

# Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation

Fédération canadienne des coopératives de travail

## Annual Report | 2024



*Canadian Rockies Scene, with tiny Montreal Canadiens & Maple Leafs playing co-operative hockey ©  
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## 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, and the Annapolis Valley, NS.

CWCF has a staff of eight permanent employees: three in Nova Scotia, two in Calgary, one each in Winnipeg, Montreal, and Campbellford, ON), with just over six FTE; most staff members are part-time.

Its Board of seven directors provides stewardship. There are two "at-large" director positions and a director for each of the following regions: BC, Prairies, Ontario, Québec and Atlantic Canada, and two BIPOC (*Black, Indigenous, & other People of Colour*) Advisors.

### 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 67 direct worker co-op members and approximately 151 worker co-ops affiliated as indirect members, through the Québec 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 hyperlinks.]

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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 2023-2024

### By Reba Plummer

As another year draws to a close, I'm reminded once again that I am fortunate to belong to a worker co-op. I get to do what I love, I feel supported in my work, and I have a say in the decisions that affect me. At the same time, none of this changes the fact that worker co-ops still have to grapple with exorbitant rents, their members still need money for groceries, and we all face the various other pressures associated with the capitalist economy. Looking beyond the worker co-op movement, there are clearly bigger systemic barriers we must work to eliminate within society as a whole.

That said, I must express my great appreciation for our dedicated Federation staff and my fellow board members, as they work to support and strengthen the worker co-op movement in the face of so many challenges.

A huge special thanks to our Executive Director, Hazel Corcoran, whose commitment is evident in everything she does. While listing all these things would be an impossible task, I want to draw attention in particular to her success in getting co-op conversions comparable treatment to employee ownership trusts (EOTs) regarding the capital gains tax.

While there's certainly much more we need governments of all levels to do to support our sector, we'd never have achieved this feat without Hazel's tireless efforts.

CWCF continued to support co-ops, both new and existing, over the past year, with the launch of the third cohort of our Worker Co-op Academy, assistance we provided some of our members in repaying their CEBA loans, and our fantastic *Stronger Together* Conference in Québec City last November. While the in-person connection at this event may have felt all too brief, we're working hard to ensure the energy we experienced in coming together there continues. Our mixers at cities across Canada, including some held in conjunction with this year's Conference, are a great way to keep these connections alive.

At a time of growing insularity and individualism, interpersonal connections are more important than ever. While the worker co-op movement may not be immune to broader cultural and societal forces, we can act as something of a model for navigating these by demonstrating the value of a collaborative approach over an adversarial one. We all need each other.

**We are worker co-operators!**

# Executive Director's Report 2023-2024

by Hazel Corcoran

## Conference



CWCF Conference Attendees in Québec City

Our 2023 Conference, with the theme of *Stronger Together*, lived up to its name. This Conference served to bring together the worker co-op sector from Québec and the rest of Canada.

By coming together across borders and cultures, we felt once again that we're not alone in building our co-operatives and this movement. The Conference featured our usual engaging workshops and great networking opportunities, and reminded us of both the diversity within our movement and the values we hold in common.



La coop de yoga, one of many local co-ops visited

## Mixers

CWCF organized a series of Mixers across the country this year, giving CWCF staff and board members the chance to strengthen ties with members of local co-op communities.



CWCF BIPOC-Focused Mixer in Toronto



CWCF Mixer in Winnipeg

We were also pleased to provide grants for member-hosted mixers in the run-up to this year's fully virtual Conference, offering a valuable opportunity for in-person connection.

## Webinars

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Webinars remained an important support for our members, as we once again presented the [Worker Co-op 101 webinar series](#).

We also featured a webinar on Conflict Alchemy: Turning Discord into Co-operative Gold, presented by Camille Dumond of [Waterline Co-operative](#), and Joel Santos of [Co-operators](#) presented on their Member Benefits Program and Co-op Guard coverage.

We also held the first in a planned series of Co-op Conversations. Watch for more of these in the coming months.

## Worker Co-op Academy

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Our third iteration of the [Worker Co-op Academy](#) has once again provided invaluable support to the participating groups, and we continued to refine and improve on this program.

We look forward to welcoming the fourth cohort in 2025.

## Tenacity Works Fund

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The board committed to making loans available to eligible worker co-ops from our [Tenacity Works Fund](#) specifically for co-ops which had federal CEBA loans coming due; the CEBA loans required repayment of most of the full amount in order to keep the remainder as a grant. We were grateful to be able to provide this support to six of our members.

## Common Good Capital

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[Common Good Capital](#), CWCF's registered savings plan program for RRSPs/TFSAs, remains an important service offering.

A highlight over the past year was the awarding of the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council's Distinguished Co-operator award to CWCF's nominee, [Linda Best, founder of FarmWorks Investment Co-operative](#), a Common Good Capital member.

## JEDDI Business Conversion Project

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CWCF's [JEDDI Business Conversions project](#) concluded earlier this year.

The project had a great impact, both on the businesses with which it worked, and on CWCF as a whole. While this specific project may be over, we remain committed to ensuring broader representation of Equity-Denied Groups ("EDG's) within Canada's worker co-op sector.

We offer deep gratitude to the Project Coordinator, Janielle Maxwell, who took a great leadership role in carrying out the project. The website content and lessons learned will live on!

## Government Relations

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We embarked on a significant federal government relations push to obtain a pilot version of an expanded Tenacity Works Fund, as outlined in Part 2 of our [federal pre-budget brief](#).

Our goal is to work quickly with allies in the federal government and in the

solidarity economy to seek a pilot project, of about 1/10<sup>th</sup> or 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the full amount sought, to enable significant supports for conversions to worker co-ops.

We were pleased to learn of the government’s plans to exempt business owners selling to worker co-ops from the capital gains tax (up to \$10 Million), which had been a key lobbying priority for CWCF.

## Staff



The Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation staff team

Our dedicated CWCF staff team remained in place for another year. We welcomed Laura Ross back from her maternity leave in January 2024. We bid farewell to Janielle Maxwell, Coordinator of the JEDDI Business Conversion project, with the wrap-up of this project in March 2024. Simon Kinsey, a graduate student at Carleton University, pursuing an MA in Political Economy, joined CWCF as an intern in April and May, completing a [research project on the Homecare Workers’ Co-operative](#).

We appreciated the chance most of us had to connect in person at our staff retreat in Ottawa in July, as well as a “mini retreat” in Halifax in September for the CGC Team.



## CWCF Board and BIPOC Board Advisors



CWCF Leadership Meeting with the Board of Directors

Leslie Brown ([Flourish Community Development Co-op](#)) and Chris Nichols ([Wood Shop Workers’ Co-op](#)), who had been appointed by the board as directors, were acclaimed at our 2023 AGM. Tara Williams ([GIA Consulting Co-operative](#)) joined the board as a new director, and we welcomed Kelly Storie ([La Siembra](#)) back for a second term. We bid farewell to departing Prairies director Jared Bluestein ([Allium Plant-forward Restaurant Co-op](#)).

We also had the privilege of working with Board Advisors Juliet ‘Kego Ume-Onyido of [Whole Woman Network](#) and the [Black Women’s Professional Worker Co-op](#), and Nasreen Omar of [Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op](#). Juliet is continuing, and Nasreen has departed.



Juliet ‘Kego Ume-Onyido, one of CWCF’s Board Advisors



## New Members

We welcomed several new members over the past year, including:

- [Metanoia Farmers Workers Cooperative](#)
- [Coop BMP \(Bar Milton Parc\)](#)
- [Sunflower Facilitation and Counselling Co-op](#)
- [Jollity Farm](#)
- [Dream Bike Game Co-operative](#)
- [Eadha Bakery Worker Co-op](#)
- [Whole Woman Network](#)
- Slate Surrey Bookkeeping Co-op
- [Seed and Spark Book Co-op](#) and
- [Lichen Community Systems Worker Cooperative](#)

We also welcomed back [Old Town Glassworks](#) in Northwest Territories and [OUR EcoVillage](#) in British Columbia.



New CWCF members, Seed and Spark Book Co-op in Halifax with a pop-up at Glitter Bean Café

## With Gratitude

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

I appreciate the important contributions of our Academy Lead Instructor, Russ Christianson, as well as the coaches in that program, currently Melanie Conn & Zoe Creighton in BC, Lynn Hannley and Teresa Campbell in Alberta, and Russ Christianson and Vesta Sehatciu in Ont/Quebec. In Atlantic, Eric Tusz-King and Rosa Poirier-McKiggan have also been involved as coaches.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks for the work of CWCF's many volunteers, including the members of the Board, BIPOC advisors, and also those serving as delegates to Co-operators and co-op associations (provincial and national), our Fund Investment Committee members, and our Government Relations Advisors, Alain Roy and Colin MacDougall.

## Allied Organizations

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CWCF continued our work with several allied organizations.

- In Québec, there are three federations doing worker co-op development and support, including the [Réseau COOP](#), the [Québec Forestry Co-operative Federation](#), and the [Québec Paramedic Co-operative Federation](#)
- All three of these organizations are Regional Federation members of CWCF
- In other parts of the country:
  - [Co-operatives First](#) is supporting Indigenous and rural co-op development in Western Canada
  - [Solid State Community Industries](#), based in Surrey, BC, helps youth from racialized backgrounds build their own enterprises, mainly in the form of worker co-operatives
  - [In My Own Voice \(iMOVE\) Association of Halifax](#), a nonprofit that uses the arts for healing and self-expression to enhance participants' (including youth at risk) ability to make a living and to develop their leadership skills. It is increasingly focused on how co-operation and the co-op model can be used to solve challenges in EDGs
  - [The Union-Cooperative Initiative](#), an incubator in Vancouver that identifies opportunities, develops structures and supports co-ops to unionize and grow.

Most of the organizations described are working in spaces of worker co-op development from a lens of racial Justice, Equity, Diversity, Decolonization, and Inclusion, or "JEDDI".



## Strategic Plan Report 2023-2024

### I. Engage and Strengthen Current Members

#### Member Engagement

- Staff contacted almost all worker co-op members by phone and/or email to offer check-in virtual meetings. We have been able to meet with about 50% in the last year. Staff also conducted some additional in-person visits.
- In-person CWCF mixers were held in Toronto in March 2024, which included a screening of the film (R)évolution, le travail est humain, in Winnipeg in May 2024, when the full board was there to meet local members and allies, and in Halifax in June 2024, which also included the film screening.



CWCF Mixer in Toronto

#### Member Development and Education

- A new webinar series called "[Co-op Conversations](#)" was launched this year. The focus is to allow members to discuss common challenges and opportunities. Our first session was Member Recruitment and Orientation. Another session on Marketing your Co-op Values was planned but postponed into the new year.
- CWCF has started exploring the possibility of offering a member bookkeeping service. A [member survey](#) is live at the time of this writing, and worker co-op members are asked to complete it as soon as possible, to inform our planning.

#### Communications

- The popular [member profile series](#) has continued, which profiled 12 members over the course of the year, including MamboMambo, a member of Le Réseau COOP and an associate member using our common Good Capital Program.
- The CWCF blog continues to explore current issues in the worker co-op sector. During the year the blog covered topics such as:

- [How CWCF is Addressing the Challenges Facing Worker Co-ops](#),
  - [Value and Challenges of the Worker Co-op Model](#),
  - [Fediverse Model Offers Social Media a Second Chance](#),
  - [Even for Worker Co-ops, Paying a Living Wage Is a Complex Issue](#),
  - [ROSCAs Are an Overlooked But Vital Part of the Co-operative Sector](#),
  - [Employee Ownership Trusts Are Not the Only Solution to Succession Planning](#), and
  - [Worker Co-ops and the Sixth Principle \(co-operation among co-ops\)](#).
- CWCF's social media strategy encompasses [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#), which are used to share upcoming events, newsletter content, and funding opportunities. Most weeks feature two to three posts per platform. Please help CWCF reach more people by joining and sharing our social networks.

## Conference

- The 2023 AGM and Conference, held in Québec City in mid-November, had the theme of [Stronger Together](#). Our [presenters](#) included Bruno Roelants, Gabrielle Beaulieu, Rebecca Kemble, David Daughton, and Margaret Tusz-King, who all spoke to the value of solidarity and co-operation from their years of experience. Conference presentations remain online to the extent available.
- Our venue, [Le Monastère des Augustines](#), is an eco-responsible venue with exemplary sustainable development practices; it is a historic building primarily used as a wellness and yoga retreat centre.
- We offer our gratitude to our partner, [Réseau COOP](#), for their strong collaboration in presenting this Conference!
- The screening and panel discussion of the Réseau COOP's documentary [\(R\)evolution – Work is Human](#), showcased worker co-operatives' inspiring solutions to current issues. ([Original-French](#).)
- Québec City was a beautiful setting and is home to a thriving worker co-op sector. We toured and experienced many of them, closing with a visit to the worker co-op microbrewery, [La Barberie](#).



CWCF friends having fun at La Barberie in Québec City

### Technical Assistance Grants

- There was strong demand for our [Technical Assistance Grants](#). We increased our budget this year from \$55,000 to \$87,000, made possible through surpluses on our programs and Loyalty Payments from Co-operators.
- We awarded 18 grants this year for a total of \$73,705; however, not all have been wrapped up and paid out yet.

### Leadership Development

- As of May 2023, CWCF board members now receive honoraria for their service, as do BIPOC Advisors. CWCF plans to launch a more deliberate succession plan for the management team.

### Member Recruitment

- CWCF welcomed ten new worker co-op members in 2023-24.
- We reached out to recruit new prospective members this year, however, we have not had much success in attracting any more worker co-operatives.

### Tenacity Works Investment Fund

- We placed six CEBA loans with members this year. CWCF has been working hard to obtain additional capital in the TW Fund, in part through a capital raise with Tapestry Capital/ 2-to-1 matching fund from the three Social Finance Funds, in part through a federal lobby campaign.

### Webinars

- We offered our Worker Co-op 101 series (Introduction to Worker Co-ops, Worker Co-op Finance, and Worker Co-op Governance) twice this year in spring and again in fall. We are also in process of developing this series as an online self-paced learning opportunity.
- We also offered a conflict webinar "Conflict Alchemy: Turning Discord into Co-operative Gold" by Waterline Co-op on June 6, 2024.

### Collaboration

- Collaboration with CWCF's Québec regional federation partners increased as part of our 2023 Conference in Québec.



This conference allowed more collaborations with our Québec partners than we have been able to engage over the past few years.

- We have translated an excellent guide developed by the Réseau COOP on Horizontal Management; once formatting is complete, we will share it on our website and through the newsletter. It is already available in the original French and in Spanish.
- We have also collaborated with the Réseau COOP around the newly announced Worker Co-op tax incentives, and with all Québec federations and some other organizations, regarding the summer 2024 Finance Canada consultation on registered plan rules.
- We provided \$4,000 in training bursaries to CoopZone for its [Co-op Developer Training Program](#).

## II. Build Awareness and Scale Up Worker Co-ops

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### Promoting the Value of the Worker Co-op Model

- Our guest student intern, [Simon Kinsley wrote a blog](#) about the benefits (and challenges) of worker co-ops in May.
- Simon Kinsley also developed a [case study on home care co-ops](#).
- Member profile series continues to highlight successful worker co-ops.
- The blog series has also promoted the value of the model.

### Worker Co-op Academy

- We have only been able to offer one cohort of the Academy which launched in May 2024. Finding groups at the right stage to participate in the Academy remains a challenge, although interest has been growing.



### Business Succession

- Our JEDDI Business Conversion project offered a series of early-stage consultations. A final session was held to allow conversion cases to meet with experts.
- We developed a [list of professional advisors](#) and posted it on our website.
- The team also conducted interviews then produced, edited and posted a series of EDG spotlight videos on our [YouTube](#).

- The focus of our recent Government Relations work has been on business succession, see the next section.

### Government Relations

- CWCF successfully lobbied the federal government to provide incentives to worker co-operatives that are in line with the incentives being provided to employee-ownership trusts (EOTs). In the April 2024 budget, it was announced that this had been accepted, and additional follow-up took place to clarify that co-ops incorporated provincially are also included, along with some other refinements. The primary incentive is a \$10 million capital gains tax exemption for business owners who sell to their workers as a worker co-operative. These amendments are being proposed by Finance Canada, in keeping with similar provisions for EOTs this fall and are expected to be enacted in 2025.
- Our current primary focus is on growing the Tenacity Works Fund to meet the demand created by the tax exemption and the current demographics with the “silver tsunami” of retiring “boomer” SME business owners.
- See CWCF’s pre-budget brief in [English](#) and en [français](#) for full details or our public policy proposals for the worker co-operative movement in Canada.

## III. Build the Solidarity Economy

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### Racial Justice

- We approved six [Racial Justice Grants](#) for this year. Two grants, \$12,000, were carried over from the previous year.
- CWCF also provided a \$5,000 bursary to Solid State for participant visits to Mondragon.

## IV. Other CWCF Strategies and Activities

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CWCF has continued to offer our [Common Good Capital](#) registered plans program, enabling not only qualified (large enough) worker co-ops but also other co-ops, CED Investment Funds, and non-profits to help capitalize their operations and give individuals a way to place their savings into community investments.

As of August 2024, we had 64 members actively making use of our Registered Plans Program. There were 2,718 RRSP contracts (individuals) and 202 TFSA contracts, with approximately \$70 million under administration.

## JEDDI Business Conversion Project

Janielle Maxwell served as coordinator of CWCF's [JEDDI Business Conversion Project](#). Funded by Canada's Investment Readiness Program, the project was a continuation of the work done by the [Waterloo Institute for Social Innovation & Resiliency's Legacy Leadership Lab \(L3\)](#). The L3 project focused on raising awareness around social acquisitions to combat Canada's business closure dilemma, challenges brought about by COVID-19, and issues of social justice. Information gathered on the experiences of members of Equity-Denied Groups (EDGs) in the business investment space showcased that the impacts of COVID-19 and financial instability have disproportionate impacts on business owners from EDGs.

After this initial information gathering, the project's focus shifted to awareness raising, knowledge sharing, and story-telling, much of which took place at the various webinars, workshops, and presentations CWCF hosted or participated in throughout the project, which included over 14 in-person and virtual events. The project focused its efforts on connecting with equity-denied groups to revitalize a sense of return to the co-op and social-purpose organization models — which have a long history within many of these groups — and create an ecosystem for improved social innovation. Noting that there is a lack of education in mainstream academic systems on Co-operative and SPO business models, the project hired two youth interns from Equity-Denied Groups through the [Create Action Youth Employment Program](#).

Even groups who were interested in business conversions sometimes lacked the resources to pursue them. The project's final phase, however, worked to support the active cases for co-op conversion it had identified and to strengthen the social innovation and social finance ecosystem. This helped 15 organizations across the country in the process. The lack of awareness around the worker co-op model demonstrated the project's value.

Although the project has concluded, it created several useful outputs, including more than 20 educational web pages as well as a service provider database and Q & A web page. It also set a certain tone and momentum for this work within the co-op space, and JEDDI issues will remain a focus for CWCF in the years to come.

## 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.

[Eadha Bakery Worker Cooperative](#) in Winnipeg was the winner of the 2024 Young Adults Arts and Culture Grant to design a three-part mural and to paint the exterior shutters so that the business becomes even more well-known and understood.

You can find past recipients here on our [Arts and Cultural Grant page](#).





**Ljgrh Ingu**  
Local Guide · 45 reviews

★★★★★ 4 months ago

I love Eadha! I'm a huge fan of all their pastries, but there are a select few I always come back to! I like trying new ones as well. Their staff are great. It is a bakery that I feel is a safe space for anyone to visit (homeless, all inclusive, all ethnicities feel welcome or comfortable. etc) but also they have good boundaries. (which is needed IN EVERY establishment, to protect your staff) to me there is so much more to a business than just the food or clothes or whatever they're selling, The vibe here is everything!





## Financial Report

<b>Statement of Revenues and Expenditures</b>		
<b>September 2023 - August 2024</b>		
	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
Total Revenues	\$916,417	\$835,161
Total Expenses	\$785,811	\$659,940
Operations Income (Loss)	\$130,606	\$175,221
Loan recovery /write-down	(\$106,823)	(\$574)
Net Income (Loss)	\$23,783	\$174,647

<b>Statement of Financial Position</b>			
<b>Year Ended August 2024</b>			
		<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
<i>Assets</i>	Current	\$787,100	\$934,791
	Long-term	\$6,594,176	\$7,607,443
<i>Total Assets</i>		\$8,012,921	\$8,542,234
<i>Liabilities</i>	Current	\$70,362	\$140,251
	Trust Funds Payable	\$6,954,721*	\$7,437,928
	Long Term Debt	\$0	\$30,000
	Mark Goldblatt Fund	\$25,000	\$25,000
<i>Member Equity / General Reserve</i>	Tenacity Fund	\$259,586	\$375,282
	CWCF	\$703,252	\$563,773
<i>Total Liabilities and Member Equity</i>		\$8,012,921	\$8,542,234

\*This is held in trust by CWCF, but it belongs not to CWCF but to CGC investors.

## Co-operators: Membership and Insurance

CWCF is one of 46 member organizations of 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 Québec Réseau COOP) have access to special or co-op-specific insurance products of Co-operators, e.g., the Member Benefits Program and Co-op Guard. Co-operators presented on Member Benefits and Co-op Guard at our 2023 Conference.

CWCF also participates in governance in five of seven regions of Co-operators, providing opportunities for networking and education for our delegates and contributing to the governance of Co-operators. The Loyalty Payment (akin to a patronage dividend) has contributed significantly to CWCF's financial stability.

Their Co-op Development Program has provided grants to CWCF as well as many of our members over the years. CWCF is greatly appreciative of this mutually beneficial relationship with Co-operators, and we encourage our members to use their insurance and other services whenever 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. CWCF nominated Reba Plummer to the Board of CMC in 2021; she was acclaimed and was re-elected in June 2024.
- CWCF is a member of the [Canadian Co-op Investment Fund](#); in spring 2022, CWCF nominated our board treasurer, Kelly Storie to the CCIF board, and she was elected.



- In addition, CWCF is a member of the [Canadian CED Network](#), where our Operations and Member Services Manager Kaye Grant served as a board member for two terms until June 2023 and our E.D. Hazel Corcoran participates in their People-Centred Economy Group.
- Lastly, Hazel Corcoran and Jessica Provencher are on the Board of [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 CWCF board members, staff or members.
- CWCF is a member of the [CoopZone Developers' Network](#). After incubating its start-up, in 2018-19 we supported CoopZone in the transition to CWCF no longer managing it.
  - 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, with 5 votes for the developers' membership class.



## International:

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- CWCF is a member of [CICOPA](#), the international organization of worker co-ops. CWCF's nominee, Hazel Corcoran, was elected to the Board of CICOPA, in June of 2023. Although after the current year, Hazel has made plans to attend the CICOPA board meeting and [ICA Congress](#) in New Delhi, India, at the end of November. She will be speaking on a panel about Co-operatives in the Care Economy. At this Congress, proposed changes to the Statement of the Co-operative Identity will be the subject of deliberation, and the UN-Declared International Year of Co-operatives 2025 will be officially launched, with the UN Secretary General and other dignitaries present. The opening session will be live-streamed.
- 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 CICOPA-North America, sometimes along with other CWCF representatives. In CICOPA-Americas,



CWCF is represented by Lissette Lemus, Marcelo Vieta, Martin Van Den Borre, and occasionally Hazel Corcoran.

## 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>.

The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) is conducting a [consultation process](#) about the Statement on the Co-operative Identity, to find out how well it has stood the test of time.

CWCF contributed to its initial survey, to share our position that the principles should be strengthened around JEDDI issues, the climate crisis, and the place of workers in co-operatives. There are other ways to engage, including an online forum, and we encourage our members and others to participate in the consultation process.

Anyone with comments at this point should email their comments to Hazel Corcoran, copying Kaye Grant, in advance of November 25, 2024. One of the last opportunities to give comments will be at the New Delhi ICA Congress.

## Staff 2023-2024



### 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 [CICOPA](#), [Co-operators](#), the [Big Idea Rainbow Foundation](#), and [Prairie Sky Cohousing Co-op](#)



### Kaye Grant, Operations 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 [Peg City Car Co-op](#)  
 Management Consultant, [Reconnaissance Management Consulting Group Inc.](#)



### Kristin Van Hattem, Common Good Capital Program Manager and Bookkeeper, Kentville, NS

B.Sc., Psychology, with University Scholar distinctions, Acadia University, Wolfville, NS, 2009  
 Bookkeeping Basics, NSCC Kingstec, December 2017  
 Advanced RRSP Strategies, CCUA Campus, December 2019



### Josh Dyke, Common Good Capital Program Administrator, Kentville, NS

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



**Laura Ross, Common Good Capital 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



**Kenzie Love, Communications Assistant,  
Calgary, AB**

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



**Ven Drake, Information & Technology Assistant,  
Trent Hills, ON**

Software Development (IT) Diploma Southern Alberta Institute of  
Technology (SAIT), Calgary, AB, 2017  
Data Asset Management, Norquest College, AB, 2023



**Chloë Williams, Executive Assistant,  
Montreal, QC**

B.A. Geography: Human Environment, 2016  
Master's Certificate, Community Economic Development, Concordia  
University, 2019, & Master's in Business Management, Co-operatives  
and Credit Unions, Saint Mary's University, 2024  
CMC Emerging Co-operators Committee

## Board & Advisors 2023-2024



### 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 Wrenches with Wrenches.

She joined the CWCF board in 2010, and was elected President in November 2016. She served on the Board of The Co-operators for the Ontario Region in April 2018 for three years. Currently Reba sits on the boards of CMC and the Ontario Co-op Association.



### Jessica Provencher, Vice President, Québec Director

Jessica is a coach and a facilitator residing in Québec City who loves assisting all kinds of socially responsible

organizations to pursue their dreams along with their workers and partners.

She has been passionate about supporting collaborative processes and worker cooperatives since she started as head of cooperative life at La Barberie microbrewery in 2010. She is currently developing her one-on-one coaching practice to support individuals to connect with their inner courage and to achieve their personal and professional goals.

Jessica holds a bachelor's degree in Social Work and a Master's degree in People and Organizational Development, 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 Coop, the Québec federation of workers' coops. She brings a strong experience in collective entrepreneurship and a sustained interest in horizontal management practices, collective intelligence, equity and diversity.

Jessica was first elected to the CWCF board in 2012.



**Kelly Storie,  
Treasurer, At-  
Large Director  
(from Ontario  
Region)**

Kelly has been a part of the cooperative and solidarity

community for over 25 years and is the Executive Director of La Siembra Co-operative (Camino), a fair trade mission-driven workers cooperative dedicated to small-farmer livelihoods and economic democracy.

In her career, Kelly has supported the growth and governance of several national and international co-operative and fair trade organizations including serving on the board of the Ontario Co-operative Association, Your Credit Union, La Siembra, Fairtrade Canada and one the largest worker co-ops in the United States, Equal Exchange.

Kelly believes that the worker co-op model has been key to keeping La Siembra and the Camino brand connected to their fair trade mission and independent for over 20 years. The worker owners care deeply about the business, its reputation, its service and the quality of the products. The democratic governance and control of the co-op will pass from member to member, rather than fall into the hands of private equity. Giving workers more power, control and accountability over their work is meaningful and dignified. This is a real strength of the model.

Kelly Storie was acclaimed as a director-at-large for CWCF at its AGM in November, 2021.



**Evan Proven,  
Prairies/ NWT/  
NU Director**

Evan has been working in building trades since starting in concrete construction as a teenager and

moving on to wood framing, cabinet making, super insulated renovations, and new home construction. Evan achieved his Red Seal Endorsement in Carpentry in June of 2017 and graduated from the Master of Management in Co-operatives and Credit Unions program at Saint Mary's University in September of 2023.

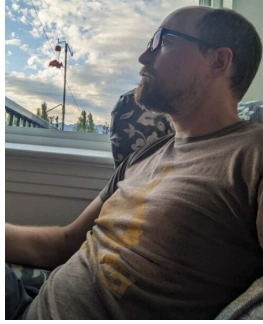
Evan's favorite co-op principle is P6, Co-operation among Co-ops. Evan's capstone research project, which was published in the 2024 edition of the International Journal of Co-operative Accounting and Management, focused on the feasibility of creating a multi-stakeholder network of co-ops and not-for-profits in Winnipeg that could partner to develop multi-unit low-income housing to a high-performance and resilient building standard by leveraging stakeholders unique attributes to help lower the upfront cost of construction.

Evan enjoys snowboarding, sailing, and fixing things. Evan is married and lives in a blended household with his wife and four children. As a founding member of Sun Certified Builders Co-op Ltd., a multi-stakeholder co-op that specializes in high-performance new construction and renovations and Evan has served on its board since 2012.

Evan was elected to the CWCF board in 2019.







**Chris Nichols, BC / Yukon Director**

Chris Nichols is co-founder and general manager of Wood Shop Worker’s Co-op, a furniture and millwork co-op operating out of Vancouver, BC.

With a Masters in Social and Political Thought and over 10 years carpentry experience, he likes to get his hands dirty, both literally and figuratively. He lives in East Vancouver in a co-owned house with his wife and two-year-old son. Chris was appointed to the CWCF Board in June 2023.

more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable society.

As a volunteer, Leslie has served in leadership positions in community planning projects, credit unions, and various types of co-ops. Since 2020 she has been member-at-large on the board of Flourish Community Development Co-operative, a consulting co-operative.

As a new board member of the CWCF Leslie says “I am excited to have the opportunity to work with Board members, staff and CWCF members who are committed to supporting worker co-operatives across the country. There is no doubt in my mind that worker co-operatives have a vital part to play in helping us imagine, and build, a better world.”

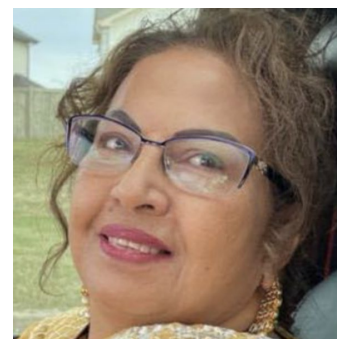
Leslie was appointed to the CWCF Board in August 2023.



**Leslie Brown, Atlantic Director**

Leslie Brown is Professor Emerita in the Sociology Department Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, where her work has involved teaching, research, policy analysis, and knowledge dissemination.

Throughout her career she has studied co-operatives and co-operation in Canada and abroad. Research methodologies that prioritize collaboration with community-based groups and organizations have proven particularly fruitful in studying the role co-operatives can play in building community, democratizing the economy, providing vital services, and offering concrete examples toward a vision of a



**Nasreen Omar, BIPOC Board Advisor**

Nasreen Omar is the Chair of the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op in Edmonton.

She migrated to Canada 47 years ago. She has been with the Co-op for the last 25 years. She retired as a Multicultural Program Coordinator from Alberta Health Services (University of Alberta Hospital) after 20 years of service.

She has a B.A. in Sociology and Master’s in Library Science. In both her jobs, Alberta Health Services and Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op, she has been a

master trainer of Intercultural Competency.

She has extensive experience in community education. She does a Punjabi radio program, South Asian Men's, and Women's support group.

She also does community education in parenting in two cultures and general health. She is an active educator of the worker co-op at the MCHB. She researches, designs and delivers workshops to relevant conferences.

She ended her term in October 2024.



**Juliet 'Kego  
Ume-Onyido,  
BIPOC Board  
Advisor**

Juliet 'Kego Ume-Onyido is a Financial Advisor with one of the

leading Financial Institutions in Canada. She is also a Social Justice Advocate, an International Speaker-Poet, and Master-Certified Leadership Coach-Trainer.

A passionate advocate of financial resilience, wealth wholeness and economic opportunities for women and girls, she is an active proponent of the cooperative movement and the solidarity economy using an ecosystem approach. Juliet is a co-founder of Whole Woman Network – a leadership and empowerment Social Enterprise for Women and Youth, and Whole Women Network Co-op; a worker co-operative

focused on culturally informed financial literacy and cooperative education, using an iterated digital model of ROSCA - Rotating Savings & Credit Association (SUSU), anchored on African indigenous lens, values, frameworks.

She is also one of the ten co-founding members of Black Women Professional Co-op (BWP Co-op); a women-led multi-stakeholder consulting co-operative, supporting black women professionals and entrepreneurs with advisory, mentorship and professional training resources, and providing linkages between black women in the co-operative space from the global South and North, to share resources and co-create intergenerational wealth and socio-cultural-political agency.

As a feminist and poet, her works of poetry amplify the lived experiences of women and girls, and proceeds from her global poetry recitals and speaking engagements support the education and empowerment of vulnerable girls and women in under-served communities across Africa.

Juliet's other areas of advocacy include ending Gender Based Violence, STEM, Menstrual Health access; Quality Public School Education; Food Sovereignty, Child Rights; Women & Youth in Leadership, and Environmental Sustainability.

Her educational background and professional experiences span multi-disciplinary fields: Engineering, International Business, Gender Studies, Wealth Management and Financial Advisory. She has an MBA from the Manchester Business School, University of Manchester, UK, and has worked and

consulted for Honeywell Group, American Express, Emex Systems, MIS Systems, Edward Jones Investments, and Sun Life Financial. She is a coach-strategist for several Governmental/Non-Governmental agencies, and some Political and Corporate Leaders.

She is on the board of several organizations in Canada, USA, Nigeria, such as: PARO Women's Enterprise Centre, Canadian Association for the Studies in Cooperation (CASC), Global Rights, BOATS (LifeBank) Foundation, and she is the equity advisor to the board of Canadian Worker Co-op Federation (CWCF).

Her other interests include belly-dancing, walking, writing, watching world cinema, traveling, sleeping and dreaming.



**Tara Williams,  
At-Large Director  
(From the BC  
Region)**

Tara Williams,  
MMCCU. She is a  
bi-racial woman of

Cantonese American born Chinese and White Canadian born English, Welsh and Dutch descent. She grew up and now lives on the lands of the Coast Salish Peoples, the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam) sə́lilwətaɣ /Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations and has immigrant roots to the lands of the Muwekma Ohlone peoples. She acknowledges the privilege of being a cisgender settler, masters educated, partial woman of colour.

She is committed to building more equitable communities through leveraging the power of the co-operative model to break down systemic barriers and support communities to grow through co-operation.

As a visionary leader in the co-operative landscape, she leverages her expertise to shape strategic visions and curate collaborative experiences.

A founding Member of GIA Consulting Co-operative, she supports organizations to build comprehensive and actionable solutions in Member Engagement, Marketing, and Human Resources, setting the stage for Co-operative success.

With a profound understanding of the co-operative model's potential, Tara champions its power to dismantle systemic barriers and foster inclusive growth. She worked in a variety of roles for over 17 years at Vancity Credit Union including in Human Resources, Marketing, Product Management, Project Management, Technology and as the lead in the Women's Employee Resource Group and Racial Equity Employee Resource Groups, amplifying diverse voices through an intersectional lens.

Tara is a graduate of the International Centre for Co-operative Management at Saint Mary's in Halifax where she wrote her Capstone on How Co-operatives Will Adapt to the Artificial Intelligence Revolution.

Tara currently sits on the Personnel Committee and JEDDI Committees as a part of her work on the CWCF Board.