

Co-operative Spotlight

May / June 2009

An overview of
Saskatchewan co-operative sector
news and activities

Co-op Classic Returns July 10

After a one-year hiatus, the Co-op Classic Golf Fundraiser returns this year with an expanded mandate. "We are really stepping up our fundraising efforts this year, particularly with our recruitment of major sponsors for the event," says Mary Beckett, Senior Vice President of Concentra Financial and Co-op Classic Committee Chair. "The funds raised this year will benefit the Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Youth Program. In this way, we can support co-operatives at home and abroad."

The Co-operative Development Foundation has been supporting the advancement of co-operatives for the relief of poverty and for community development in 20 countries for over sixty years.

The Saskatchewan Co-operative Youth Program has been in operation since 1928 and has been a positive influence in the lives of over 42,000 young people.

For more information about participating in the Co-op Classic as a golfer, sponsor, prize donor, or volunteer, visit our website at www.sask.coop



Co-op Development Initiative renewed by Federal Government

The Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) is very pleased with the federal government's decision to renew and enhance the Co-operative Development Initiative (CDI), a program aimed at providing support to new and emerging co-operatives across Canada.

The Honourable Jean-Pierre Blackburn, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture) announced today that the government will invest \$19.1 million over the next four years to support the establishment of new co-operatives and test innovative methods of using the co-operative model. The previous CDI program, which began in 2003, expired on March 31 of this year.

"This is wonderful news for the co-operative sector, for Canadians who use the services co-operatives provide and for the communities in which co-operatives are located," said CCA Executive Director Carol Hunter. "By renewing and enhancing CDI, the government has recognized that co-operatives create jobs and bring enormous value to Canada's economy."

The new program will have two major components:

Advisory Services, which will improve access to co-operative development information and services that will assist in the formation of new co-operatives. This component of the program is an expanded version of the Advisory Services component of the previous CDI; it will continue to be managed by CCA and its francophone sister organization, the Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité (CCCM) through provincial and sectoral co-operative associations across Canada and will also provide new national services.

Innovative Co-operative Projects, which will provide project support for new and emerging co-operatives. This will include value-added agriculture projects, which had been supported by a separate Ag-CDI component within the previous program. This component will now be fully managed by CCA and CCCM.

In addition, there will be a **Research and Knowledge Development** component, which will support new and applied research to support co-operative development. This component will be managed by the federal Co-operatives Secretariat, which is part of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

Ms. Hunter said she was pleased that the two national co-operative associations have been given the opportunity to fully manage the two major components of the

(continued on page 2)

Co-op Camps Ready to Rock!

SCYP is ready for another action packed season.

With only 30 days until the summer season starts the SCYPs superhero crew is busy! Summer may seem like a long way away, but we're already flexing our creative and promotional muscles: working with sector and alumni staff, putting the finishing touches on the new seminars, reaching out to new campers, doing school presentations and attending career fairs!



We are very excited about the upcoming season and can't wait to put our plans into action. This summer promises to be the best ever with two new exciting levels expanding our summer line up to 5 different levels open to youth ages 12 to 18. SCYP continues to offer Saskatchewan

youth a chance to get away from it all, while learning new things, making new friends, and developing leadership skills.

There are still spots available in all seminar levels; however, register now to ensure your first choice of seminar!

The superhero badge and lollipops pictured are a sample of some of the 2009 must have superhero accessories! Order yours today!



SCYP Seeks "Co-op Superheroes"

Registrations continue to pour into the Saskatchewan Co-operative Youth Program Office, straining our ability to find sponsors for each participant. "Sponsorships in Saskatoon and Regina start to become difficult for participants to find at this time of year. We are also receiving an increasing number of applications from lower income families who need additional sponsorship to be able to attend," says Heather Hale, SCYP Program Officer. "It is our policy to never turn anyone away due to lack of funding, and so our office staff have been calling co-ops and credit unions around the province to help participants find sponsors."

With only a month to go before seminars begin, we anticipate an urgent need for sponsors. If your organization can help sponsor a youth to attend Co-op Camp, please contact our office at 306-244-3702 or sca@sask.coop.

Co-operatives Weigh In On Poverty Issues

The co-operative sector has called upon the federal government to do more to reduce poverty in Canada.

Lynne Markell, Government Relations and Public Policy Advisor for the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) and Nicholas Gazzard, Executive Director of the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada (CHF Canada) made their views known before a Parliamentary committee on April 23. The Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities has been holding hearings on the federal contribution to reducing poverty in Canada.

CCA called upon the government to develop an anti-poverty strategy with goals and timetables and better coordinate the work of different federal departments and agencies working on anti-poverty issues with provincial programs. CCA also urged the government to add a new focus on self-help and community economic development with additional programs and policies to facilitate the development of co-ops.

CHF Canada urged the government to ensure that federal housing spending, most of which is transferred to other levels of government, is tied to reducing core housing need, and to maintain current levels of spending on "legacy" federal programs that have delivered some 650,000 units of social housing over the past 60 years.



More information the submissions are available on the CCA and CHF Canada websites. Source: CCA Co-operative NewsBriefs, April 30, 2009

CDI Renewal (continued from page 1)

program; under the previous program, the associations only managed Advisory Services and Ag-CDI. "We are happy that the government has confidence in the co-operative sector to administer these funds on its behalf, for the benefit of co-operatives, communities and all Canadians," she said.

CCA and CCCM have actively lobbied for the renewal of the CDI program for the past two years, with the help of individuals and organizations across Canada, from both within and outside the co-operative sector. The previous CDI program supported more than 1,500 co-operatives through Advisory Services and project funding, and helped create some 200 new co-operatives. Information on how to apply for the Innovative Co-operative Projects component of the new program, including criteria and deadlines, will be available on CCA's website, www.coopscanada.coop, within the next few weeks.

Source: CCA press release, May 21, 2009

Junior Director Position Helps Prepare Youth for Future

This is the second in a two-part series profiling young leaders at Otter Co-op in Aldergrove, BC. Each year, Otter Co-op offers a Junior Director position to a Grade 12 student from the community. They spend the year gaining experience in a director role and providing a youth perspective for the Otter Co-op's board of directors. We wanted to find out more about these youth, how they got involved and what they are learning from their experience.

Brittany Bergevin, profiled in the April edition of *Co-operative Spotlight*, was Junior Director last year, and was subsequently elected a director at Otter Co-op. Gabby Bohmer is the current Junior Director, and this is what she told us about her experience so far.

1. What made you want to be a junior director at Otter Co-op?

I first heard about the Junior Director program through my Dad, who used to be a director on the Board at Otter. He told me about the program and the Junior Directors before me and how they enjoyed the program so much and told me that I should apply for it when I was in grade 11. The years went by and when my grade 11 year came around my dad reminded me about the program and I thought seriously about applying. I had heard many wonderful things about the program and thought about what an honour it would be to sit on the board and what an amazing experience it would be. I would get an introduction to the business world and learn all about the work that is put in behind the scenes to run a business and so much more, so I eventually decided that I had absolutely nothing to lose and everything to gain by applying and so I did, and haven't regretted it for a minute!

2. What is the process used in applying to be a director? Is there a lot of competition? Elections? Application forms? How does it work? Are you the only junior director?

The position of Junior Director is filled every year by one willing and dedicated grade 11 (soon to be grade 12) student. To apply I had to fill out an application form, containing all the basic things an interviewer would like to know about you (i.e. name, telephone number, achievements, education, etc.) then on top of filling out the application I had to write an essay on the history of co-operatives/the co-operative movement, and get a reference letter from someone in the community,

What have I learnt so far? What have I not learnt is a better question!

which for me was the vice principal at my school. The amount of competition varies from year to year, based on the interest and the amount of advertising put out by the co-op. Only one Junior Director is honoured to sit on the Otter Co-op board each year and they are chosen based on the 3 sections of their application, reference letter, application form, and essay, and then they also have to go through an interview process in which they are interviewed by selected members of the current board including the current Junior Director.

3. What do you think you've learned so far from your junior director experience?



Federated Co-operatives Limited President Glen Tully meets with Brittany Bergevin (R) and Gabby Bohmer (L) at FCL's AGM

What have I learnt so far? What have I not learnt is a better question! I have learnt a lot about co-ops in general and how they work in regards to member shares, equity, etc. I have seen how co-ops come together to work toward bettering

and supporting the community in any way shape or form. I have learnt a lot, not only about co-ops but about running a business in general and all the things that go on behind the scenes that as a customer, you would never think of.

4. How do you think you'll be able to use what you're learning in the future?

A lot of the rules and business etiquette that I have learnt this year I will be able to carry into my future. Things like Robert's rules and other elements of meeting structure that are used in co-operatives all across Canada are some things that will

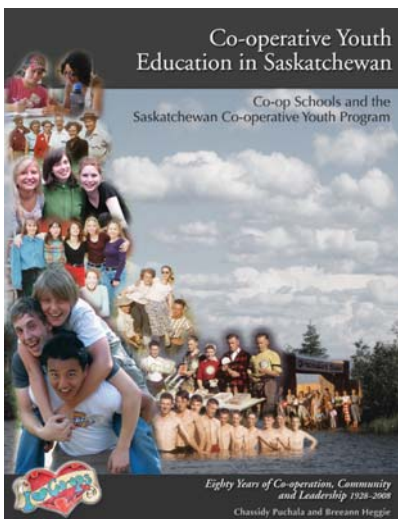
(continued on page 4)

Federal Government Partners With Affinity Credit Union For Aboriginal Business Financing

The federal government has announced a new partnership with Affinity Credit Union which will help First Nations businesses in Saskatchewan obtain access to debt financing.

Under the arrangement, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada will provide \$1.9 million to establish a loan loss reserve fund with Affinity Credit Union. The fund can be used by financial institutions as collateral to finance loans to medium and large First Nations businesses with assets on a reserve.

The initiative will make First Nations businesses more competitive by addressing historical impediments to debt financing, including provisions of the Indian Act that prohibit the use of reserve land as collateral. Source: CCA NewsBriefs, May 14, 2009



SCYP History Books Now Available!

Celebrating 80 Years

2008 marked the 80th anniversary of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Youth Program. This book, written by Saskatchewan youth, celebrates the essence of the program and documents its history, development, and achievements through archival research, personal interviews, and information gleaned from internal documents never before made public. With over 75 photographs, both archival and current, first-hand accounts from numerous personal interviews, and appendices of rare historical documents, this book will be an invaluable addition to the history of the co-operative movement in Saskatchewan.

Celebrating Co-operative Youth Education

Co-operative Youth education has been important in the development of youth across Saskatchewan since the early 1920s. The first official Co-op School, held in 1928, laid the foundation for an incredibly successful series of co-operative education initiatives, which evolved into the Saskatchewan Co-operative Youth Program.

Books are available for only \$20 plus GST and shipping. Call 306-244-3702 or email sca@sask.coop to order.

Young Directors (continued from page 3)

be helpful to me in to future, as they are standard business techniques that help things to run smoothly no matter what type of a career you choose. I also learnt a lot about teamwork in general. It was neat to be on a team with people older than me rather than my peers at school, and to see how differently they worked. Really, everything that I learnt this year on the board I will be able to carry through into my future, as I am planning on running for the board as a full fledged director next year, when I am 18 and eligible.

5. What have you learned about co-operatives?

Before I got the position of Junior Director I knew very little about co-operatives and how they work. I knew that my parents were members and that when they shopped at the co-op they got money back, but that was about the extent of my knowledge. Since being on the board I have seen the inner workings of the co-op and how they differ from all other businesses. Co-ops really work hard to please their members and not everyone on the outside sees the lengths that co-ops go to help support and better their community and its members. Not only do they give back in the form of equity but they sponsor sports teams and all sorts of community functions and people in need, they allow use of any free space they have to groups for fundraisers and barbeques, etc. co-operatives are so much more than just a store, they are community builders.

6. What is the biggest challenge for you in being part of this program?

Personally, my biggest challenge is keeping up with all the financial aspects of the co-op. I attend all of the finance committee meetings but it is sometimes a little hard to keep track of what is going on and follow the statements. I think it's a tough thing for most people but I am definitely not a 'numbers' type of person and so that makes it a little more difficult for me, but I still go and make an effort, you just have to do the best you can and eventually it will make sense in the end, even if it's just as clear as mud.

7. What is the best thing about the Junior Director program?

I love this program because it opened my eyes up to a whole new aspect of business that I had never seen and gave me career ideas that I had never thought of before. I think that my favorite part of the job was both the Western Conference in Victoria and the AGM in Saskatoon. It was so neat to see people from all across Canada, from all different walks of life, coming together to work towards a common goal. At the meetings I was also privileged to meet many wonderful and influential people, which definitely made the trips worthwhile. I have had a wonderful year working on the Board at Otter Co-op and would have strongly regretted it if I had not applied.

8. What are your plans for when you've completed Grade 12?

Next year I am taking a year off of school and working full time until February when I am going to Europe and Ireland with a friend of mine. When I get back I am going to Trinity Western University full time working towards getting my Bachelor of Fine Arts, majoring in theater and minoring in history or languages (I haven't decided yet) and then becoming a high school teacher. That's the plan as of now anyways :)

9. Last book you read?

Life of Pi. It was weird, but it was good. It's one of those books when everything is revealed in the end and it gets 100 times more interesting. But before that it was the Time Traveller's Wife, which I really liked, definitely a must read. And before that . . . Twilight series ;) I like reading if you haven't guessed already.

10. Top 10 Playlist?

1. Come on get Higher - Matt Nathanson
2. I'd rather be with you - Joshua Radin
3. Details in the Fabric - Jason Mraz
4. You and I - Ingrid Michaleson
5. Dear Mr. President - Pink
6. Fairytale - Sara Bareilles
7. Pink Tux to the Prom - Relient K
8. Put Your Records On - Corinne Bailey Rae
9. Stay Beautiful - Taylor Swift
10. Wonderwall - Oasis