

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

## Annual Report | 2020



CWCF new website and Conference 2019



CANADIAN WORKER  
CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION  
[www.canadianworker.coop/](http://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 48 direct worker co-op members and approximately 100 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*.

## Table of Contents

President’s Report 2019-2020	2
Executive Director’s Report: A. Introduction	3
B. Report Based on the Strategic Plan	4
Financial Report	10
The Co-operators: Membership and Insurance	10
The Mark Goldblatt Project: Arts and Culture Grant	11
Membership in Related Associations	11
Statement on the Co-operative Identity	12
Staff	13
Board 2019-20	14

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

#104, 402-30 Ave. NE, Calgary AB T2E 2E3  
Tel: 403-276-8250 Fax: 403-338-0226

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 2019-2020

By Reba Plummer

The 2019-20 year started off normal. We ended our 2018-19 year looking good; our revenues were up and our strategic plan was in place, we were moving ahead with implementation of several programs, working on new member outreach and engagement options, and lobbying the government.

All plans changed when the pandemic hit. Early on we decided to cancel the annual in-person conference and AGM and host it virtually, and at the same time increase the number of webinars throughout the year. For example, in July we hosted a very well attended webinar *A Shared Strategy for Shared Ownership* featuring Nathan Schneider (our original keynote speaker for the AGM). For our virtual AGM, we are pleased to present special guest speaker Dr. Jessica Gordon-Nembhard speaking on the topic: *Diversity & Inclusion Aren't Enough: Practical Tools for Worker Co-ops and the Worker Co-op Movement*.

An excellent year of hard work under difficult circumstances had the staff quickly pivot to working from home and continuing to advance our strategic plan implementation while not being able to host any in-person events. Our worker co-op development program based on the Quebec Réseau COOP's successful Parcours program will be launched as an online course, allowing more people to participate. CWCF created an [Emergency Relief Program](#) and instituted Solidarity dues of \$10. Because more than dues, we want members, strong vibrant members who see value in CWCF. Lobbying continues and interest grows in helping businesses transition to worker co-ops.

The pandemic has exposed (to more people) the fragility of the capitalist system. One (not) fine example is our long-term care facilities. You had to be willfully blind to not realize that there were serious problems pre-pandemic. When Ontario's Premier Ford vowed to change the long-term care system after he revealed that his mother-in-law had contracted Covid in a long-term care facility, there was hope that something would change. Doug Ford stated, *"I recognize that the system is broken and we're going to fix the system."* Now we are well into the second wave and we see that no (meaningful) changes have been implemented. This is the capitalist system to its core. Financial advancement is number one while community, the environment, and our collective future are ignored. The same applies to precarious work, unaffordable housing, and the list goes on...



Just Us! Coffee Roasters Co-op

This is the time for a [New Economy](#). **Another world is possible, another world is happening.** We are part of the [solidarity economy](#). The "theft" of MEC from the Canadian co-operative sphere is devastating. The corporatization of co-operatives is a serious threat. The capitalist economy believes that this is how business must be done and that the thoughts, ideas, aspirations, ethics of the

members be they consumers, producers or workers don't count, that we don't know what we want, need, desire, believe in. But we do! We don't turn a blind eye to unfair labour practices, outrageous pay differentials, and exploitative work. We are on the frontlines; we strive for equity, equality, justice, and inclusivity (among other things): **We are Worker Co-operators!**

A heartfelt **Thank-you** is extended to staff, board, members, and everyone who makes CWCF possible. We will get through this difficult time. Some of us will be reduced, and some of us will emerge stronger. Where there is adversity, there is opportunity. Stay strong, stay healthy; let's meet again soon!

## Executive Director's Report: A. Introduction

by Hazel Corcoran

### Building Resilience through Challenging Times

What a year it has been. As I look back on CWCF's last financial year (ended on August 31<sup>st</sup>), it is impossible to not think about it as before, and during Covid-19. I will of course report on both, but all is seen through the lens of our current, very challenged world.

We find ourselves facing not only the pandemic but also other crises which have both become more visible and in most cases worsened: economic inequality, systemic racism, lack of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, mental health, the long-term care crisis, and climate change. Given that these other crises were already present, it is critical that we not go back to the old normal. Times of crisis push us to reconsider what matters. We need a new normal, which puts people at the centre and which prioritizes equality, justice and health of the planet. The worker co-operative model is a key part of a solidarity economy and is needed now more than ever.

Through mutual aid, through building equality and democracy in the workplace, and by working in areas such as food services, health-related services, sustainability consulting, IT, green building, bicycle sales, low-carbon delivery and other important

services, worker co-ops are demonstrating their resilience, helping people address the concerns of our times and helping worker-owners maintain employment. Although the worker co-ops across the country are challenged, to the best of our knowledge none of our member worker co-ops have ceased operating during the pandemic, and some are thriving.

The CWCF response to the pandemic has included changes to operations, member services, government relations, and of course to how we



Shift Delivery Worker Co-op

meet. On the operational side, we quickly created and followed a Business Continuity Plan which we previously did not have, and we transitioned the Nova Scotia RRSP-TFSA office staff to a work-from-home approach. In terms of member-facing services and activities: we amended the Technical Assistance grant program and the Tenacity Works



Fund criteria to address Covid-related concerns, and offered to Regular members (worker co-ops) the option of “Solidarity Dues” of only \$10 for the year if they needed it. We have focused on government relations activities to seek a program using worker co-op buy-outs for economic recovery, to help the staggering numbers of workers at risk of unemployment. In terms of meetings, we’ve had to change board meetings and member engagement activities to virtual, and we held additional webinars. I hosted five virtual coffee break meet-ups, and board members hosted several other similar check-in events.

CWCF’s strategic plan maps out paths to strengthen worker co-ops and scale up the worker co-op movement. Given Covid-19, CWCF has amended its programming to offer different

services, to support worker co-ops through the pandemic, and prioritized government relations in support of having worker co-operatives be part of the federal response to economic recovery.

### **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 and also those serving as delegates to The Co-operators and provincial co-op associations, our Fund Investment Committee members, and our Government Relations Advisor, Alain Roy. Thank you all!!

## **B. Report Based on the Strategic Plan**

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 over the last year in the Federation<sup>1</sup>, organized primarily according to our three strategic priorities. 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: pre-pandemic: in-person events and visits, our annual Conference, and throughout the year invitations to connect on social media, feature stories about worker co-op members, in webinars, and invitations to participate in discussions. Board and staff worked towards increased in-person contact by holding or participating in events in rural Nova Scotia (December), Edmonton (February) and Toronto (February). More in-person events and member visits were planned, but were not possible. Instead we have pivoted to additional virtual events, and will create a modified engagement plan. We also added a

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

“[Solidarity Shopping](#)” section to the website, to encourage patronage of worker co-op products and services. In terms of strengthening members, see the Technical Assistance program report in the next section.

CWCF hosted its October 2019 Conference in Tatamagouche, NS, in conjunction with [CoopZone](#); conference proceedings are available [here](#). Our keynote speaker was Mi’kmaq woman Hannah Martin on the challenges posed by climate change and the issues facing First Nations communities. She eloquently spoke of the important need for non-Indigenous and Indigenous people to “wake up and work together”, including through the Mi’kmaq approach of *two-eyed seeing*: being able to see from the strengths and knowledge of both the Indigenous and Western perspectives.

The Conference included our third Worker Co-op Management Intensive Day, on Human Issues in a Worker Co-op, which covered wide-ranging topics such as Conflict Management, Democratic Decision-Making, Compensation as a Philosophy, and Benefits and Values of Membership. Other sessions included the Social and Solidarity Economy and Worker Co-ops, Worker Co-ops Building Resilient Communities, Building Your Co-op’s Financial Viability, Member Peer Coaching, and The Co-operators’ Approach to Environmental Sustainability. Various co-ops made Ignite presentations, on the theme of either Participating in the Green Economy, or Living Workplace Democracy. The Worker Co-op Merit Award was presented to [Open Sky Co-operative](#) of Sackville, NB. Open Sky is an inspiration, and Conference participants were clearly moved by the presentation by Margaret Tusz-King.



Hazel (right) presenting the Worker Co-op Merit award to Margaret Tusz-King of Open Sky Co-op.

We hope to be able to hold a Conference in Vancouver next November, although it is still an option that it may be a virtual one, in whole or in part.



Sonja Novkovic, St. Mary’s University, presenting on social and solidarity economy.

**Webinars:** Over the last the year, we hosted five webinars: (1) Directors and Officers Liability, and Insurance Solutions, in conjunction with The Co-operators; (2) the Social and Solidarity Economy and Worker Co-ops, by Sonja Novkovic, (3) Worker Co-ops and Covid-19 with presentations by a lawyer from Iler Campbell, a public health nurse, CMC and me, (4) A Shared Strategy for Shared Ownership with Nathan Schneider, and (5) Building a Resilient and Equitable Economy Post-Covid: What Worker Co-operatives Do, by Eric Tusz-King. Click [here](#) for available reports.

**Membership:** CWCF has 48 worker/ multi-stakeholder co-op members which is up by 8 since last year, as well as 3 Quebec Region Federation members including about 100 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 **Communications Plan** which has guided us in changing CWCF’s logo/ visual identity and revamping the [website](#), which is now far easier to navigate, more mobile-friendly, and features many

[worker co-op profiles](#) written by our Communications Assistant, Kenzie Love. Recent profiles include: Sustainability Solutions Group, Come as You Are, Tourne-Sol, Natural Cycleworks, Hypha, The Allium, Organic Planet, Multi-cultural Health Brokers, the Woodshop, Just Us Coffee Roasters, and Shift Delivery. A next step is to improve the status of the French side of our website.

We published [12 regular newsletters](#) and a variety of special newsletters throughout the year. Kenzie has also continued CWCF's blog series, which is available [here](#). Our part-time Social Media Coordinator, Mateusz Salmassi has implemented our social media strategy, which has led to strong growth in our followings especially on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).



By Eyemole Arts and Technology Co-operative

**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 made available up to \$2,000 per co-op which wished to create a plan for surviving effects of Covid-19, and continued to make up to \$3,500 available per co-op in the general Technical Assistance grant program; the full amount spent in the year was approximately \$19,000 with additional funding committed for the current financial year. We supported seven different co-ops with grants, including five continuing members (Hullabaloo Publishing, Saskatchewan; Shift Delivery, Vancouver; Sun Certified Builders, Winnipeg; the Allium Restaurant, Calgary; and Woodshop, Vancouver) and two start-ups or new members (Drivers Coalition, Edmonton; and Weaver Digital Media and Storytelling, Victoria). Other co-ops

have been approved for support and/or are in progress for the current year. 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 a loan in the Developmental Support Workers' Co-op in Ottawa. In the last financial year, the Fund committed a loan to a worker co-op which subsequently decided it did not wish to take the loan. The Fund now has investments and cash of \$424,000. 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 over half of our own *Tenacity Works Fund*; we have been placing funds into CCIF as capital is called which so far is \$39,000. CCIF investments can range from \$50,000 to \$1.25 million. We greatly appreciate the work of (Ms.) Willy Robinson who was elected to the CCIF Board in May 2019 after being nominated by CWCF; she is also a member of our Tenacity Works Fund Investment

Committee. 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 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 significant government relations work in 2020, notably advocating that the federal government use the worker co-op model to enable employee and employee-community buy-outs of businesses threatened with closure. The full proposal, called *Building Community Resiliency*, as well as an executive summary are available [here](#) in English, and [here](#) in French. Throughout, we have had extraordinary support and advice from our volunteer Government Relations Advisor, Alain Roy, and worked in conjunction with the CCEDNet-convened People-Centred Economy Group. We have also hired the government relations firm of FleishmanHillard HighRoad, specifically Pierre Cyr and Jennifer Anthony. CWCF has developed a set of lobby priorities for the sector which are available [here, in our latest pre-budget submission](#).

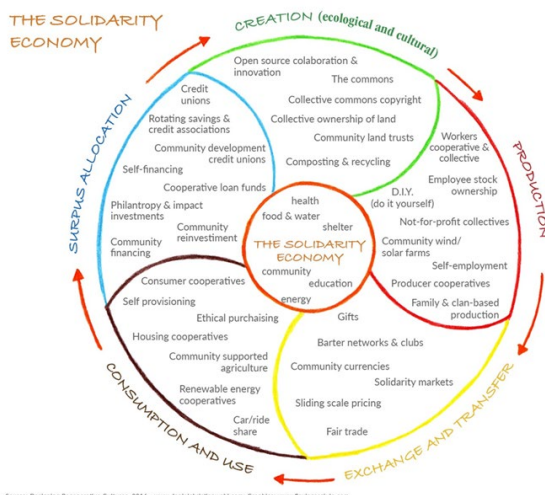
**Worker Co-op business succession:** We engaged in a partnership with Vancity, BC Co-op Association, the CoopConvert research project and others to focus on a pilot project in BC’s Lower Mainland. The purpose is to promote and encourage business succession to worker co-ops. A survey was developed which was to be shared with several thousand businesses in the region. Unfortunately, the pandemic started before the survey was carried out, and this has had to be put on hold for the time being.

**Start-up Training Program:** We signed a partnership agreement regarding a training program with the Quebec [Réseau COOP](#) to offer a worker co-op start-up training program called [Parcours Coop](#). This program has been very successful in Quebec in assisting worker co-ops to start. Translations of all student materials have now been completed, and we are in the process of having them adapted for use outside Quebec.

**Platform Co-ops Now! course:** In summer 2020, CWCF acted as a country-specific partner in support of the Platform Co-ops Now course, first edition. We opted to not continue as a partner given that the scope of work was outside of what we normally do. This is now in its [second edition](#), and we encourage those with interest in platform co-ops to consider taking it at a future date.

### 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



Source: Designing Regenerative Cultures, 2016 - www.danielchristianwall.com; Graphics: www.favizgarguio.com



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, racial justice organizations, 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 the climate change movement, and the Black Lives Matter movement.

**Youth Climate Strike on September 27, 2019**

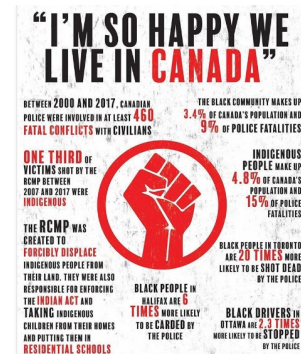


The Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation supported the co-op Climate Strike initiative, that was led by our member Sustainability Solutions Group with several other co-ops also engaged. Our board and staff participated in and encouraged

other members and allies to participate in the climate strikes in their communities. See the [press release here](#).

**Black Lives Matter Statement, June 5, 2020**

The events taking place across North America and the world in response to the murder of George Floyd have given all of us a stark reminder of the ongoing wrong of racism in our communities. In solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement, CWCF’s board and staff released [this statement](#). The issues of racial injustice and inequity affect not only Blacks, but also Indigenous people and People of Colour (“BIPOC” communities). We know that there is enormous work left to be done, which needs to happen in conjunction and relationship with these communities. CWCF has struck a committee of board and staff members to do a deep dive on this issue, to identify what we can do to address it – and build not only diversity and inclusion, but also racial justice. We are pleased to welcome Jessica Gordon-Nembhard as our AGM Guest Speaker to provide guidance to us on this journey.



**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 at last year’s conference and in a webinar. We have also created a preliminary list of organizations with which to partner and ally. To fully partner in the Solidarity Economy as outlined in our Strategic Plan, CWCF will need to identify and obtain significantly enhanced resources.

**At London Brewing Co-op, solidarity works for Local Values**

The London Brewing Co-op has put community values at the heart of its business model, sourcing local ingredients, reducing waste, and using reclaimed materials for its new, expanded taproom.

London Brewing Co-op Profile on CWCF website

#### 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 nearly \$75 million under administration in both RRSP's (primarily) and TFSA's with over 3,300 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 completed a project to significantly update the documentation in this program. In addition, we will soon launch the option of taking in investments, as community bonds, in non-profit organizations. We have also hired a community college student to assist us in digitizing all of our files. We greatly appreciate the role of Concentra Trust, which is the liaison to the Canada Revenue Agency and provides support to CWCF.

**We represented and promoted the Canadian Worker Co-op movement** – with many other organizations including Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada (CMC), The Co-operators, most 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 topic is that we learned there was overwhelming support by CMC's membership, and co-ops in general, to the possibility of CMC taking a position on fair tax treatment for indivisible reserves, or permanent co-op capital, in co-operatives. This resolution, submitted to CMC's AGM by CWCF in 2019, passed, and the first step in its implementation was 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.

## Financial Report

### Statement of Revenues and Expenditures

Year Ended August 2020		
	2020	2019
<b>Total Revenues</b>	\$476,588	\$405,863
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$448,711	\$392,414
<b>Operations Income (Loss)</b>	\$27,877	\$13,449
<b>Loan recovery /write-down</b>	0	(\$43,210)
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>	\$27,877	(\$29,761)

### Statement of Financial Position

Year Ended August 2020			
Assets	2020	2019	
	Current	\$756,768	\$715,077
	Long-term	\$4,260,786	\$3,321,769
<b>Total Assets</b>		\$5,017,554	\$4,036,846
<b>Liabilities</b>	Current <sup>1</sup>	\$60,220	\$77,076
	Trust Funds Payable <sup>2</sup>	\$4,181,777	\$3,242,090
	Long Term Debt	\$30,000	0
	Mark Goldblatt Fund	\$25,000	\$25,000
<b>Member Equity / General Reserve</b>	Tenacity Fund	\$424,224	\$434,645
	CWCF	\$296,333	\$258,035
<b>Total Liabilities and Member Equity</b>		\$5,017,554	\$4,036,846

1. 2019 has been restated

2. Primarily RRSP and TFSA cash, 2019 also restated

## 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 co-op-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 provided a grant to support our web site re-development, and has provided grants to several of our members over the years. 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.



## The Mark Goldblatt Project: Arts and Culture 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 winner in 2018-19 was announced last year, Eyemole Co-operative, and they subsequently completed their project in April 2020 which is posted [here](#). This year the winner is Social Justice Co-operative NL led by Neri

Aylward.

## 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 six 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). CWCF nominated Stephanie Guico to the Board of CMC in 2016; she has since been re-elected and will continue to serve until the AGM in 2021. Reba Plummer is CWCF's delegate to CMC. CMC's June, 2020 AGM took place virtually, 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](#); 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. Lastly, Hazel Corcoran, Reba Plummer, and Jessica Provencher are now all on the Board of [The Co-operators](#). 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. 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 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, and she continues to actively serve.
- 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 representatives of le Réseau COOP.



## 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 Building Care 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](#), [The Canadian CED Network](#) and [Peg City Car Co-op](#)

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 – Communications and 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, University of Calgary (in process)

## Board 2019-20

### *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-1980s, 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.

### *Frank Bezanson-Harris, Vice-President, and At-Large Director*



Over sixteen years ago I joined Just Us! Coffee Roasters Co-op. I started as a Barista in our Wolfville Coffeehouse shortly after it opened. I became a Worker Owner as soon as I was able (14 years ago) and was immediately elected onto the Board. I have sat on the Just Us! Coffee Roasters Board for most of my time as a member of this co-op and am currently sitting as the Chair of our Board until my term finishes in April. I have served as a member of the Board of Directors for the Wolfville Farmers Market, a local not-for-profit co-op for several terms now and currently sit as the President of its Board.

### ***Evan Proven, Treasurer, and Prairies/ NWT/ NU Director***



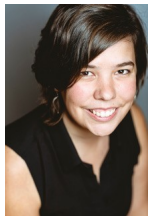
Evan has worked in the construction field for his entire career starting in concrete and moving on to wood framing, cabinet making, and super insulated renovation and new home construction. Evan achieved his Red Seal Endorsement in Carpentry in June of 2017. Evan is currently a Masters Candidate for the Management in Co-operatives and Credit Unions program at Saint Mary's University in Halifax. His hobbies include beekeeping, gardening, cooking, snowboarding, sailing, and fixing things. Evan is married and has two daughters and a step son and step daughter. Evan is a founding member of Sun Certified Builders Co-op Ltd. (SCBC) and has served on its board since 2012.

### ***Eric Tusz-King, 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 is the Course Director for the CoopZone Training Program. He is currently the CWCF Atlantic Board Director. Eric joined the Board of CWCF in 2008.

### ***Jessica Provencher, Quebec Director***



Jessica is a member of Code Opale, a worker co-op located in Montreal and Quebec City offering services in facilitation and organizational development, for all kinds of socially responsible organizations. She has been 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, where she worked for eight years. Jessica holds a bachelor's degree in social work and received a master's in education in developing people and organizations, both from Laval University. She joined The Co-operators board in April 2019 and is an observer for CWCF on the board of the RESEAU Québécois de la coopération du travail. She brings a strong experience in collective entrepreneurship and a sustained interest in horizontal management practices, collective intelligence, equity and diversity.

### ***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-based understanding of the realities, struggles and aspirations of immigrant and refugee families for the purpose of 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.

***Jessica Valentine, BC / Yukon Director***



Jessica is the Marketing Director for Wood Shop Worker Co-op, a Reclaimed Wood Furniture and Interior Fabricator Co-op in Vancouver B.C. She has been a member of Wood Shop for six years. With a background in web development, photography, social media and brand development she enjoys visual story telling and supporting the Wood Shop through those skills. She also works along side of Vancity and other Vancouver Co-ops to host a quarterly social known as Chats, Chews & Brews. Creating the opportunity for co-op connections and collaborations. Jessica was elected to the Board of CWCF at the AGM in October 2019.

Jessica is supported in her role on the CWCF board by Sandra Allen of Shift Delivery Co-op.