorities and I was happy to be able to attend the Worker Co-op Pizza Party in Winnipeg in May as well as the Worker Co-op Summit in Quebec in June. Whenever I get the chance I visit with our members. In the past year I have visited Organic Planet, Planet Bean, Come as You Are, Natural Cycle, and Red2i. I also visit with worker co-ops who are not members to encourage them to join.

I would like to express my appreciation for the hard work and excellent performance over the past year by everyone on the staff and board team.

Thank-you!

2018-2019 Executive Director's Report

by Hazel Corcoran

Bringing the New Strategic Plan to Life

After a year-long process with significant member engagement, CWCF's membership approved an ambitious new strategic plan last November at our AGM in Winnipeg. Today, the societal concerns which informed our strategic plan are only escalating, including precarious work, automation threatening jobs in many sectors, spiraling wealth inequality, and the devastating effects of climate change.

Through building equality and democracy in the workplace, through following sustainable practices, and in some cases by working directly in the green economy, worker co-ops help people address these concerns and build resilient communities. Thus CWCF's new strategic plan maps out paths to strengthen worker co-ops and scale up the worker co-op movement.

CWCF's three Strategic Priorities are:

- I. We seek to engage and strengthen our members.*
- II. We seek to build awareness and scale up worker co-ops.*
- III. We seek to build the Solidarity Economy.*

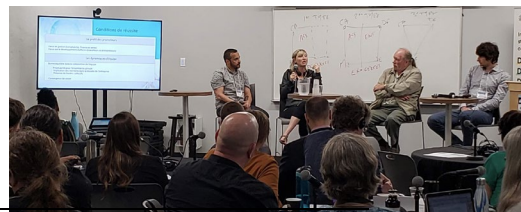
The focus in this report is on what we have achieved to date in our small (for now), yet sustainable Federation. Organized according to our three strategic priorities, our accomplishments in the year included the

following¹. Some of the activities fit in more than one priority area but are placed where they best fit.

I) Engage and Strengthen Current Members

A key focus has been to better engage our members, by providing a variety of means for members to be connected: in-person events and visits, our annual Conference, invitations to connect on social media, feature stories about worker co-op members, and invitations to participate in discussions on Loomio, a collaboration platform run by a worker co-op. Board and staff have worked towards increased in-person contact by holding meet-and-greet events in Toronto and Winnipeg. More member visits and phone calls are happening and more are planned.

CWCF hosted the November 2018 Winnipeg Conference, in conjunction with CoopZone. It included our second Worker Co-op Management Intensive Day, on financial management which was led by Russ Christianson. It was very well received; hence a similar approach in the current year's Conference – on Human Issues in a Worker Co-op.



¹ On occasion, where indicated, this includes notable activities which occurred after the financial year-end of August 31st.

In June in Quebec City, with the theme of “Meeting Worker Co-op Challenges of 2019”, over 50 co-operators gathered for the **Worker Co-op Summit**. It was a special opportunity for members of worker co-ops belonging to the Quebec Forestry Co-op Federation, Quebec Paramedic Co-op Federation, Réseau COOP and CWCF to meet and learn from each other. The full summary of the Summit is given in a later article in this Annual Report.

Webinars: We hosted a webinar on implementation of the new strategic plan, by Board President Reba Plummer and me. We also hosted two learning webinars each in two parts: *Worker Co-ops 101*, by Peter Hough, and *Holding Effective Meetings*, by Rick Proven. Click [here](#) for available reports. We have partnered with the US Federation of Worker Co-operatives to be able to offer their webinars to our members at a reduced price.

Membership: CWCF has just under 40 worker/multi-stakeholder co-op members, 3 Quebec Region Federation members including 95 indirect co-op members, as well as significant numbers of developer and associate members.

II) Build Awareness and Scale Up Worker Co-ops

CWCF has a new **Communications Plan**. As part of this, we transitioned from a bi-monthly to a monthly newsletter during 2018-19, and we have revamped both the design and content. We published [9 regular newsletters](#) and a variety of special newsletters throughout the year.

Website updates and improvements have been made throughout the year. In addition, CWCF will be creating a new visual identity and website in the coming year. It has recently selected a developer for the new identity and site, and work has begun.

We hired a very part-time Social Media Coordinator, Mateusz Salmassi. Mateusz has

implemented our social media strategy, which has led to strong growth in our followings especially on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#). Kenzie Love, our Communications Assistant, has profiled members including Fourth Pig, Glitter Bean, London Brewing, La Siembra, and DSW Co-op in our newsletter, and is also featuring profiles or stories about members when they are featured in external sources. Kenzie has also begun a blog series which we hope will engage our members through discussion on Loomio.

Technical Assistance Program: We have provided assistance to a variety of our members and to start-ups, both through assistance by staff and through grants to hire co-op developers and other professionals. We increased the maximum amount available per co-op in the Technical Assistance grant program from \$1,500, to \$3,500, and the annual amount in this program to \$25,000. We supported six different co-ops with grants, including three continuing members (Glitter Bean Café, Halifax; Urbane Cyclist, Toronto; and Hullabaloo Publishing, Saskatchewan) and three start-ups or new members (Ecosystem Collective Co-op, Sackville, NB; West Arm Woodworking, Nelson; and Begin Again Group, Kingston). Members are encouraged to apply if they wish to hire technical assistance with any aspect of operations or governance.

CWCF’s **Tenacity Works Fund** started as a Pilot Project in 2000, funded by the federal government. Since then, Tenacity has continued to fulfill its mandate of providing financing to worker co-ops and related sectors. In 2018-19, the Fund placed one loan in the Developmental Support Workers’ Co-op in Ottawa, and another investment, in Planet Bean of Guelph, was fully paid off. Unfortunately, two other investments were lost in the year when two members closed or ceased operating: Real English Victoria (REV) Co-op of Victoria, BC and Africa Slow Foods Co-op

of Ottawa due to various significant challenges that each encountered. It had been about seven years since the Fund last lost an investment, and this was a difficult result for the Fund. However, we are aware that our Fund takes high risks, and losses are part of the operating model. The Fund now has investments and cash of just under \$440,000. CWCF will be exploring avenues in the near future to grow and change the terms of the Fund. Worker co-ops seeking loan capital are encouraged to apply to the Tenacity Works Fund for loans of between \$15,000 to \$50,000, and to consider doing so in conjunction with an application to CCIF; see next section.

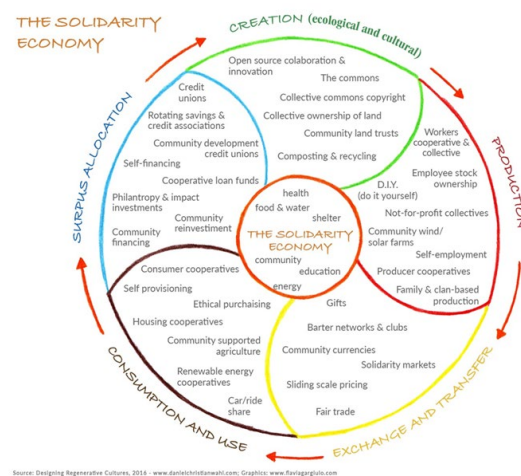
One key accomplishment of the co-op sector in Canada, with CWCF's strong support over many years, was the creation in 2018 of the [Canadian Co-operative Investment Fund](#) ("CCIF"). CWCF has committed \$250,000 to this \$25 million Fund, which is currently just over half of our own *Tenacity Works* Fund; we have been placing funds into CCIF as capital is called which so far is \$38,000. CCIF investments can range from \$50,000 to \$1.25 million. We greatly appreciate the work of Peter Hough, CWCF's Financial Officer Emeritus; Peter served on the steering committee and then the Board of the CCIF until he retired from the Board in May 2019. At that point, CWCF's nominee (Ms.) Willy Robinson was elected to the CCIF Board. In addition, developer member Marty Frost, is also serving on the CCIF board as a developer (CoopZone) representative, and developer member Greg O'Neill is on its Investment Advisory Committee. To date, only one worker co-op, Sumac/ Planet Bean has obtained a CCIF investment. CWCF remains actively engaged with CCIF to seek to meet the capitalization needs of worker co-operatives. We encourage worker co-ops seeking capital to apply jointly to CCIF and CWCF's Tenacity Fund.

Government Relations: We carried out government relations work in 2018-19, notably

advocating that our Tenacity Works Fund should be eligible for investments from the federal Social Innovation and Social Finance Initiative. This has been in conjunction with both CCEDNet and the People-Centered Economy Group. Throughout, we have had extraordinary support and advice from our volunteer Government Relations Advisor, Alain Roy. CWCF has developed a set of lobby priorities for the sector which are available here. It is expected that post-federal election, our lobbying activities will be ramped up.

Worker Co-op business succession: We initiated a partnership with Vancity, BC Co-op Association, the CoopConvert research project and others to focus on a pilot project in BC's Lower Mainland. The purpose is to promote and encourage business succession to worker co-ops. If it is successful there, we will seek to replicate it in other regions of the country.

Training program: We are pursuing a partnership with the Quebec Réseau COOP to offer a worker co-op start-up training program called *Parcours Co-op*, likely starting in the Toronto region. This program has been very successful in Quebec in assisting worker co-ops to start.



III) Build the Solidarity Economy

CWCF seeks to engage more in the Solidarity Economy, and help to build it -- including helping worker co-ops recognize they are a central part of it. "The solidarity economy meets human needs through economic activities—like the production and exchange of goods and services—that reinforce values of justice, ecological sustainability, cooperation, and democracy. ... Instead of prioritizing profit over all else, solidarity economy initiatives encourage a commitment to shared humanity best expressed in *social, economic, and environmental justice*." (<http://solidaritynyc.org/basics>) A leading solidarity economy organization in North America of which CWCF is a member is the [New Economy Coalition](#).

Engaging in the Solidarity Economy means partnering with various allies including other types of co-ops, trade unions, those working for migrant justice, climate change activists, and others who share these values. Here are a couple of examples from the past year, where CWCF and/or worker co-ops partnered with trade unions, and with the climate change movement.

GM Oshawa

CWCF and Green Jobs Oshawa funded a preliminary feasibility study on transitioning to electric vehicle (EV) production under democratic ownership at the GM plant in Oshawa. The feasibility study, written by Russ Christianson and released at a public forum in Oshawa on September 19th concludes that converting the plant to EV production is possible. Significant government investment and procurement including for Canada Post vehicles would be required. Green Jobs Oshawa is in favour of democratic public ownership, which CWCF has advocated should include a meaningful element of worker and community control. Converting this plant to EV production would not only save

or create about 15,000 direct and indirect jobs, but it would also maintain manufacturing capacity and demonstrate leadership in the transition to a sustainable economy, critical in the face of the current climate crisis. The full study as well as two summary versions are available on the [CWCF website](#).

Youth Climate Strike on September 27, 2019

The Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation supported the co-op Climate Strike initiative, that was led by our member Sustainability Solutions Group with several other co-ops also engaged. Our board and staff participated in and encouraged other members and allies to participate in the climate strikes in their communities. See the [press release here](#).

Looking forward: We continue to explore ways to engage more fully in the solidarity economy. Among other ways, we have had the topic of worker co-ops and the social / solidarity economy on our conference agenda in both the 2018 and 2019 conferences. To fully partner in the Solidarity Economy, CWCF would need to identify and obtain significantly enhanced resources.

IV) Other CWCF Strategies and Activities

In addition to the year's strategic planning implementation, CWCF has taken many other steps to improve the governance, financial sustainability, human resources, and succession planning processes of the Federation. There are a variety of other programs and services we continue to offer, as below.

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 \$75 million under administration in both RRSP's (primarily) and TFSA's with over 3,600 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. CWCF has started a project to significantly update the documentation in this program which will be completed in the near future. We greatly appreciate the role of Concentra Trust, which is the liaison to the Canada Revenue Agency and provides support to CWCF.

The Co-operators: membership and insurance

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 Quebec Réseau COOP) have access to special or coop-specific insurance products of The Co-operators, e.g., the [Member Benefits Program](#) and [Co-op Guard](#). Secondly, CWCF participates in five regions of The Co-operators, providing opportunities for networking and education for our delegates and contributing to the governance of The Co-operators. 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 our web site re-development. CWCF is greatly appreciative of this mutually beneficial relationship with The Co-operators, and we encourage our members to use their insurance and other services whenever possible.

We represented and promoted the Canadian Worker Co-op movement – with many other organizations including Co-operatives and

Mutuals Canada (CMC), The Co-operators, nearly all Provincial Co-op Associations, and the international worker co-op association CICOPA. For more on this, see the section on Membership in Related Associations.

One notable success in the year is that CWCF presented an AGM resolution to CMC to have CMC consider taking a position on fair tax treatment for indivisible reserves, or permanent co-op capital, in co-operatives. The resolution passed, and the first step in its implementation is a consultation with CMC members on this issue. We know that in regions with indivisible reserves, the worker co-op sector is generally larger and more dynamic than in those without. Having differential tax treatment for co-ops would encourage more co-ops to choose indivisible reserves helping their stability, and may make it easier to obtain government support for worker co-ops.

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



CWCF's Past President Mark Goldblatt, who died in 2015, was a strong believer in worker and other co-operatives for societal transformation. Mark bequeathed \$25,000 to CWCF "for a cultural project(s) in

support of the co-op movement". The Board is using this bequest as an endowment fund which CWCF tops up each year from general revenues, to place each year a \$1,000 grant in a young adult art or cultural project regarding worker co-ops, with the first grant placed in 2018-19. The [Big Idea Rainbow Foundation](#), which Mark helped to found, also topped up this amount with an additional contribution of \$350 in 2018-19 to enable a second prize. The first place winner was Eyemole Co-op of Vancouver, and Hannah Branwen received second place. There will be another competition in 2019-2020 for a youth

arts and cultural grant.

With Gratitude

Last but certainly not least, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the dedicated and engaged staff members of CWCF for all you’ve done throughout the year. I also greatly appreciate the work of

CWCF’s many volunteers, notably the members of the board. Thank you!!



CWCF Staff Team: Laura MacDonald, Kristin Van Hattem, Kaye Grant, Hazel Corcoran, Kenzie Love, Josh Dyke. (Absent:

Mateusz Salmassi)

Financial Report

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures

Year Ended August 2019		
	2019	2018
Total Revenues	\$405,863	\$377,756
Total Expenses	\$392,414	\$340,974
Operations Income (Loss)	\$13,449	\$36,782
Loan recovery /write-down	(\$43,210)	(\$13,332)
Net Income (Loss)	(\$29,761)	\$23,450

Statement of Financial Position

Year Ended August 2019			
Assets		2019	2018
	Current	\$715,077	\$670,696
	Long-term	\$3,321,769	\$2,313,775
Total Assets		\$4,036,846	\$2,984,471
Liabilities	Current	\$47,560	\$47,981
	Trust Funds Payable *	\$3,271,606	\$2,189,049
	Mark Goldblatt Fund	\$25,000	\$25,000
Member Equity / General Reserve	Tenacity Fund	\$434,645	\$477,515
	CWCF	\$258,035	\$244,926
Total Liabilities and Member Equity		\$4,036,846	\$2,984,471

*Primarily RRSP and TFSA cash

Worker Co-op Summit, Quebec, June 2019

By Hazel Corcoran

With the theme of “Meeting Worker Co-op Challenges of 2019”, over 50 co-operators gathered for the Worker Co-op Summit in Quebec City on June 17th. It was a rare and special opportunity for members of worker co-ops belonging to the Quebec Forestry Co-op Federation, Quebec Paramedic Co-op Federation, Réseau COOP and CWCF to be able to meet and learn from each other. Guest speakers included US FWC Executive Director Esteban Kelly by live video conference; Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada (CMC) Executive Director André Beaudry; Conseil de la coopération et de la mutualité (CQCM) Executive Director Gaston Bédard; and (on pre-recorded video), Noam Chomsky.

The main themes explored via panels were worker co-op governance; the motivations to join a worker co-op; and federation services, with guest speakers covering other topics.

To kick off the day, the three Quebec Federations (Forestry, Paramedics, and the Réseau COOP) and CWCF brought their perspectives on worker co-op governance. Interestingly, the Forestry Co-op Federation explained that their members had previously voted that the Federation require that member co-ops meet certain obligations. For example, forestry co-ops which are Federation members must have an external director or advisor on their board of directors. All new board members must take training on the roles and responsibilities of a director, and every three years a co-op must undergo a diagnostic process called CoopFOR. The Quebec federations offer training and direct support on worker co-op governance, whereas CWCF provides training through Conference sessions/ webinars, and can assist its members to work with co-op developers with the support of a technical assistance grant.

All federations spoke to the importance of members understanding the different roles that worker co-op members have, and to know when they should wear which “hat” – as worker, as member, as board member, and (especially in the case of the paramedic co-ops), as a union member. Board members must understand that when acting as a board member, they are legally obligated to look after the co-op’s interests. The critical importance of open communication was also stressed. It was noted that when a person is a worker in a co-op, it does not necessarily follow that they know how to govern, and hence training and outside support are important. Following the Federations, Alain Bridault of Orion Co-op spoke to the particularities of governance in a self-managed worker co-operative, then three individual co-ops (La Siembra, Productions 4 Eléments and the Grand Portage Paramedic Co-op) communicated some of their experience.

Six different worker co-op members shared briefly regarding the motivations of people to found or join a worker co-op, at different points in time. The longest-serving member, of the North Coast Forestry Co-op, had been a member for 40 years; the most recent (of the same co-op) for one year – with a variety of lengths of service in between by the remaining members. Other co-ops represented were Just us Coffee Roasters Co-op, the Montégrie Ambulance Co-op, the Quebec Ambulance Co-op, and Cirquantique. Some spoke to joining based on passion for what the co-op does (e.g., fair trade, circus work), others because they wished to have a voice and not “just be a number.” There was a sense that worker-owners from a couple of decades, or more, ago were more willing to work long hours whereas younger workers tend to put a higher value on work-life balance. In sum, the attraction to found or join a worker co-op was based on one or



more of the following: to have a voice/ a vote, to be part of a values-based business, to work in an area about which one is passionate, and to obtain the financial rewards from operating the co-op.

Each Federation briefly presented its services. The Forestry Co-op Federation provides governance services to members as described above, as well as in management including financial and operations. The Paramedic Co-op Federation is able to call on a variety of staff members to provide services to members, including in bookkeeping, legal services, human resources, and communications. The Réseau COOP offers advisory services at preferential rates to its members, in the following areas: human resources, governance, marketing, and financial management; it also offers a training program to start-ups called the Parcours Co-op which has successfully supported the launch of new worker co-ops. CWCF provides annual Conferences, webinars, a technical assistance program for members including a granting pool, the Tenacity Works Fund, and an RRSP-TFSA program. All federations offer government relations services. One important question raised by one of the federations, was how to handle the situation where a member co-op clearly needed some outside support which the federation could provide, but which the co-op would not accept. There was no clear solution to this dilemma.

CWCF's strategic plan was also presented, with its focus on (1) Engaging / Strengthening Members (Worker Co-ops & Regional Federations), (2) Building the Solidarity Economy, and (3) Building Awareness and Scaling up Worker Co-operatives. Some important points were raised in the discussion around the strategic plan. In terms of what types of actors in the solidarity economy CWCF should seek alliances, suggestions included fair trade organizations and environmental organizations. A worker co-op member noted that it would be very helpful if CWCF could provide referrals to experts of various types (not only developers) who understand worker co-ops, e.g. lawyers and accountants. In addition, one of the Quebec Federations noted that it is not yet clear enough what is the offer to the Quebec federations; more work needs to be done around this issue but possibilities include help with federal lobbying, conferencing/ networking opportunities such as at this Summit, and focus on worker co-operative identity as opposed to only sector focus (e.g., forestry, paramedic industries).

CMC's André Beaudry spoke about the member consultations which CMC will hold over a six-month period starting in July with a goal to reframe its value proposition, as well as a series of research studies which CMC would soon be publishing. CQCM's Gaston Bédard spoke about CQCM's focus on bringing out more strongly the impact of co-ops to the public. To this end, CQCM will convene a large event for all of the Quebec co-op sector on October 22- 23, 2020.



Noam Chomsky's intervention was thought-provoking. He notes that we need to get away from what Gramsci called "hegemonic common sense" which ignores workplace democracy among many things; "if something doesn't come to mind in the culture, nothing can happen about it." He spoke knowledgeably about Mondragon, and the role of the IWW in the early part of the Industrial Revolution during which this union advocated for workers to own the factories which employed them. His advice in our times, all the while understanding that there will be push-back, is to organize and agitate to seek to have workplace democracy more known.

USFWC Executive Director Esteban Kelly was the closing speaker. Although he was not able to be present physically, his intervention was inspiring. The worker co-op movement in the US is growing quickly. Demographically, 2/3 to 3/4 of worker co-op members are women, and 60% are people of colour. There is political support, notably in a variety of cities but also federally with the passage last year of the Main Street Employee Ownership Act. There is a sense of growing interest in this model. In response to a question about how they've done their base-building work, he said that at the USFWC, they



have “dissolved their egos” and don’t necessarily lead with worker co-ops. They speak out in support of other groups, and encourage them to include employee ownership. E.g., they focus on being about climate resiliency, renewable energy, economic resiliency; they can tap into work that’s been done by other groups on these issues over the long haul. “We are meeting the community where it’s at.” Important food for thought as CWCF and worker co-ops in Canada embark on partnering within the Social and Solidarity Economy.

We ended the day with a reception where the participants had a chance to network with each other over wine and cheese.

CWCF greatly appreciates the efforts of all the following who made this Summit possible:

- The Quebec Paramedic Co-op Federation, notably Benoît Caron and Olivier Mercier,
- The Réseau de la coopération du travail du Québec, notably Isabel Faubert-Mailloux, Mathieu Dionne and Erika Gaudreault,
- The Quebec Forestry Co-op Federation, notably Jocelyn Lessard,
- Official Languages Support Program of Heritage Canada, which helped to support the simultaneous interpretation,
- Coop L’Argot which provided simultaneous interpretation,
- The Ian MacPherson Legacy Fund which sponsored one participant,
- Noam Chomsky, with technical team Crystal Zevon, Steev Hise, Raquel Mogollon, and Pan Left Productions who assisted in the making of the video,
- Luc Audebrand for morning facilitation, and Mathieu Dionne for afternoon facilitation,
- all presenters, panelists, and participants,
- and all others who helped in organizing and delivering this Summit!

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 five 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 founding Board of CMC. Hazel did not re-offer after the first three years, at which point CWCF nominated developer member 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, 2019 AGM took place in Quebec City, where Reba attended as 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](#); Peter Hough served on its Board through May 2019, having been a leader in the launch of this Fund. In spring 2019, CWCF nominated Willy Robinson who is a long-term member of CWCF’s *Tenacity Works* Fund Investment



Committee, and she was elected to the CCIF Board. In addition, CWCF is a member of the [Canadian CED Network](#), where our Communications Manager Kaye Grant continues as a board member. Hazel Corcoran served briefly on the Board of CCEdNet during the last year as well. Lastly, Hazel Corcoran, Reba Plummer, and Jessica Provencher are now all on the Board of [The Co-operators](#). CWCF is also a member of the [Social Enterprise Council of Canada](#). CWCF is also a member of nearly all of the Co-operative Provincial Associations across Canada, where CWCF is represented by delegates or directors who are either board members, staff or members.

- CWCF is a member of the [CoopZone Developers' Network](#). In 2018-19, we supported CoopZone in the transition to CWCF no longer managing it. It had become confusing to others to have CWCF manage CoopZone because it includes developers and other professional service providers working with co-ops in all sectors, not only with worker co-ops. The CoopZone Board now has a management contract with le Conseil de la coopération de l'Ontario. CWCF continues to work closely with CoopZone, through joint Conferences, overlapping developer memberships, etc. The reason is that CWCF and developers recognize the important role played by worker co-op developers in our movement, in support of worker co-ops' start-up and continuing success. Although the worker co-op members have the vast majority of votes in the CWCF AGM, the place of developers in CWCF is assured in CWCF bylaws and policies.

International:

- CWCF is a member of [CICOPA](#), the international organization of worker co-ops. At the CICOPA General Assembly held in Kigali, Rwanda on October 13, 2019, CWCF's nominee Isabel Faubert Mailloux, Executive Director of the Quebec Réseau Coop was elected to the Board. Also elected from North America were US FWC Executive Director Esteban Kelly, and Dov Orian and Apolinar Ortiz of the Mexican Confederation. At that same General Assembly, CWCF's past president Alain Bridault completed two four-year terms as a member of the Board of CICOPA, for which CWCF expresses its great appreciation.
- 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 been reactivated since 2018, under the leadership of the US FWC. The CICOPA-Americas region held its sixth meeting in Ixtapa, Mexico on August 30th and 31st, 2019. CWCF as well as US FWC were represented by US FWC board member Daniella Preisler.



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, 1978

B.Ed., Laurentian University, 1979

MBA, University of Manitoba, 1986

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

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



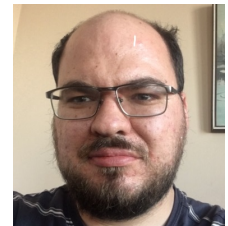
Kristin Van Hattem – RRSP Program Manager and Bookkeeper, Kentville, NS

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



Laura MacDonald – RRSP-TFSA Program Assistant, Kentville, NS
 B.A. English Literature, with Distinction, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2008
 Creative Book Publishing Certificate, Humber College, 2009
 CPA Atlantic School of Business Halifax, Introductory Financial Accounting Course, 2017

Mateusz Salmassi – Social Media Assistant, Calgary, AB
 B.A. Psychology, (in process)

Board 2018-19

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 and Vice-president.

Ian March Treasurer, and BC / Yukon Director (until September 2019)



Ian Marsh joined the worker co-operative movement in 2014, becoming a worker-owner at Brierwood Co-operative in Ottawa where he carried the hats of software developer and operations person. Before joining Brierwood, his work experience included IT, software development, professional services, and business management. Ian is passionate about alternative business structures and co-operative enterprises that promote equitable and resilient living. His volunteer experience includes crisis intervention at the Distress Centre in Calgary as well as involvement with LGBTQ2+ organizations in Alberta and Ontario. Ian

lives in the central Kootenay region of British Columbia. Ian joined the Board of CWCF in November 2018 as the BC / Yukon Director.

Rick Proven, Prairies/ NWT/ NU Director



Rick Proven is an adult educator, worker cooperative member. After 32 years in the federal public service Rick retired from Parks Canada Agency in 2010. He held various positions such as human resource advisor, program manager, project coordinator, informal conflict management advisor and national trainer. Through continuous learning and application, Rick has become an effective facilitator and trainer.

Rick now works as a private consultant focusing on facilitation design and training. He also spends his time as a member of Sun Certified Builder's Co-operative building energy efficient and net zero buildings. Rick joined the Board of CWCF at the AGM in November 2018 as the Prairies/ NWT/ NU Director.

Jessica Provencher, Quebec Director



Jessica Provencher is a self-employed facilitator and consultant in organizational development in various social economy organizations, mainly in Quebec City. She is passionate about supporting collaborative processes since she started working with workers' co-operatives in 2010, including as head of cooperative life at La Barberie microbrewery. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work and a Master's degree in Developing People and Organizations from Laval University and she brings a strong experience in collective entrepreneurship and a sustained interest in participatory management, equity and democracy. It is also through training in the Art of Hosting and volunteer engagements with local and national organizations that she has developed her talent for effective cohesion as well as her skills allowing the deployment of collective intelligence, decision-making and action. She was elected to the Board of The Co-operators for the Quebec Region in April 2019.

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.

Yvonne Chiu, At-Large Director (from Prairie Region)



Yvonne is one of the founding members and the executive director of the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative, an award winning organization owned and operated by immigrant community health workers.

For the past two decades, she has focused on promoting broad-base understanding of the realities, struggles and aspirations of immigrant and refugee families for the purpose affecting practice & policy change. She has also worked on revealing the effectiveness of

the cultural brokering practice and community health worker model in addressing health inequity, as illustrated by the Multicultural Health Brokers.

Prior to this, she had worked in settlement counseling in Chinatown, multicultural program development with the provincial government, and health promotion with the public health department in Edmonton.

Yvonne joined the Board of CWCF at the AGM in November 2018 in an at-large seat.

2019 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 2019, which was co-organized with CoopZone. Thank you to everyone who volunteered to help at this year's Conference, especially the 2019 Conference Planning Committee members, program committee and local connections committee for their many contributions:

- Ian Marsh, Brierwood Co-operative, Nelson, BC, Committee Chair (to Sept 2019)
- Reba Plummer, Urbane Cyclist, Toronto, ON
- Pascal Billard, CoopZone, Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, QC
- Julien Geremie, CoopZone, Ottawa, ON
- Chris Johnson, ParIT, Winnipeg, MB
- Kelly Fredericks-Smith, Just Us, Grand Pré
- Keely Carter, Just Us, Grand Pré
- Joey Pitoello, Just Us, Grand Pré
- Hazel Corcoran, CWCF Executive Director, Calgary, AB
- Kaye Grant, CWCF Communications Manager, Winnipeg, MB
- Kristin Van Hattem, CWCF RRSP Program Manager and Bookkeeper, Kentville, NS
- Josh Dyke, CWCF RRSP Program Administrator, Halifax, NS
- Jessica Provencher, Le RÉSEAU COOP, Québec, QC
- Wilf Bean, Tatamagouche, NS
- Wilma van der Veen, River John, NS
- Yuill Herbert, SSG, Tatamagouche, NS

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