



Worker co-op dedicated to eliminating inequities is named new co-op of distinction

GUELPH, ONTARIO, Oct. 15 --An Ottawa-based non-profit that is dedicated to identifying and eliminating inequities worldwide will be honoured as a new co-operative of distinction at the Annual Co-op Conference and Gala at the Burlington, Ont. Royal Botanical Gardens on Oct. 20.

BIAS FREE Co-operative Inc. (www.biasfree.org) was incorporated in 2008. It provides training and support to help organizations and individuals use a framework that identifies sexism, racism, ableism, colonialism, ageism, classism, and other biases that prevent individuals from reaching their potential and society from gaining their talents. The framework can also help researchers significantly improve their research once they are aware of biases.

“I am confident...to say that the *BIAS FREE* Co-operative...will change many policies and systems in Ontario, in Canada and across the world,” says Michael W. Clarke, Director, Research for Health Equity of the International Development Research Centre, (IDRC).

The program has already been used to help identify discrimination in the Ontario employment system with respect to immigrants and help eliminate gender biases in the political arena.

Two of the *BIAS FREE* Co-operative Inc. founders, Mary Anne Burke and Margrit Eichler, are co-authors and master trainers of the framework which has been in development and testing across the world for more than 15 years.

The Spirit Recognition Awards Gala is part of a daylong conference that draws up to 250 Co-operative and credit union directors, employees, and supporters from across the province. Its theme is “2020: Expand your co-op vision.” On Co-op, based in Guelph, Ont., develops, unites and promotes co-operatives throughout the province of Ontario. Its mission is to lead, cultivate and connect co-operatives.