

Valley Alliance of Worker Cooperatives

Annual Report 2026

Together, We're Working For a Co-operative Economy

From the Board of the Valley Alliance of Worker Co-operatives,

A common theme of our reports the past several years is that there have been many challenges to our co-ops and communities, both near and far. The push for economic justice, equality in the workplace, and democracy has gone from a challenging conversation which we're proud to be a part of to a battleground as costs rise, incomes stagnate, and working conditions suffer in the tension in between.

VAWC members keep rising to these challenges, innovating and proving that they are part of creating a better world. This past year, we had 7 members and we continue work on two conversions. Nationally, co-ops have grown faster than conventional small businesses, including an increase in the number and diversity of members. Regional associations like us are leaders in co-op growth across the U.S.

VAWC supports our members to be able to do this work with technical assistance, educational events, legislative engagement, and peer-to-peer support, all cornerstones of our association. Our most recent workshop on effective governance and accountability was a great success, sharing expertise from several co-ops. We continue to lead the fight for supportive legislation along with the Coalition for Worker Ownership and Power to help prevent the loss of jobs and community.

Interns this year researched the impact that our co-ops have in our communities, showing that since 2008 VAWC co-ops have retained $536,000 in our communities through surplus, have made $75,000 in charitable donations and spent $347,000 at other co-ops, including over $10,000 in VAWC co-ops alone in 2025.



Thank you to our members, affiliates, sponsors, and supporters for another year of working for a co-op economy.

In Solidarity, the VAWC Board of Directors,

Larisa Demos, Flat Iron Coffeehouse Cooperative
Ben Jankowitz, Pedal People Cooperative
Ethan Tupelo, Stakeholder Director, Boston College
Charity Zeilony, Nubbernaut Studios

Contact us: valleyworker.coop, info@valleyworker.coop

Cover picture: Pedal People preparing for routes
Left: One of many Pedal People Cooperative trailers
Photos courtesy of Larisa Demos

Technical Assistance

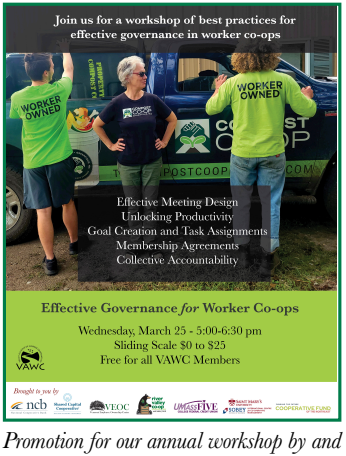
VAWC's mission is to support our members in a venue that is self-directed. We provide technical assistance for the entire life-cycle of a worker co-op that is augmented by peer-to-peer and 20 years of experience in building an economy for all.

Peer-to-Peer Support
VAWC is a co-op led venue where worker co-ops share needs and goals in a community built on trust and shared vision. Our system is dedicated to developing programming, building shared strategies, and business opportunities.

Conversions
At VAWC we provide initial support, like articles and bylaws. We also provide long-term assistance for co-ops over the complete life cycle of a conversion, from governance and co-operative culture to education and financial management. We have supported nine conversions and had two conversions in process in 2026.

Our Annual Educational Series
We dedicated our annual workshop to running effective meetings in 2026. Attendees took home best practices from existing VAWC members and our partners. Find the recording on our YouTube channel.

Direct Support to Co-ops
VAWC held workshops with members of our co-ops throughout the year on participation in worker co-ops, introducing new employees to the movement, co-op movement history, preparing proposals, and more.



Promotion for our annual workshop by and for worker co-ops.

Education

UMass Cooperative Enterprise Collaborative
We hosted two interns in 2026 through the Cooperative Enterprise Collaborative at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, in the Department of Economics. David Vitello supported the collection and promotion of data about our members' impact while Benjamin Marien researched data to support our legislative advocacy.

Scholarships to Conferences
The revenue from our fund conitnues to offer important resources. We gave 50% to 75% registration scholarships to three worker members to go to the U.S. Federation of Worker Co-ops conference in Boston in 2026.


The Compost Cooperative
Courtesy of Larisa Demos

Legislation

VAWC worked with its membership and the Coalition for Worker Ownership and Power to draft Opportunity To Own (OTO). OTO would reduce captial gains tax on any business seller with a qualified sale to workers, up to $1 million. The bill did not pass as of this report, but we will continue to work with our legislative partners to propose a revised version in the next session.



VAWC was also part of the effort to support the Massachusetts Center for Employee Ownership being funded and to recenter worker co-ops in their activities.

Financial Report

In 2026, VAWC increased reserves, grew the VAWC Fund by 9%, and received support from One Project who increased our capacity for 2025 and 2026.

We're very thankful for our members, affiliates, and sponsors. These contributions make our work possible and our work accountable to our members. This connects to our financial goals of having a strong financial position to provide long-term, sustainable service to membership. 2025 highlights include:

- VAWC Fund increased to $38,000
- A direct loan from our Fund to a VAWC member co-op, our 5th, is in good standing
- Retained earnings increased by 11%
- VAWC had $48,400 invested in co-ops regionally and nationally, from our reserves and VAWC Fund

Donate to the VAWC Fund

Support us in meeting growing demand for co-op finance. VAWC accepts donations to our Fund to increase our ability to meet financial need. 100% of funds accepted go to the Fund. Email adam@valleyworker.coop.

VAWC Financial Snap Shot

2025-2026 Budget	$31,000
Reserve Account	$9,990
Expenses	
Staff payroll & taxes	$23,800
Printing, Phone and Web	$300
Accounting & Bookkeeping	$1,800
Marketing	$1,300
Income Taxes	$2,200
Memberships & Sponsorships	$650
Income	
Member Dues	$6,000
Affiliates	$1,300
Sponsorships	$3,700
Other Income	$1,500
Grant Income	$20,000

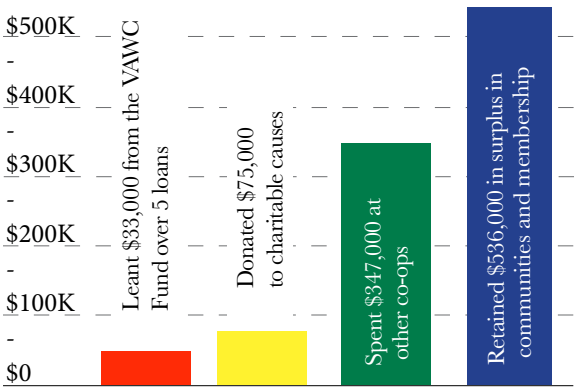
Thanks to Our Members

Collective Cleaners
Collective Copies*
The Compost Cooperative
Flat Iron Cooperative
Nubbernaut Studios
Oxbow Design Build Cooperative
Pedal People Cooperative*

** Collective Copies and Pedal People are founding members*

VAWC Member Impact

We're excited to share the impact of VAWC members since our first member-driven budget back in 2008. VAWC members have taken great strides in impacting our local economy, democratizing business, and creating dignified jobs:



Instead of sending profits to outside shareholders and off-shoring business, VAWC retains surplus in our communities, builds infrastructure in local business, and offers microloans directly to members. Since 2008, VAWC members:

- Spent $347,000 in other co-ops, leveraging $624,000 in added local business purchasing and infrastructure
- Retained $536,000 in surplus, which added $1.2 million in local spending through business and payroll ripple effects
- Local spending and business development enhanced Main Street not Wall Street
- Stabilized pay for workers and prices for consumers

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

Shared Capital Cooperative®

Freedom Credit Union

A member of:

New England Farmers Union

An investor in:

Funding the Future Cooperative Fund of the Northeast

And a Federation Partner of:

United States Federation of Worker Cooperatives

Thank You Affiliates

Tech Collective
Green Mountain Spinnery
Pioneer Valley Photovoltaics
Philippe Rigollaud
River Valley Co-op
Suzette Snow-Cobb