

Ontario Co-operative Association

2016 ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Chair's Report

How do we measure success? How do we support such a diverse membership and ensure we are doing the best for all co-operatives in the province?

Based on these key questions, the board of directors and executive director Erin Morgan developed three new pillars of forward thinking at this year's strategic planning meeting. We resolved that even though we have a very diverse membership, we remain consistent in our core principles and values — and as a sector, we have a strong desire to be heard.

These three new strategic pillars will take effect in the 2017-18 fiscal year and embody all that we do. We will strive to be:

- 1. The voice of co-operatives in Ontario**
- 2. The advocate of the co-operative principles**
- 3. The facilitator of co-operative solutions**

A five-year plan was developed with an emphasis on strengthening member engagement, government relations and co-operative education. New strategies and initiatives have been put in place to enhance and sustain our many programs available to our members.

We are especially proud of the momentum we have gained through the expertise of the government relations working-committees, the lobbying efforts of consulting firm Brown & Cohen and the support of the All-Party Co-op Caucus champions at Queen's Park. It has truly been a positive lesson in the value of widespread collaboration and good teamwork.

We also continue to work closely with the Conseil de la coopération de l'Ontario (CCO) to help create a more unified co-operative system in the province. Together, we have created greater awareness with key provincial ministers and MPPs.

To finish, I want to acknowledge that without the incredible dedication and commitment to excellence from the Ontario Co-operative Association board of directors and management team, our dreams and aspirations would remain unfulfilled. The 2017 conference theme is very fitting because **People, Planet and Prosperity** encompasses all facets of what we strive to protect and nurture for our members and the Ontario co-operative system.

I look forward to a bright future ahead!

Janice Johnson



Janice Johnson
GROWMARK, Inc.
Chair, Ontario Co-operative Association

A five-year plan was developed with an emphasis on strengthening member engagement, government relations and co-operative education.

Executive Director's Report

Change was the theme of the last year as we welcomed new staff, moved our office, developed a new strategic plan and enhanced our membership structure.

Member Relations Jennifer Ross was promoted to manager and has begun to reconnect with all of our existing members and reach out to potential new members. This has resulted in a need to restructure our membership categories to encourage members to choose the “voting” category, with the goal of increased member participation across all co-operative sectors and more engaged policy development.

Government Relations In September, we learned the Premier included modernization of the *Co-operative Act* in the Minister of Government and Consumer Services' mandate letter. This began a year of engagement with the Ministry of Finance (MoF), Ministry of Government and Consumer Services (MGCS) and the Ministry of Economic Development and Growth to facilitate the move of our *Act* to MGCS from MoF and modernize its contents, and to provide improved programs and services to Ontario's co-operatives. The MoF included plans to move the *Act* to MGCS in their March budget announcement and internal government work has begun to determine the steps required to make this happen.

Education Changes were made to the goals of CYL for the coming year after input from the sector suggested the curriculum required an update. In the summer of 2016, we had six weeks of programming with 118 participants. The reduced participation numbers necessitated a review of the program goals. Changes were made throughout the winter to refocus on encouraging children to find and develop their co-operative leadership style and establish connections with the different co-operative membership and volunteer opportunities across the province. In All 4 Each, a new direction has been developed for 2017 that will improve participation in the program while reducing overhead for the organization. This became a necessity after sales targets were not met in 2016 and as a result, staffing changes were required.



Erin Morgan
Executive Director,
Ontario Co-operative
Association



Peter Cameron
Acting Executive Director,
Ontario Co-operative
Association

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Co-op Development got a great boost as our Outreach Project (supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation) continued to build co-op business model awareness and development across the province. New networks have been added in Kitchener-Waterloo, Hamilton and Windsor, and new co-operatives were initiated in a variety of sectors, including food, renewable energy, broadband distribution and medical cannabis cultivation.

This has been an exciting year at the Ontario Co-operative Association and one of great change—not the least of which was the addition of a future staff member when Executive Director Erin Morgan welcomed daughter Hannah in December! Peter Cameron has taken on the role of Executive Director for one year during Erin's leave and is working with the board to initiate the new strategic plan in 2017.

The staff have taken great pleasure in working on your behalf over the past year and look forward to working with our members to enhance the co-operative sector, as we execute our new strategic plan over the next five years.

Erin Morgan and Peter Cameron

In September, we learned the Premier included modernization of the Co-operative Act in the Minister of Government and Consumer Services' mandate letter.

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REPORT ON THE STRATEGIC AREAS



Co-op Advocacy & Government Relations

The Ontario Co-operative Association works to improve the regulatory and legislative environment for Ontario co-operatives.

13 meetings took place with government officials throughout the year, to raise awareness of the co-operative movement and the **3 key sector recommendations** that would enable Ontario co-operatives to develop and thrive. This included an organized breakfast meeting at Queen's Park with the All-Party **Co-op Caucus** and a meeting with the Financial Services Commission of Ontario.

3 meetings of the joint **Ontario Co-operative Association and Conseil de la coopération GR Committee** took place, and 1 of the **Regulatory Affairs Committee**. The experience and expertise of the committee members have greatly contributed to the momentum we have achieved in educating government and raising awareness of the strength and diversity of the Ontario co-operative sector.

3 new infographics were developed, to help relay information about co-operatives and the three key sector recommendations to government: **Co-ops 101, Agriculture & Food Co-ops** and **Insurance & Financial Co-ops**.

41 government officials (26 MPPs, 7 Ministers and 8 staffers) attended the May 2, 2016 Queen's Park reception. To elevate the strategic approach of the annual event, members of the joint Government Relations and Regulatory Affairs Committees held 6 meetings throughout the day with Ministers, MPPs and Policy Advisors, to bring attention to the 3 key sector recommendations.

Brown & Cohen Communications & Public Affairs was retained for an additional 6-month contract. The consulting firm has been integral to helping the joint Government Relations Committee frame and deliver our key recommendations to modernize the Act and move non-financial legislation out of FSCO to the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services.



Co-op Education

The Ontario Co-operative Association provides co-operatives with the tools to achieve their organizational goals, and to help train a new generation of leaders for the future of the co-operative movement.

15 individuals graduated from the Fundamentals of Co-operative Organizations program on May 28, 2016. Seven bursaries were provided for students to take the program, thanks to the [CHS Foundation!](#)

118 participants attended the 49th annual [Co-operative Young Leaders](#) (CYL) program—a week long leadership development program for Ontario teens aged 14–18, that also introduces them to the co-operative principles, values and business model.

26 volunteers facilitated over the 6-week CYL program. Our facilitators are either staff from an Ontario co-operative or credit union, or a past CYL participant who has gone through and graduated from the full program (i.e., Junior, Intermediate and Senior). Many are sponsored by their employers to participate as a professional development opportunity, while others come on their own personal time.

40 unique organizations sponsored the 2016 CYL program, which included 37 individual participant sponsorships, 6 weekly sponsorships and 2 corporate program sponsorships. Ontario's co-operatives and credit unions continuously see the value in developing co-operative leadership in youth by providing them with the opportunity to attend CYL, evidenced through their strong financial and in-kind support from year-to-year.

6 young finalists pitched their co-op business concepts at our fall AGM as part of the 2016 *All 4 Each* (A4E) [Create-a-Co-op Challenge](#). The fourth event of its kind was sponsored by Gay Lea Foods Co-operative, and adjudicated by volunteers from the co-op sector, including Wendy Carruthers (Senior Manager, Member & Co-operative Relations, The Co-operators), Harvey Cooper (Managing Director, Ontario Region, Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada) and Robin Redstone (Communications Manager, Gay Lea Foods).

One of the first student-run co-operatives was established in Madoc, ON, in 2016, after Centre Hastings Secondary School's entrepreneurship class participated in the Ontario Co-operative Association's *All 4 Each* "Co-ops in the Classroom" presentation. Quinte Credit Union partnered with the high school to open "The Smoothery" co-op, which was created and operated by the students. Well done Quinte!



Co-op Engagement

Through a wide range of events, publications and social media, the Ontario Co-operative Association works to strengthen and enhance the knowledge and awareness of Ontario co-operatives within and beyond the co-op sector.

4,470 individuals received *The Co-op Current*, our monthly electronic newsletter that informs and educates the co-op sector and public about our news, programs and events, as well as sector news and updates.

433 individual posts were made to over 1,200 followers on Facebook and **328 unique tweets** were sent to over 1,000 followers on Twitter.

4 new non-voting associates joined to support the organization, including: PACE Credit Union (Supporter), Kincardine Ladies Fitness Co-operative (Friend), Douglas Tindal (Friend) and Sherylann Barrington (Friend).

38 members attended the fall AGM, where new director Crystal McNerney of CHF Canada, Ontario Region, was welcomed to the board, and youth director Brent Davies of Ag Energy Co-operative was acclaimed for a second term.

At a special Members Meeting held on March 15, the membership unanimously approved a new membership structure to take effect April 1, 2017. The new structure was designed to recognize the varying stages of development and capacity of our membership, and their ability to support the Ontario movement. The two areas that will be affected by this new structure are the names of the member categories and the base dues amount for becoming a Voting Member. It is our hope that these changes will allow for greater inclusion and a broader representation of all types and sizes of co-ops across the province.

7 years after Jennifer Ross was hired as the Office Co-ordinator, she assumed the role of part-time Member Relations Manager, with the long-term goal of strengthening our member engagement, collaboration, sense of ownership, and to develop a greater understanding of our members' needs.



Co-op Development

The Ontario Co-operative Association also supports the creation, development, funding and enhancement of new and existing Ontario co-operatives and credit unions through a variety of programs and services.

\$486,500 was allocated to the Ontario Co-operative Association by the [Ontario Trillium Foundation](#) in May 2016 — a [significant grant](#) to help us impact thousands of community members (directly and indirectly) across the province. The goal is to create 60 new co-operative enterprises and to develop targeted outreach initiatives in 9 regions across the province.

6 Regional Managers were hired to help us achieve the goals and deliverables of the grant. Jennifer Ross was hired as the part-time Regional Program Coordinator to oversee the grant.

34 training workshops, speaking engagements, conferences and networking events were conducted *across the province* to educate employees, stakeholders and communities on using the co-op model to launch successful enterprises, or to transform existing businesses into co-operatives.

1,191 individuals were reached through the various outreach initiatives over the past year.

26 new co-operatives were incorporated across the province.

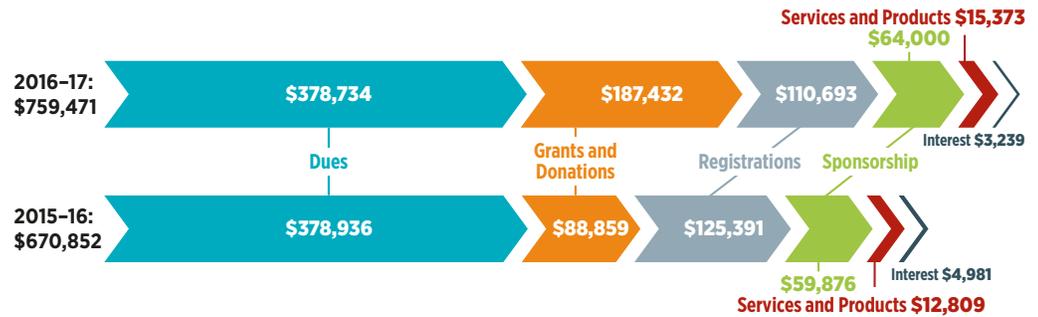
130+ individuals received technical assistance and advice through our 411 consulting service from both new and existing co-operatives.

Two delegates attended the third International Summit of Co-operatives in Quebec, where the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were endorsed by the international co-operative movement. This inspired us to build on the theme of sustainable development and to encourage our members to develop practices that support the SDGs.

Financial Highlights

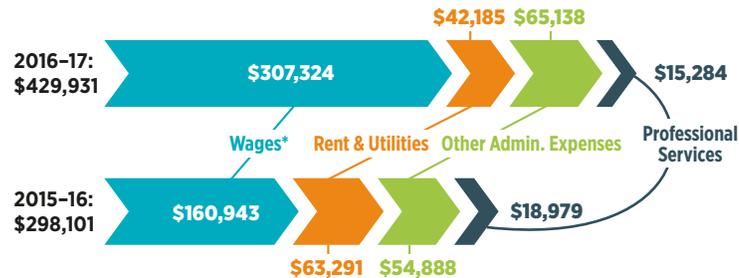
Revenue

Membership dues, grant and donation income, event registration and sponsorship provide us with the bulk of our financial resources to develop, engage, educate and advocate for our members and the province's more than 1,300 co-ops.



Program Support Expenditures

Corporate and contract staff wages, rent and utilities, professional services (i.e. consultants), and other administrative expenses support our programs and organization, making the work we do possible.



* Wages includes full-time salaried staff and reflect time spent supporting our programs. **Wages spent on actual strategic areas were not allocated to the Strategic Direction Expenditures this year (2016-17), with the exception of CYL.**

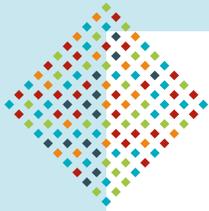
Strategic Direction Expenditures

Our work is organized into three strategic areas (Engagement & Development, Education and Advocacy & Government Relations), which include a number of programs, services and activities.



* Co-op Engagement & Development includes: Membership, Communications, Conferences and Roundtables, Regional Networks, Provincial Conference and Celebration, Fee-for-Service/Consulting services and Co-op Development (Trillium expenses total \$160,109).

** Education includes Co-operative Young Leaders, All 4 Each and the Fundamentals of Co-operative Organizations programs.



Our People

The work that we do to lead, cultivate and connect the Ontario co-operative movement would not be possible without the commitment, support, passion and engagement of our Board of Directors, management team, consultants, committees, membership and funding partners, as well as the generosity of our partnering sponsors!

Board of Directors

Janice Johnson (Chair)
GROWMARK, Inc.

Kim De Lallo (Vice-Chair)
Ontario Natural Food Co-op

Lisa Guglietti
(Treasurer, to January 2016)
The Co-operators

Kelly Storie (Treasurer,
from February 2016) Canadian
Worker Co-operative Federation

Mark Hamel
Gay Lea Foods Co-operative

Kelly McGiffin
Central 1 Credit Union

Crystal McNerney
CHF Canada, Ontario Region

Kelly Tryon
The CUMIS Group

Michelle Vieira
Ag Energy Co-operative
(from February 2017)

Brent Davies (Youth Director)
Ag Energy Co-operative

Staff Team

Erin Morgan
Executive Director
(Mat leave as of December 2016)

Peter Cameron
Co-op Development Manager
and Acting Executive Director
(from December 2016)

Audrey Aczel
Communications and
Event Manager

Lauren Hillson
Office Co-ordinator

Adam Malloy
Education Manager
(to October 2016)

Jennifer Ross
Member Relations Manager &
Trillium Program Co-ordinator

Contract Staff

Stephen Bell
CYL Program Co-ordinator (to
August 2016)

Eddie Sauvé
CYL Summer Co-ordinator
(July–August 2016)

Lisa Furfaro
CYL Program Co-ordinator
(from February 2017)

Consultants

Barking Dog Studios — website
and e-Directory support

BDO Canada LLP — Auditors

Brown & Cohen, Government &
Public Relations — GR support

Calculated Success — financial
management

Carefree IT — IT support

Iler Campbell — legal services

LINDdesign — graphic design

Committees

Co-op Development

Michael Béland
Co-operatives and Mutuels
Canada

Simon Berge
University of Winnipeg

Nancy Bradley
Parent Co-operative Preschool
Corporation

Peter Cameron
Ontario Co-operative Association

Russ Christianson
Rhythm Communications

Kim De Lallo
Ontario Natural Food Co-op

Tom Ewart
The Co-operators

Julien Geremie
Conseil de la coopération de
l'Ontario

James Law
TREC Renewable Energy Co-op

Judith Lipp
TREC Renewable Energy Co-op

Kelly Storie
Canadian Worker Co-op
Federation

Finance

Lisa Guglietti
(Chair — to February 2016)
The Co-operators

Kelly Storie
(Chair — from February 2016)
Canadian Worker Co-operative
Federation

Brent Davies
Ag Energy Co-operative

Janice Johnson
GROWMARK, Inc.

Erin Morgan
Ontario Co-operative Association

Peter Cameron
Ontario Co-operative Association

Government Relations (joint with CCO)

Simone Swail (Chair)
CHF Canada, Ontario Region

Pierre Benoit
Caisses Populaires Trillium

Philippe Boissonneault
Brent Davies
Ag Energy Co-operative

Julien Geremie
Conseil de la coopération
de l'Ontario

Mark Hamel
Gay Lea Foods Co-operative

Thierry Lasserre
Alliance Française

Megan McIver
Central 1 Credit Union

Maya Milardovic
The Co-operators

Lucie Moncion
l'Alliance des caisses populaires
de l'Ontario Ltée.

Luc Morin
Conseil de la coopération
de l'Ontario

OUR PEOPLE

Government Relations (continued)

Monika Wyrzykowska
The Co-operators
Hosni Zaouali
Voila Learning
Erin Morgan
Ontario Co-operative Association
Peter Cameron
Ontario Co-operative Association

Human Resources

Michelle Cummings (Chair)
DUCA Financial Services Credit Union
Kim De Lallo
Ontario Natural Food Co-op
Robbyn McLellan
The Co-operators
Jessica Stanley
The Co-operators
Erin Morgan
Ontario Co-operative Association
Peter Cameron
Ontario Co-operative Association

Membership & Governance

Kim De Lallo
Ontario Natural Food Co-op
Janice Johnson
GROWMARK, Inc.
Kelly McGiffin
FirstOntario Credit Union
Kelly Tryon
The CUMIS Group
Erin Morgan
Ontario Co-operative Association
Jennifer Ross
Ontario Co-operative Association

Regulatory Affairs

Ian Shewan (Chair)
Lerners LLP
Glenn Agro
BDO Canada LLP
Ryan Azotini
The Co-operators
Harvey Cooper
CHF Canada, Ontario Region
Aaron Denhartog
CHF Canada, Ontario Region
Doug Dowhos
Team Werks (as required)
Julien Geremie
Conseil de la coopération de l'Ontario
Ove Hansen
Gay Lea Foods Co-operative
Jay Harris
Sovereign General Insurance Co.
Ted Hyland
Iler Campbell LLP
Luc Morin
Conseil de la Co-opération de l'Ontario
John Reby
Gay Lea Foods Co-operative
Dave Robertson
Prentice, Yates & Clark
Kelly Storie
Canadian Worker Co-op Federation
Erin Morgan
Ontario Co-operative Association
Peter Cameron
Ontario Co-operative Association

Membership

57 organizations, co-operative federations, associations, stakeholders and individuals represent a diversity of Ontario's English-speaking co-operatives and credit unions, and provide 53% of our annual funding.

Funding Partners

These partners provided us with essential funding support to help us execute programs, initiatives and partake in professional development:

CHS Foundation — for a stewardship grant that provided bursaries for students to enroll in the 2016 FCO program.

Ontario Trillium Foundation — for a two-year grant to develop 60 new co-operatives across Ontario and develop targeted outreach initiatives in 9 regions in the province.

Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development — for a Canada Ontario Job grant that enabled one of our staff to take the St. Mary's three-day Executive Education course in Guelph.

Sponsor Partners

Many of our key programs and events are supported solely or largely through registrations and sponsorships, ultimately helping us leverage the funding and resources provided by our members. These organizations provided sponsorships in 2016:

The [sponsors and donors](#) of the May 2, 2016 Queen's Park Reception.

The (40 unique) [sponsors](#) of the 2016 CYL program.

[Gay Lea Foods Co-operative](#) for the Create-a-Co-op Challenge.

[The Co-operators](#) for their generous sponsorship of our Government Relations efforts, including our ongoing work with [Brown & Cohen Communications & Public Affairs](#).

[Alterna Savings & Credit Union](#) for donating the meeting space for the Ontario Co-operative Association to host the FCO program and graduation ceremony.

Volunteers

A very special thank you to our 26 volunteer CYL facilitators who helped make the 2016 program year a great success!

Connect with us!

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 [@on_co_op](https://www.instagram.com/on_co_op)

 [youtube.com/user/ontariocoops](https://www.youtube.com/user/ontariocoops)

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