



ALBERTA COMMUNITY & CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

ACCA Year In Review. A message from Randy Taylor, Chair and Michele Aasgard, Executive Director

It is time to reflect on the milestones achieved and efforts made to Unite, Promote and Develop the co-operative sector in Alberta and Canada.

There was no shortage of work for the Board of Directors and Board Committees in 2017.

The Governance Committee of ACCA consisted of Tara Burke (Chair), Duane Blahun, Brian Scott, and Randy Taylor, with management representation Michele Aasgard. With the challenges that ACCA experienced recently there were several areas that required attention from the Governance Committee. Several By-laws were looked at and while no changes are coming forward to the 2018 AGM it has been decided that a full By-law review would be beneficial to the organization, so this will take place in the 2018 year. The committee is responsible for the Executive Director evaluation; the committee led the development of a new tool for this evaluation as well as reviewed the Executive Directors compensation. The committee has been developing a work plan and an updated Terms of Reference to represent the responsibilities of the committee. A new Board Evaluation tool was developed to help identify areas for improvement from a Board perspective and inform the Nomination process. With a committee re-structure that occurred late 2016 the Governance Committee took on the responsibilities of Resolutions & Nominations. The call for Resolutions was sent to members along with the Call for Nominations, prior to the AGM. Chair of the Committee, Tara Burke, I would like to thank the committee for the work over the past year.

The Stakeholder Relations Committee is made up of ACCA board members Lisa Hicks, Chris Ross, Brian Scott and Sandra Thornton. The committee is

also supported by ACCA staff-person Seth Leon. In 2017 the Stakeholder Committee held three meetings, including a strategic planning session, in December, to provide advice to the ACCA board. The steering committee advised the ACCA board to better understand how ACCA creates value for its members, and recognize that given the diversity of our membership (from some of the largest co-ops in the country, to start-ups), members may benefit from ACCA in a variety of different ways. The Stakeholder Relations Committee also advised that staff meet with members on a more regular basis to identify common goals and discuss how ACCA can create value for them.

The Audit and Finance Committee included Harvey Hagman (Chair), Chris Ross, Duane Blahun, and Carl Beniuk. Cindy Dixon ACCA's Director of Operations provided support to the Committee. The Committee held 4 meetings including finalizing the budget and financial annual report with our auditor, Darcy Kosman. The Committee worked on recommending our existing auditor to continue to provide services to ACCA. This was done by a Request for Proposal and Search.

Management was able to find a renter to help offset the cost of our building. With the downsizing of staff, this will help financially in the 2018 year. The budget for 2018 has a small deficit that reflects money owed to staff when they worked at the end of 2016 for free. We appreciate the work that ACCA staff does and recommended that this back pay be put into the 2018 budget.

Challenges that ACCA face going forward will be to increase our existing membership and provide value to our membership. Grant's have been much harder to come by as governments continue to run large deficits in a much better economy than a few years ago. Harvey Hagman Chair, would like to thank the Audit and Finance Committee for their commitment to ACCA during the past year.

In 2017, ACCA's board and staff spent time engaging and working with co-op strategist Ms. Terry Geib. This work resulted in a potential re-alignment for ACCA that will provide for the mutual enrichment and advancement of the co-op sector, maximize the value of membership and to operate within financial means. If approved, this realignment will focus on adding value for members. More information on the potential realignment strategy will be presented to you, our members, during 2018.

In terms of operations, ACCA was actively involved in growing the co-operative sector! By providing education and awareness of the co-operative business model, **5 new co-operatives** were incorporated in 2017. These co-operatives bank at credit unions and are active in promoting the co-operative sector in Alberta!

As our members regard leadership and education as items high on their motives to belong to our organization we are happy to report that our educational programs had great attendance and the ACCA Co-operative Youth Leadership program also grew slightly this year.

ACCA was engaged to create a Community Renewable Energy Toolkit to educate groups on how the co-op structure, and co-op businesses in their community can play a role in developing new energy resources and drive rural economic development.

Through several different means, the co-op education efforts impacted hundreds of Albertans who learned about Alberta co-ops, the co-op business structure, and how to build strong communities. In the past year ACCA staff worked with 300 community members, 150 Post-Secondary students, 100 co-op sector employees, 30 Government employees, 30 Economic Development Officers, 300 youth program participants and 12 career focus interns.

Through networking activities, ACCA brought together hundreds of co-operators to learn and work together. Over 200 people participated in events hosted throughout the year. ACCA accomplished this by working with 15 different co-operatives to collaborate on workshops, present the

2017 Leadership Summit, hold a very successful MLA reception, host a full EconoUs Co-op Tour, lead and hosted many webinars on subjects such as co-op basics and Opportunity Development Co-ops.

Community education also continued to flourish in 2017. ACCA facilitated two very successful adult learning opportunities with over 725 participants in attendance. ACCA members are encouraged to attend workshop that are hosted by ACCA. We are encouraged by the willingness of Alberta Agriculture and Forestry to include material on co-operatives in the Agriculture Tax Update for Professional's workshop. This would expose approximately 700 lawyers and accountants to the co-op business model.

As part of ACCA's youth strategy, the Career Focus Internship program contract wrapped up in May, 2017 but another application was approved and a new program started October 2nd. The program allows members to access skilled post-secondary graduate interns at a reduced cost to their organizations and as employer/mentors this allows these organizations to help shape the interns' education toward co-operatives and/or credit unions. This program is open to all members as well as other businesses or organizations throughout Alberta. During 2017 and continuing into 2018, ACCA has been provided enough funding to place 13 interns within co-operatives and community organizations. This program has not only helped many youths begin their careers but has also helped promote and educate many on the co-operative business model.

New Co-operative Youth Leadership Program curriculum was completed and available at the 2017 program. The 42-volunteer staff did a great job delivering the new youth program curriculum. The volunteers facilitated it with more confidence and structure than in previous years. The content was relevant and current, and it still gave the volunteer staff leeway to add their own flare to it when presenting to the youth. Thank you to everyone who provided a financial contribution to making the development of the new material obtainable.

2017 saw an immense increase in our social media presence and interaction with those that 'Follow' or 'Like' our pages. We have over 1000+ followers on Facebook & Instagram! Keeping the excitement up on youth program happenings such as updates on promotional material, inspirational quotes, testimonials etc throughout the year has kept alumni, volunteer staff, participants, parents and sponsors really engaged! On average, we organically reach 500+ people per week.

Great efforts were made to keep costs under control in all areas of ACCA. This included prompt contract management with members and clients and prompt accounts monitoring to ensure our cashflow stayed as healthy as possible. In an endeavor to streamline event costs and man hours spent, all events and programs have implemented online registrations thus keep overhead as low as possible. We have seen an substantial increase in the use of the on-line registration system in programs such as the youth area.

Keeping this in mind when budgeting for 2018 the management team worked towards increased financial stability of all our core and non-core programs.

As we look to 2018, there are many things to look forward to. Here are just a few we are excited about:

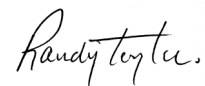
- Co-op case studies and research. MBA students at the University of Alberta will be creating case studies tackling key co-op challenges. This will provide key insights on relevant issues, and puts co-operatives on campus.
- Community Economic Development Corporations. The Government of Alberta has indicated they will introduce an investor tax credit in 2018 that will be eligible for co-operatives raising capital through the sale of investment shares. This is part of the Alberta Investor Tax Credit Program (Bill 30), and provides a huge boost to our work in local investing and co-operative education and awareness.
- As always, we continue to look for ways to remain fiscally responsible to our members. Already in 2018 we have seen a reduction in our

office lease and office expenses as we have now negotiated and have sublet half of our office space. It will once again be year of a comprehensive overview of the ACCA Co-operative Youth Leadership Program. The program budget costs for 2018 will be under scrutiny as our current rented facility has plans to increase the accommodation and food rates to ACCA therefore will have an impact on the program. In another effort to remain focused on our education and leadership area, we have submitted the next Career Focus Internship application to begin July of 2018.

- ACCA will continue to foster working relationships with other Provincial Associations & like-minded organizations to share best practices and to look for opportunities to align closer between provinces. In 2017, ACCA, BC Co-op Association, with support from Co-operatives and Mutuels Canada, held a number of meeting to look at the sharing of services, youth education and government education. This conversation will continue between the two Board of Directors and senior management teams from the 3 organizations. The goal of these conversations are to strengthen Provincial Associations not only in Alberta and British Colombia but to also create a model for co-operation throughout Canada.

The Board of Directors and staff of ACCA look forward to facilitating member networking opportunities, sharing of best practices with others and educating about the co-operative model. Thank you to you, our members, for supporting the work that ACCA does in building strong Alberta communities.

Respectfully submitted,



Randy Taylor, Chair



Michele Aasgard, Executive Director

CO-OPERATIVE AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

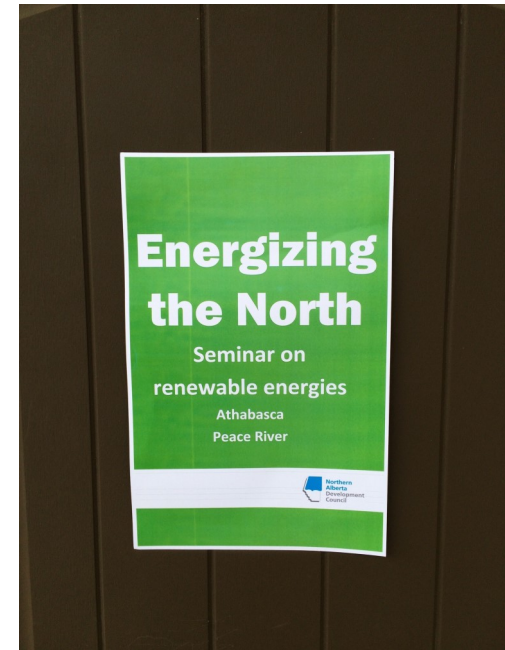
Co-operative Services educates and builds awareness, of the co-operative business structure and promoting Alberta co-ops, and creates networking opportunities for co-operatives. Co-operative principles 5, 6, and 7 informs and guides a lot of our work.

Along with the activities listed below, which always bring co-operators together, we hosted co-op networking events, including a Stampede Meetup.

Educating and building awareness of the co-operative sector is a large category, it ranges from online engagement to workshops, development of resources, co-op tours and more. Here are some of the highlights in how we educated Albertans about co-operatives.

Energizing the North Workshop and Tool-Kit

Working with the Northern Alberta Development Council we developed a Community Renewable Energy tool-kit to communities with the necessary information to develop renewable energy projects using the co-operative structure. We also provided in-person workshops in Athabasca and Peace River to over 100 attendees.



Post-Secondary Institutions

ACCA went back to school as a guest lecturer at Mount Royal University and the University of Calgary providing 'Co-ops 101' to 150 post-secondary students. Students also took on co-operative case studies and came up with innovative ways in which co-ops could better engage millennials.



Econous: Co-op Tour

The Econous conference is the preeminent event for Community Economic Development (CED) in Canada. To show how co-ops play a role in CED, ACCA was enlisted to lead a co-op tour of some amazing co-ops based in Calgary. Alberta Co-operative Energy, Connect First Financial, Grain Exchange Worker's Co-op, Equipment Co-op, Servus Credit Union, and YYC Growers and Distributors Co-op provided excellent presenters and hosted a group of 40 CED experts with an amazing tour.



MLA Reception, Pre-reception training, and Consultation with Government

Government is an important target audience for building awareness of the co-operative sector. To engage government, we held an MLA reception attended by 17 MLAs, and 3 Ministers (Education, Infrastructure and Service Alberta), as well as several ministerial staff from Agriculture and Forestry. ACCA members Federated Co-operatives Ltd., UFA, Servus Credit Union, and Rocky REA made presentations and several of our members also submitted briefing notes to all MLAs in advance of the event. Both the presentations and the briefing notes allowed Alberta co-operatives to communicate directly with government and build awareness of the co-operative sector.

Prior to the MLA reception attendees from the co-operative sector had access to a presentation led by government relation staff from Servus Credit Union on effective networking and government relations. Along with the MLA reception ACCA was a key stakeholder in the consultation process for Bill 30 on economic diversification.



Emerge Hub

ACCA member, International Ave. Business Revitalization Zone invited us to collaborate on their Emerge Hub business incubator in Calgary. With funding from the province's CARES program, International Ave renovated a great space for new and existing businesses to incubate and grow. We have been providing co-op education to groups and others who use this space.

Webinar Series

In November we ran a webinar series featuring ACCA members and other colleagues providing information on a range of topics.

- ◇ North Parkland Power on how co-ops can be a driver for local business development through a local loyalty program.
- ◇ Alberta Small Brewers Association on branding and marketing a local industry, and innovative ways in which to show how craft breweries are working together to compete against the big players like Budweiser.
- ◇ Universal Access explained how creating accessible and inclusive businesses not only makes for strong community investing but also a great return on investment.
- ◇ Momentum explained the emerging trends in community economic development and the opportunities for more local investing and co-op development.

ACCA was also a featured speaker at a range of different conferences to discuss how co-operative solutions can meet local needs, and how Alberta co-operatives are taking care of business and building strong communities.

Over 2017, five new co-operatives were started in Alberta. All of them had some contact with ACCA to learn more about the co-operative structure, and how to connect with the co-operative sector. We hope to see more Albertans use co-ops, and for more co-ops to exist.



2017 Summit of Co-operative Leaders

(AKA Gathering of Alberta Co-operatives)

An action-packed day looking at the role of co-operatives in Alberta's economy, and succession planning within our sector. As always there was lots of networking and learning from one another. This event also featured representatives from the Government of Alberta, the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties, the Alberta Business Family Institute, and great support from the sector (Another big thanks to CEOs of Calgary Co-op and Servus Credit Union, Ken Keelor and Garth Warner, respectively, for being excellent panelists!)

Attendee Comments:

"I will apply this information in my work"

"I have improved my understanding of succession planning"

"Fantastic Day, great networking AND presenters"

"I expanded my network"

***"I would recommend this summit to a colleague"**

"I have a new appreciation for the benefit and power of Co-operatives!"



"Very well Managed"



Our expectations
were met and
exceeded!

CAREER FOCUS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

It was one of the most
transformative
experiences of my life
so far.

During 2017 and 2018, ACCA has been provided with enough funding to place 13 interns within co-operatives and community organizations. This program has not only helped many youth begin their careers but has also helped promote and educate many on the co-operative business model.

Great Program!

Because of this assistance I was able to meet doctors who helped me prepare for my Medical School interviews

Win/Win
scenario for
everyone
involved!

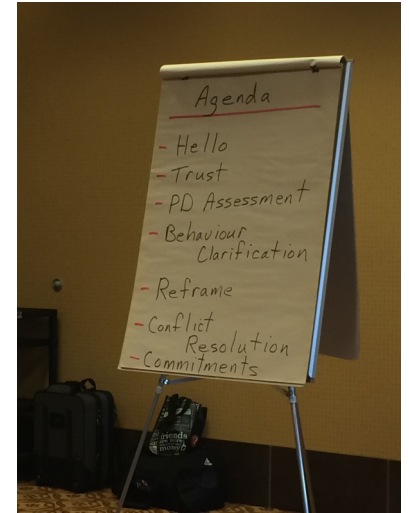
I believe that the support and encouragement I received from ACCA helped me feel more confident in my new position. The resources, like the communications workshop also provided me with additional knowledge that I will be able to use as I continue on my new career path.

Would definitely participate in the program in the future. This is an excellent program!

It was great to meet others similar to me, have a host in my chosen industry and have a great program lead which ensured my success in the program. I would definitely recommend this program to others.

This is an excellent program and we are very grateful to participate. Our intern is an amazing addition to our team and we hope to continue working with ACCA to bring exceptional candidates into our workplace that otherwise may not have had the opportunity.

Career Focus Internship Program



CO-OPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Parent testimonial from 2017 *"I cannot begin to express what this camp has meant to our kids. Most of all for our oldest daughter and her ability to accept herself for who she is and deal with her anxiety. Several things have happened over the past year for her and she credits the ACCA program for helping her be able to get through it all even when some decisions she made were hard. So I just want to say **THANK YOU** to everyone who makes this camp what it is!"*



In 2017, we had **226 youth** attend the program, which is an increase in numbers from 2016. We engaged **13 NEW sponsors** from across Alberta from both the co-operative and private sector. Our total amount of sponsors supporting the program was 86. The support from our long-standing & new sponsors was tremendous in 2017! Not only were youth sponsored, supplies and in-kind donations really helped to the success of the program.



New curriculum was unveiled in summer of 2017 & we received tremendous positive feedback from the volunteer staff as well as useful suggestions for enhancements. The sessions were delivered with more structure and confidence. There was also more specific feedback on the curriculum sessions from the youth participants stating that they learned more than in previous years, the sessions were more fun and engaging.

We had **41 AMAZING** volunteer staff that mentored our youth this summer. Of these 41 volunteers, 6 of them were volunteers supported by their employers.



Board of Directors 2017

Randy Taylor - Chair

Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops

Christopher Ross - Director

The Co-operators Group Ltd.

Carl Beniuk – Director

North Parkland Power REA

Tara Burke - Director

Federated Co-operatives Ltd.

Harvey Hagman - Vice Chair

UFA Co-operative Limited

Brian Scott - Director

Canadian Workers' Co-operative Federation

Lisa Hicks – Director

Calgary Co-operative Association Ltd.

Sandra Thornton – Director

EQUUS Ltd.

Duane Blahun - Director

Credit Union Central of Alberta

Earl Graham - Director

Rocky REA Ltd.



Co-operative Leadership Awards

Co-operative Merit Award

Terry Geib

Greg O'Neill

Jim Watt

Co-operative Innovation Award

EQUS REA Ltd.

Connect First Credit Union / Servus Credit Union

Co-operative Visionary Leadership Award

Kye Kocher

Evert Vandenberg

Inspiring Young Co-operator Award

Not awarded in 2017

Young Co-operative Leaders Award

Not awarded in 2017

2017 Winners



Michele Aasgard
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Cindy Dixon
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Seth Leon
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WANT TO KNOW MORE?
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