



Valley Alliance of Worker Co-operatives

Supporting the Success of Worker Co-operation in the Valley & Beyond

Report from the Executive Director

for VAWC Member Meeting, August 22, 2018

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Executive Director

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2018 Annual Meeting

Members gathered together for our annual meeting on June 27. Members created strategic goals for the year that leverages our assets and programming to achieve our goals and act on opportunities. Members approved the annual budget, too, in order to orchestrate our goals and activities along with our resources. Lastly, Suzette Snow Cobb, Sourcing Coordinator for the Neighboring Food Co-op Association and president of the Valley Co-operative Business Association, was re-elected as our stakeholder director.

And, lastly, congratulations to our award recipients:

2018 'Jesse Owens' Payment Award

went to Collective Copies

2018 'Emilia Romagna' Cross Sector Collaboration Award

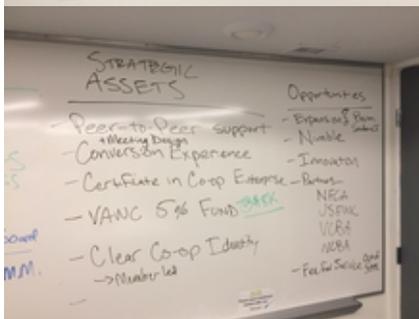
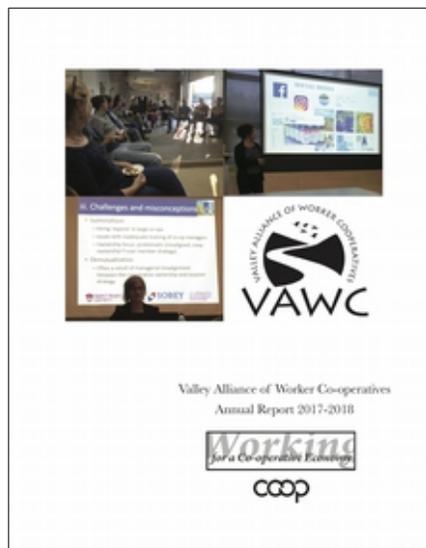
went to Neighboring Food Co-op Association

2018 'Julie Graham' Solidarity and Culture of Enjoyment Award

went to Philippe Rigollaud

Thanks to our members for another year.

2018 Annual Report



Our Annual Meeting brought together members to formulate strategy, approve a budget and elect a board member.

Our latest Annual Report is now available. Our financials, highlights from our activities and more are all compiled for your review. This is a great document to send to your co-workers and co-op to understand the impact members have in the co-op economy.

To see the report, [click here](#).

Education and our Summer 2018 Intern

Chris Diaz was our summer 2018 intern and continued work on our survey information regarding the impact of worker co-ops in New England. Chris, and the previous intern, Jack Fischer, compiled a list of 82 worker co-ops, contacted 44 directly and received information from 16 of them.

The information is being analyzed and put into a narrative now and will be presented to VAWC later in the Fall of 2018.

Chris and Jack are part of the internship program we coordinate with the Neighboring Food Co-op Association and staff and faculty of the Department of Economics at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. They are part of a nine intern cohort this year who researched and supported VAWC and NFCA co-ops. For more about this program contact Adam.

Northeast Organic Farming Association Conference

We are so grateful for the opportunity to spread the message of co-ops at the NOFA Summer Conference Co-op Track organized by Neighboring Food Co-op Association.



We presented along side Suzette Snow-Cobb in a workshop entitled *Economic Democracy: Building Co-op*



VAWC and NFCA hosted nine interns this past year through the Spring and Summer sessions

Power and talked about how co-ops root jobs and wealth, are centers of democracy and education and achieve larger social, economic and political change through federations. Highlights included discussing Collective Copies, Co-op Food Stores, Real Pickles, Old Creamery Co-op, Shared Capital Cooperative, Cooperative Fund of New England and New England Farmers Union.

Co-opreneurship

Amherst Food Co-op

It was great to be at AFC's 3rd Annual Meeting and see it continue toward opening. Bonnie Hudspeth

of Neighboring Food Co-op Association gave the keynote to attendees and showed people are hungry for alternatives to traditional economy as well as healthy food. Thanks to Food Co-op Initiative for their support and the board of AFC for organizing a great meeting.

VAWC Board of Directors Meeting

September 26, 6:30

Location TBD

National Co-op Month

All October!

The theme for this year's Co-op Month is

“Cooperatives See the Future”. After 170 years of innovation which includes securing safe housing, providing healthy food and offering dignified jobs, we couldn't agree more about how co-ops serve members. Co-ops are resilient and are leaders in putting the needs of people above profit and meeting the needs of working people.

For more information go to:

www.coopmonth.coop



Upcoming Events

Worker Cooperative National Conference



This is the premier worker co-op conference of the year; organized by the United States Federation of Worker Cooperatives and the Democracy at Work Institute.

Los Angeles, September 14-16

L.A. Trade Technical College

conference.coop/register

Co-op Impact Conference

The Cooperative:

Grow, Participate, Connect

National Cooperative Business Association

Washington, DC, October 3-5



First time reading a VAWC Report?

VAWC is itself an expression of co-operative principles — a co-op of worker 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. VAWC Representatives attend meetings, direct staff and resources while defining the goals of our organization. Interested in being a Representative or running for the Board? Contact adam@valleyworker.coop. Here's some of our main activities:

- Ad/PR campaign through area food co-op newsletters, local and movement media;
- Maintain your **VAWC Owners' Manual** aimed at educating, training, and empowering current and especially new members;
- Measures of economic and environmental impact and a shared identity among VAWC members; and
- Developing our co-operative economy especially with inter-VAWC purchasing and cross sector collaboration.
- Education of many sorts including directing the UMass, Amherst Co-operative Enterprise Collaborative (on Facebook) and the undergrad Certificate program we co-created.
- Operating the **VAWC Interco-operative Development Fund** made from 5% of VAWC Member surplus, owned and controlled by VAWC Members.

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.

VAWC Member Co-ops

Collective Copies

Green Mountain Spinnery Co-op

Oxbow Design Build Co-op

Pedal People Co-operative

VAWC Board of Directors

Faith Seddon

Collective Copies

Lauren Yohe Von Krusenstiern

Green Mountain Spinnery

Suzette Snow-Cobb

Franklin Community Co-op
– Stakeholder Director

www.valleyworker.coop

Working
for a Co-operative Economy