



Valley Alliance of Worker Co-operatives Annual Report 2017-2018

*Working
for a Co-operative Economy*



Our Impact Continues



- 1** Loan active from our Interco-operative Development Fund
- 2** Investments VAWC has from our VAWC Interco-operative Development Fund
- 3** Classes offered at University of Massachusetts Department of Economics about co-operatives through the Certificate in Co-operative Enterprise we co-created along with the Neighboring Food Co-op Association
Also the number of presentations to potential conversions
- 4** Interns in VAWC and its co-ops in 2017 who performed 1,000 hours of research and on-the-floor labor
- 11** Workshops and class talks at seven conferences, schools and after school programs representing VAWC membership
- 13** Print ads run featuring VAWC and its members in local and co-op outlets
- 90** Students enrolled in classes offered through the Certificate
- 244** Minutes of radio programming and advertising featuring VAWC
- 17,735** Views of posts about VAWC and its members on Facebook
- \$23,651** Member-led dollars in VAWC's Interco-operative Development Fund
- 58,435** Impressions on Twitter about the activities of VAWC and its members

*Co-operative advantage lies in social networking,
and illustrates various types of co-operative networks
as sources of innovative adaptations to new socio-
economic challenges.*

- Sonja Novkovic

Member Relations

As with years past, a majority of the work of the board and staff is focused on member relations. VAWC continues to meet directly with members and to work closely to provide technical assistance regarding structure, governance, marketing, business opportunities and more.

A key strategic advantage is how we are democratically owned and operated. Because we have long term members we can invest in long term success of our goals and direct our own destiny for intergenerational success..

This past year featured a democratic election for our board, six member meetings and six board meetings, all of which reach quorum and moved our federation forward. Our budget, staff, Fund and resources were all directed by members.

VAWC is proud to support our members:



**pedal
people**
1008



VAWC has supported the development of Amherst Food Co-op, a multi-stakeholder co-op start up that will include workers and consumers as members, since 2012. Here, board co-president JuPong Lin talks to attendees of a member drive event.



Michael Ruthr, one of our interns from 2018, found VAWC has unique capabilities as a secondary co-op to support worker co-operatives and conversions with stronger co-op identities and more participatory worker-members.

and our provisional member:

Oxbow
design|build

Co-opreneurship

A key capacity of our federation is having a peer-to-peer system of support for the research and development of other worker co-operatives.

Highlights include:

- Fielding 8 inquiries about forming worker co-operatives
- Setting 3 in-take meetings with new groups considering forming worker co-operatives
- Continuing to support Amherst Food Co-op, a multi-stakeholder start-up co-op
- Continuing to support the potential conversion of Oxbow Design Build of Easthampton, MA
- Supporting the development of Mo'Coffee, a student run start-up co-op at Mount Holyoke College

Principle 5: Education, Training and Information

Education has been a strategic focus because an informed public is one that knows the advantages of co-operatives. Throughout the year we bring the message of our worker co-operatives and co-ops in general as we engage the history and theory of co-operatives worldwide.

Highlights include:

- Internal Education: Creation of three educational modules tailor-made for worker co-operatives in federations on the topics Participation, Financial Literacy and the Co-operative Movement
- External Education: The University of Massachusetts Co-operative Enterprise Collaborative
 - Three classes offered specifically on co-operatives with 90 students enrolled
 - Ten interns placed in VAWC and NFCA co-ops
 - 2,500 hours of research and “on-the-floor” labor performed for host co-ops with topics including inclusivity, how federations support co-operatives and conversions
 - Over 55 academic credits allocated to interns
 - VAWC presented five class talks to over 100 students

Most education in public education institutions does not promote Co-operative Values. All too often they promote values that are contrary to the Co-operative Values and Principles. Therefore, it is exceedingly important for us to appreciate that Co-operative Education is founded on those Co-operative Values and Principles.

- Sidney Pobihushchy



After reporting on their research, interns from the spring of 2018 all received a copy of Tom Webb's *From Corporate Globalization to Global Co-operation: We Owe it to Our Grandchildren* from the Neighboring Food Co-op Association.

**Introduction to Financial Literacy
& Open-Book Practices for
Worker Co-ops**

Valley Alliance of Worker Co-operatives

Participation
in
Worker Co-operatives

Adam Trott
Executive Director
Valley Alliance of Worker Co-operatives



Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations

Promoting our members and their services is another key goal for VAWC. We are pro-active in promotion whether it is marketing through our ***Together, We're Working for a Co-operative Economy*** campaign, social media, bringing speakers to our region or advertising. Highlights include:

- VAWC was a member of the annual Co-op Panel on WHMP's The Bill Newman Show in October for National Co-op Month
- VAWC headlined an hour long WXOJ Labor Day Special on Occupy the Airwaves with Bob Gardner
- We aired over 2 hours of advertising time on WRSI/WHMP/Hot94.7 during Co-op Month
- We ran 12 print ads run in the Brattleboro Food Co-op Newsletter
- VAWC earned 58,435 impressions on Twitter with a .085% rate of engagement with 650 followers
- VAWC earned 17,735 views on Facebook with 1,041 site clicks and likes from 767 followers
- Website up and running all year with new content on the value of the Co-op Identity
- Delivered eleven workshops and talks at seven conferences, events, colleges and after school programs

Working for a Co-operative Economy

Co-op Printing & Co-op Values
Need business materials? Publishing a book or printing a calendar? Try **Collective Copies!**
To learn more about Collective and other members of the **Valley Alliance of Worker Co-ops**, please visit our website or call.



VAWC *Together, we are working for a co-operative economy.*

WWW.VALLEYWORKER.COOP • 413.268.5800

One of the twelve ads in Brattleboro Food Co-op's Newsletter featuring VAWC members.



Above: VAWC was part of the team that brought Sonja Novkovic, Chair of the International Co-operative Alliance Committee on Cooperative Research to speak at UMass, Amherst.

Below: Attendees of one our workshops at the Vermont Employee Ownership Conference in Burlington, VT.



Network formation is a strategic advantage for co-operatives, given their collective problem-solving nature and co-operative identity.

- International Co-operative Alliance

Principle 6: Co-operation Among Co-operatives

In addition to supporting interco-operation for our members, VAWC is a participant in the broader co-operative movement regionally and nationally. By acting together we learn from each other, unleash innovation and can explore collaboration and joint ventures. Highlights include:

- 2017 sees the VAWC Interco-operative Development Fund reaching new heights of activity:
 - Over \$20,000 of our Fund is invested in co-op loan funds. We invest in Shared Capital Cooperative, where we are a member and vote on the board of directors, and the Cooperative Fund of New England, where we support regional collaboration.
 - We have an active loan with Collective Copies, a founding VAWC member, for expanding wide format printing capacity in their Florence, MA shop.
- VAWC continues our Federation Partner status at the United States Federation of Worker Co-operatives
- VAWC is a board member of the Valley Co-operative Business Association
- VAWC attended five annual meetings of co-ops and support organizations: Amherst Food Co-op, Neighboring Food Co-op Association, Franklin Community Co-op, Shared Capital Cooperative, National Cooperative Bank and the National Cooperative Business Association-CLUSA as well as the 9th anniversary celebration of River Valley Co-op.

Thanks to our Organizational Affiliates:

Special thanks to our Affiliates for supporting our mission and collaboration across the region.

AORTA – Anti-Oppression Resource and Training Alliance

Boston Tech Collective

Erbin Crowell

Franklin Community Co-op

Neighboring Food Co-op Association

Real Pickles Co-operative

Suzette Snow-Cobb

Nurturing participation at grass-roots level therefore strengthens the legitimacy and authority both of front-line co-operative organizations, but also and particularly of their representative bodies such as the ICA.

- Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade



International
Co-operative
Alliance

Co-operative enterprises
build a better world

CO-OPS COMMIT Co-op Month 2017 October is Co-op Month!

Across the Pioneer Valley and around the world, your local co-ops & credit unions help you connect with your community. Co-ops put people before profit, contributing to community development, employment and food security. Stop in at your local co-op or credit union to see how we commit to our community.

Want to know more about co-ops in the Pioneer Valley and what they can do for you? Visit www.vdca.coop.

Join us! Valley Co-operators for our Annual Social on Saturday, October 14th at __ pm at Shelburne Falls Bowling Alley.



National Co-op Month's shared print ad by VCBA promoted cross sector collaboration in our region and included VAWC and many VAWC members.

Financial Report

It was a challenging year as member did not pay dues after our budget was approved. Our board held two meetings specifically designed to face the ensuing challenges and made adjustments to successfully cover all necessary expenses.

Despite the challenges, and experiencing a rare loss, we continue to be a majority dues funded, member-led co-operative in both governance and in finances.

We continue to use a bookkeeper to review our all our finances and a separate tax preparer for checks and balances. We continue to support co-operatives with our banking services by having ourw business checking and credit card with Freedom Credit Union.



Jack Fischer, intern from the Certificate in Co-operative Enterprise, researched the impact of worker co-operatives throughout New England.

The form of association...which if mankind continue to improve...is not that which can exist between a capitalist as chief...but the association of the labourers themselves on terms of equality, collectively owning the capital with which they carry on their operations, and working under managers elected and removable by themselves.

- John Stuart Mill

VAWC Profit & Loss January through December 2017

	Jan - Dec 17
Income	
4000 · Member Dues	3,952.88
4558 · Fundraising Event-Operations	650.00
4690 · Other Operating Income	725.00
4700 · Development Funding	4,486.32
4777 · Organizational Affl	2,100.00
4899 · Loan interest	234.65
4992 · Bank interest	17.80
Total Income	12,166.65
Expense	
5003 · Staff Contracted Services	10,785.00
5004 · Accounting Expense	800.00
5006 · Bad Debt Expense	1,500.00
5205 · Telephone & Telecommunications	26.62
5503 · Printing and Copying	125.00
5505 · Dues & Fees	400.00
5506 · Promotion	1,776.68
5600 · Other Expenses	754.08
5688 · Taxes	887.00
5700 · Travel and Meetings	94.74
Total Expense	17,149.12
Net Income	-4,982.47

VAWC Balance Sheet As of December 31, 2017

	Dec 31, 17
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1004 · Freedom Credit Union	6,963.88
1009 · Shared Capital	3,150.00
1045 · CFNE	6,767.24
Total Checking/Savings	16,881.12
Total Current Assets	16,881.12
Other Assets	
1180 · Loans Receivable	
Loan Receivable - Simple	3,068.06
Loan Receivable Coll Copies	3,857.26
Total 1180 · Loans Receivable	6,925.32
1390 · Allowance for Doubtful Loans	-1,500.00
Total Other Assets	5,425.32
TOTAL ASSETS	22,306.44
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
2200 · Accrued payroll	1,111.05
Total Other Current Liabilities	1,111.05
Total Current Liabilities	1,111.05
Total Liabilities	1,111.05
Equity	
3100 · Net Assets	26,077.86
3200 · Member Share	100.00
Net Income	-4,982.47
Total Equity	21,195.39
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	22,306.44

Worker co-operatives and our movement are made stronger through shared identity, statutes and structural provisions that preserve our individual autonomy while clearly identifying our organizations as co-operatives united in the common cause of developing a co-operative economy.

Definition

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

Values

Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Principles

The co-operative principles are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice.

Voluntary and Open Membership

Democratic Member Control

Member Economic Participation

Autonomy and Independence

Education, Information and Training

Co-operation among Co-operatives

Concern for Community

The worker co-operative identity is further detailed by the World Declaration on Co-operative Worker Ownership established by CICOPA (The International Organisation of Industrial, Artisan and Service Producers' Co-operatives) in 2004.

The Valley Alliance of Worker Co-operatives (VAWC) is rooted in the ideals of co-operation, mutuality and solidarity. VAWC is itself an expression of co-operative principles - a "co-op of co-ops" - that have come together as a means of strengthening the efforts of our individual co-ops to develop their businesses, serve their members, and contribute to the wider co-operative economy. Our core goal is to provide ourselves with the resources and support we need to advance our co-operatives, empower our members, and benefit more people in our communities.

Valley Alliance of Worker Co-operatives

Board of Directors

Philippe Rigollaud

Pioneer Valley Photovoltaics

Faith Seddon

Collective Copies

Lauren Yohe Von Krusenstiern

Green Mountain Spinnery

Suzette Snow-Cobb

*Neighboring Food Co-op
Association and Valley Co-operative
Business Association, Stakeholder
Director*

VAWC is a proud Federation
Partner of the United States
Federation of Worker
Co-operatives



VAWC is a proud member of
the following co-operatives:

