



## **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, February 27, 2019**

Adam Trott

Executive Director

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## **Celebrating the 5<sup>th</sup> Co-op Principle: Education, Training & Information**

In 2008 Nancy Folbre, now Professor Emeritus of the Department of Economics at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, wrote a two part blog in New York Times' "Economix" about worker co-operatives. VAWC initiated a dialog about the worker co-op movement in the backyard of UMass and proceeded to build curriculum about co-operatives. We accepted our first interns 2010 and announced the opening of the Certificate in Applied Economic Research in Co-op Enterprise.

Since 2010 we have held multiple classes taught about co-ops every year showing hundreds the advantages of co-operatives. We've coordinated over 20 interns to support VAWC and our Member Co-ops. We worked with the Neighboring Food Co-op Association (NFCOA) to include food co-ops in the Certificate, too.

As we accept three more interns this spring we celebrate a 10 year commitment to the importance of education in the co-op movement. Congratulations to members and thank you to our partners, the NFCOA and the Department of



## **VAWC Supports Recovery from Uganda Tragedy**

VAWC and VAWC Members work together to donate to the Cooperative Development Foundation's Disaster Recovery Fund. We were devastated to

hear of the loss of 21 lives in a vehicle accident in Uganda, 18 of which were part of the National Cooperative Business Association staff.

Thank you to the Cooperative Development Foundation for providing the opportunity to support the families and others affected by this tragedy and to show our support for co-ops around the world.

## **Upcoming Events**

**March 27, 2019**

VAWC Board Meeting  
*Location TBD*

**April 2, 2019**



## **VAWC Educational Event**

*Participation in Worker Co-ops and Collectives*

At Click, 9 1/2 Market Street  
Northampton MA

**April 24, 2019**

VAWC Annual Member Meeting

(Also) At Click, 9 1/2 Market Street Northampton MA

**July 6, 2019**

International Co-operative Day  
The International Co-operative Alliance supports dignified jobs with the 2019 theme "COOPS 4 DECENT WORK".

## **VAWC Board Nominations Open**

*Any member of any Member Co-op can nominate and be nominated*

Support worker co-operation and direct VAWC's activities – Run For Our Board of Directors.

This year we will be looking to fill two director seats. Nominees do not need to be current VAWC Representatives, but do have to be members in good standing of a VAWC Member Co-op.

VAWC will be taking nominations from now until the 18<sup>th</sup> of March. The election will be at our Annual Member Meeting on April 24th, 2019.

Please submit your nominations to [lauren@spinnery.com](mailto:lauren@spinnery.com).



## **VAWC Annual Meeting and Board Elections**

All members of VAWC co-ops are encouraged to attend this meeting. Along with awards & camaraderie, the meeting will feature:

- A presentation of our budget for 2019-20 for member decision
- Board Election
- Discussion of priorities for 2019-20 and last year's accomplishments
- Reports from staff, board and interns on activities and successes

*An Educational Event of the  
Valley Alliance of Worker Co-operatives*



## Participation in Worker Co-ops and Collectives

*Why is working at a worker co-op different? How do you constantly improve?*

*How are co-ops structured? How do you create informative proposals?*

*What's the difference between structure and governance?*

*What are best practices for organizing meetings?*



Join us for a presentation and a Peer-to-Peer support workshop

Collectives and co-operatives thrive on educated, engaged members and this session will feature best practices, skill sharing activities among attendees and materials for you to take back to your co-op. Though these are geared to new members of co-ops, all are encouraged to attend and be part of the session.

**Admission:** \$25 per person

*Free for members & employees of VAWC co-ops*

No registration required

RSVPs and questions welcome:  
adam@valleyworker.coop

**April 2, 2019**

**5:00 pm to 6:30 pm**

**Click Workspace**

**9½ Market St, Northampton, MA**

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

Neighboring Food Co-op  
Association

– Stakeholder Director

[www.valleyworker.coop](http://www.valleyworker.coop)

**Working**  
for a Co-operative Economy