



Monday, October 18

The Atlas Hotel, Regina



The Saskatchewan Co-operative Merit Awards Program, started in 1980, honours individuals and organizations that have made an outstanding contribution to co-operatives and credit unions and to their members. Awards are presented in up to four categories, each of equal importance.

The Saskatchewan Co-operative Merit Awards Committee selects recipients from nominations submitted annually by Saskatchewan co-operatives and credit unions. Saskatchewan co-operators, officials, staff, and members are eligible for awards.

The Co-operative Merit Awards Committee members are:

Jason Majid
Sheldon Stener
Lori Winnitowy
Victoria Morris

Concentra Bank
Federated Co-operatives Limited
The Co-operators
Saskatchewan Co-operative Association

On behalf of all Saskatchewan co-operative and credit union members, the Committee is proud to honour Co-operative Merit Award recipients for their outstanding contributions to the development and prosperity of our co-operative sector and province.



Welcome

Heather Hale, Master of Ceremonies

Greetings

Jim Deane, Saskatchewan Co-operative Association

Board Chair

Muhammad Fiaz, Member of the Legislative Assembly,
Regina Pasqua

Dinner

Award Presentations:

Co-operative Young Leader Award

Wes Filson (2020)

Kim Schmidt (2021)

Josh Noble (2021)

Lifetime Co-operative Achievement Award

Stuart Dyrland (2020)

Brad Schultz (2020)

Milton Kerpan (posthumous) (2021)

Keith Nixon (2021)

Lori Sanders (2021)

Concluding Remarks



The Co-operative Merit Award

Categories

The **Co-operative Enterprise Award** is presented for leadership, innovation, and achievement in co-operative business and member service initiatives for the social and economic development of the co-operative sector.

The **Co-operative Young Leader Award** is presented to young people for outstanding contributions to co-operatives and credit unions in Saskatchewan.

The **Co-operative Contribution Award** is presented to those who have inspired others as a role model, leader, and mentor through the development and expansion of co-operatives and credit unions, and have increased awareness and understanding of co-operatives and co-operative principles.

The **Lifetime Co-operative Achievement Award** is presented for long, varied, and meritorious service by individuals in volunteer and/or elected positions within co-operatives and credit unions.

Soapstone Carvings &

Commemorative Lapel Pins

Awards for the recipients are soapstone carvings from Arctic Co-operatives Limited. The arts marketing arm of this co-operative is dedicated to providing support for artists and craftspeople from Canada's North.

We are pleased to also present award recipients with commemorative lapel pins, featuring the Co-op Merit Awards Program logo, as a wearable symbol of their award.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the support of the following organizations:

The video profiles of the award recipients were produced with the assistance of

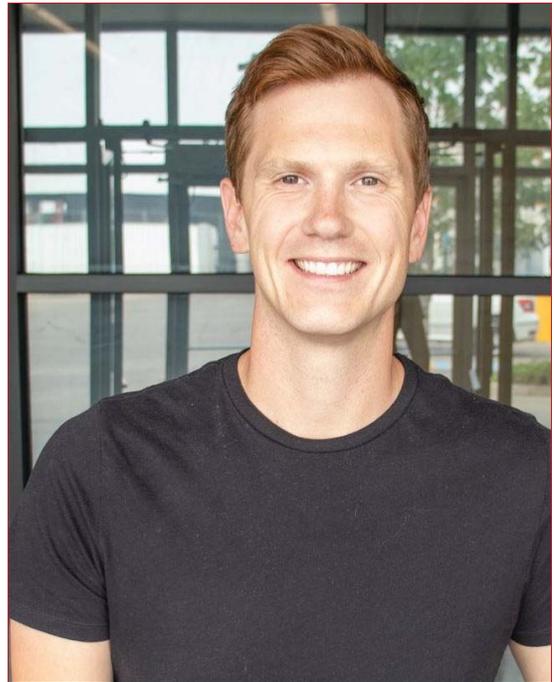


This event is sponsored in part by the Ministry of Trade and Export Development.



Wes Filson

*2020
Co-operative Young
Leader Award*



Wes Filson has inspired young leaders for more than a decade, creating a ripple effect that can be felt in communities across Saskatchewan.

Wes began his involvement with the Saskatchewan Co-operative Youth Program, as a participant, in 2002. He spent most of the next 14 years as Co-op Camp co-ordinator or a staffer (counsellor), in charge of leading teams, taking responsibility for the participants, and overseeing the delivery of camp programs and sessions.

Through Wes' roles in Co-op Camp, he has provided the opportunity for hundreds of young people to find themselves -- and encouraged many to become part of the Saskatchewan co-operative movement. Wes helped update Grad Camp curriculum, providing a framework for years to come. His involvement has helped in the sustainability of Co-op Camp, encouraging participants and staff to continue with the program year after year.

His interactions with camp staff and participants continue to be used as examples in staff training. Many years later, a Co-op Camp alumni still remembers Wes' sense of humour and his willingness to do whatever it took to make the session better, including donning a grass skirt and coconut bra. Another graduate calls him "a natural and extraordinary role model for everyone – youth and adults alike."

His passion and dedication inspired fellow SCYP alumni, Fran Moran, a past recipient of the Youth Leader award recipient. Fran says, "Wes' love of Co-op Camp, and support for co-operatives in general, is contagious. He generously supports fundraisers and initiatives that improve the lives of others. Wes embodies the co-operative spirit and continues to make his community a friendlier and more inclusive place to live." Wes is always ready to lend a hand during co-operative events, including promotion of Co-op Camp during Regina-based gatherings and during the annual Camp Awareness Week.

He's an active volunteer at the Regina Food Bank and in the many events his employer, Jump.ca, organizes with the community. Wes has spearheaded blood drives and fundraised for a school in Mexico to ensure the village children have access to an education. He was a leader in the "Welcome Home" program, organized by the Regina Open Door Society to create equal opportunities for new immigrants. Wes does all this while balancing the needs of raising a young family.

Wes' employer notes that his positivity helps build a culture of inclusivity where others feel they matter and, as a result, are highly engaged and excited to be a part of his team. It is without question that Wes has used these same outstanding qualities to have a significant impact on the many kids he has gotten to know over his years at Co-op Camps.

Using his own personal experiences and talents, Wes continues to lead by example. He shows youth and adults alike the power and freedom that comes with just being yourself. He also motivates youth to become more involved in their local co-operatives and pushes his company and employees to embrace diversity and co-operative values.

Wes is charismatic and an eternal optimist. Co-operation, equality, development, enthusiasm, and respect are found in his volunteer work within the Saskatchewan Co-operative Youth Program, his work with Jump.ca, and his involvement in community programs.

Our congratulations to Wes Filson, a very deserving recipient of the 2020 Co-operative Young Leader Award!



Kim Schmidt

*2021
Co-operative Young
Leader Award*

The best way to describe Kim Schmidt is “firecracker”. She is electric with an energy level turned up to eleven towards almost everything she puts her mind to. That includes two organizations she’s very passionate about: Co-op Camp and Kin Canada.

Kim’s involvement and commitment to the community began early on. Her roots in Shaunavon informed her values and her appreciation of co-operatives and credit unions. Her parents opened a Fat Cat savings account for her when she was an infant at her local credit union, and she worked at the Shaunavon Co-op Grocery store in high school.

After discovering the Saskatchewan Co-operative Youth Program, Kim’s belief in the co-operative model flared into a passion. She attended Co-op Camp as a participant in 2002 and returned for two more years. Kim came back to the program as a leader right away, staffing eleven camps between 2005-2019.

Kim took on the roles of Junior Staff, Alumni Staffer, and Assistant Co-ordinator during the various summers, sacrificing her vacation and personal time to help plan, organize, and lead sessions. She has staffed over 200 young people and inspired countless youth to get involved in their communities, embrace co-operative values, respect one another, and explore their independence.

She improves each Co-op Camp participant’s experience by being present in the moment. Kim treats youth with respect, encouraging them to believe that they can be more - and do more - than they think they can. They light up and try harder. And then they succeed.

Kim connects with the participants by showing her vulnerability, sharing her experience being bullied as a kid. She says, “I let these kids know I’m not some robot adult. I care, I’ve been there, and they can relate to me.”

Brady King, Co-op Camp alumni, says this about Kim: "From day one, her infectious positivity, bubblyness and Tigger-like attitude lit up any room. She taught me that there is always a bright side to any situation, and she is one of the key people who's shaped me into who I am. Co-op Camp has shaped my identity, but Kim by far had the greatest impact."

Kim's media education and skillset were instrumental in producing marketing and communication materials for the Saskatchewan Co-operative Association. She helped the program staff with design elements for the Co-operative Youth Education in Saskatchewan history book. Many of Kim's photos have been featured in Co-op Camp marketing.

Over the fourteen years that Kim volunteered with Co-op Camp, she actively contributed to curriculum refinement and fundraising initiatives. And she remains a committed and passionate ambassador for the program.

Kim's other passion is Kin Canada, for which she has been an active member for 10 consecutive years. She has held many roles, including Vice-President of the Saskatoon & District Kinettes, and Communications Director and Bulletin Editor, and she is an advisor on the Marketing and Membership Development Committee for Kin Canada. She's a regular volunteer for Saskatchewan's popular Telemiracle event, and she also spearheaded and ran Help-Portrait Regina, an annual event that gives people in need a free mini makeover, free family portrait, and free meal.

Tracey Quiring, Program Officer, SCA, says: "Co-op Camp has one goal; we work to give youth the tools to become leaders in their communities. I feel like SCYP has succeeded with Kim. She is a ball of energy and puts everything she has into the work she does. It doesn't matter if it's her paid employment, her volunteer work with Kin Canada, or her time spent as a staffer at Co-op Camp."

Kim Schmidt is an energetic and enthusiastic mentor to the youth who are lucky enough to be at her Co-op Camp sessions or interact with her in one of her other volunteer roles. In her mind, all are equal and equally valuable. She leads by example and shows kindness and strength at the same time.

Congratulations, Kim, on being selected as a 2021 Co-operative Young Leader Award recipient!



Josh Noble

*2021
Co-operative Young
Leader Award*

Josh Noble takes innovative approaches to promoting the co-operative model. This is especially noticeable in his work with youth -- a category of young professionals that he also happens to belong to.

Josh wears many hats and balances a young family, busy career, co-operative commitments, and volunteerism. He's worked in the Saskatchewan credit union system since 2015. As the Manager of Deposit Support at Synergy Credit Union, he oversaw a department that provides back-office support for many of its retail employees. In his new role with Servus Credit Union, Josh assists members in building holistic financial plans through goal setting, investment advice, and estate planning.

In 2018, Josh joined Canada's Emerging Co-operators (CEC), a committee of Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada. When he was elected chair, he made it his goal to redefine youth engagement and its importance in the Canadian and international co-operative spaces. He developed the role into a position of mentorship to support the development of new CEC leaders. During his tenure, the committee had renewed vigour and doubled in size.

Maggie Miland, vice chair of CEC, says of his leadership style, "Josh does three things extremely well: Ask questions, clarify next steps, and eliminate barriers." She adds that he has the rare ability to support his team when things are tough, while at the same time giving them a nudge to keep moving them forward.

Josh is helping CEC make a presence on the international level. In July 2021, he co-presented at the World Credit Union Conference on "Celebrate Difference; Foster Solidarity," a global case study for youth in co-operatives, and also the CEC vision statement.

Josh was elected to the board of Lloydminster & District Co-op in the midst of

the global health crisis. Leanne Hawes, Chief Executive Officer of Lloyd Co-op, says Josh played a strong role in assisting the organization to reframe its new mission statement of "Members together, growing community."

He has helped the organization rediscover its co-op roots and the co-operative values. Leanne adds, "Josh's core concerns often centre around relevance and sustainability for our co-operative. Part of his passion includes finding ways to educate our members on the true value of belonging to our co-operative."

Josh pursued a Graduate Diploma of Co-operative Management at Saint Mary's University and has a Master's degree in communication and technology. He created a podcast dedicated to credit union management, which will soon celebrate its fifth anniversary. His podcast has a wide reach and is studded with leaders from across the country. Through his podcast, he's providing access to co-operatively-themed information, and promoting the successes of young people within the co-op and credit union sectors.

Josh is a former junior boys basketball coach. In addition to his work with CEC, he sits on the boards of The King's University and Manitou Lake Bible Camp. Josh speaks regularly about how proud he is of his rural roots, and is often volunteering at a local organization.

As a father, Josh is exploring how to introduce the concepts of co-operativism to his kids. He's in the midst of developing a children's book that features a bee reconnecting to the hive as a metaphor for choosing a credit union over a commercial bank.

Josh Noble embodies a blend of co-operative education, values, and innovations. He exemplifies a type of leadership that paves the way for other emerging leaders to think critically and disagree well together while working towards social justice. He is a role model for young co-operators who are shaping the future of the co-op sector today.

We are honoured to name Josh Noble a recipient of the 2021 Co-operative Young Leader Award.



Stuart Dyrland

*2020
Lifetime Co-operative
Achievement Award*

Throughout his 44-year history with Pioneer Co-operative Association, Stuart Dyrland exemplified many of the ideals of this award, including integrity, leadership, and vision.

Stu served as director of Pioneer Co-op from 1975-1990, much of that time as president of the board of directors. In 1991, he transitioned to general manager, marking the first time an elected official became general manager of such a large retail.

Stuart is a strategic thinker and a savvy number-cruncher. Under his collaborative leadership, the co-op, headquartered in Swift Current, undertook substantial revitalization of its co-operative retail locations in rural Saskatchewan. His dedication to ensuring the long-term success of Pioneer Co-op (and by virtue, the co-operative retail system) required significant commitment, and at times the willingness to take calculated risks to ensure the viability of the organization.

To facilitate ease of access and promote local shopping, Pioneer Co-op created an innovative way of assembling the products and services needed by a small rural population in one site. This streamlined approach allowed Pioneer to provide excellent member service in modern facilities while minimizing costs.

Working with Federated Co-operatives Limited (FCL), Stu and his team developed new concept stores in Kyle and Cabri, combining grocery, hardware, crop protection, and petroleum. Another one-stop-service facility was developed in Consul to sell grocery, liquor, hardware, and agronomy inputs. A similar store was built in Morse and tailored to that community's needs.

Recognizing the role of modern agriculture in Saskatchewan, some Pioneer Co-op locations began providing comprehensive agricultural services and added business lines such as agronomy, seed sales and seed cleaning, farm equipment rentals, fertilizer and other agricultural inputs and agricultural infrastructure.

In addition to helping Pioneer Co-op, Stuart sat on the boards of both Consumer's Co-operative Refineries and Federated Co-operatives Limited for 12 years. He represented FCL as a director on the boards of both The Co-operators Group Ltd. and the Co-operative Superannuation Society.

Within Pioneer Co-op, Stu worked to ensure professional development opportunities, employee engagement, and provided a foundation for co-operative values to flourish in southwest Saskatchewan. He built a strong and engaged staff team.

Larry Kozun, Pioneer Co-op's current CEO, and Shirley Dafoe, Pioneer's HR Manager, both worked with Stuart for more than three decades. "With Stuart as a mentor, we learned countless lessons – both professionally and personally." They remarked that when he wasn't at his desk or touring the locations, he would be taking pleasure from his time spent in the fields or relaxing with his family.

Stuart is married to Leslie. They have 4 children and 3 grandchildren. He is a lifetime farmer in the Kyle area, initially farming with his brother and now his children. Stu has a large farm, incorporating modern and innovative farming practices. It's reported that the cab of Stu's tractor looks like a spaceship, with many lights, screens, computers, and cameras.

Stuart has always been true to his faith and his community. He is currently president of Zion Lutheran Church, one of the few rural churches in Saskatchewan that is still operational. A sampling of his other community involvement includes the local 4H, the board of Saskatchewan Landing Golf and Country Club, and the Swift Current Chamber of Commerce.

Under Stu's leadership, Pioneer Co-op grew to a retail leader serving more than 23,000 members with annual sales of more than \$319 million. When he retired in 2019, Pioneer Co-op was a strong, thriving, and member-centered retailer employing more than 600 people in 19 communities across southwest Saskatchewan.

Stuart Dyrlund's principled approach to leadership and his understanding of the important role co-operatives play in building community are evident throughout a career that spans four decades. Stuart's commitment to the Co-operative Retailing System, to the communities of southwest Saskatchewan, and his vision and leadership have made Pioneer Co-op a strong, vibrant successful and truly southwest Saskatchewan co-operative.

Congratulations, Stuart, on being recognized with a 2020 Lifetime Co-operative Achievement Award!

Brad Schultz

*2020
Lifetime Co-operative
Achievement Award*



From Co-op Camp staffer, to credit union mentor in Africa, to Chair of the Federated Co-operatives Limited (FCL) board, Brad Schultz has gathered a lifetime of co-operative experiences.

Brad Schultz began his career as a teller with Melville District Credit Union (now Cornerstone Credit Union). He progressed over time to Manager of Lending. Brad had a way with his fellow employees, and he enjoyed playing practical jokes on his peers. Known as a firm but fair leader, he held his lenders to the same standards, making sure they would do the same for their members. Brad was also a trustee for the local school board, and a board member and president of Prairie Co-op and coached numerous sports and other activities his children participated in.

Brad's focus expanded from local co-ops and credit unions to the provincial level. He attended a Saskatchewan Co-operative Youth Program Camp training session in June 1989 and became a volunteer staffer (counsellor) that year. His colleagues at Horizon Credit Union recall how excited Brad was to educate the campers on the nature and benefits of co-operation, and to hear what he had learned from them. When he returned to the credit union, he shared his new co-op perspectives with colleagues through his daily work, staff presentations, and social gatherings.

Brad's co-op focus expanded again when he joined the Canadian Co-operative Association's Credit Union Manager Mentorship Program. Brad was partnered with another Canadian credit union professional to go into the African credit union system for three weeks to coach and mentor local leaders in the ongoing development of their SACCOs (Savings and Credit Co-operatives, equivalent to very small, very community-focused credit unions).

In 2011 he travelled to Rumphi, Malawi and was placed within a small SACCO of tobacco farmers that was struggling financially. Brad and his partner (Scott Kennedy - Superior Credit Union, Thunder Bay) worked long hours with the board and staff. From their knowledge of co-operative and credit union best

practises, they identified more than 20 areas that could be improved. One of their main recommendations to the SACCO's board and community leaders was to diversify beyond tobacco farming. They needed to support change in their farming practices, as the demand for tobacco world-wide was declining.

The team that paid this SACCO a follow-up visit in 2012 reported that, of the items that Brad and Scott recommended, all but two had been implemented. This SACCO and its community were diversifying and well on the way to becoming sustainable.

Brad returned to Africa the next year for a three-week placement in Uganda, which was one of the most memorable and proud moments in his career. He gained a fresh, new perspective to embrace change and it became a life-changing influence. The placements reinforced the importance of community and family in people's lives and he willingly shared his experiences with others after his return.

Brad's co-operative career continued, when he accepted a position at Churchbridge Credit Union as Manager, Retail Services. In Churchbridge, he gave influential presentations on his experiences in Africa, opening up a new view on co-operation among co-operatives for his co-workers.

He was elected to the board of Federated Co-operatives Limited in 2014. Brad retired from his credit union career a year later to concentrate on his FCL board responsibilities as well as participate in farming which he has always enjoyed even to this day.

After four years, he was elected president and chair of the FCL board. Working with the Senior Leadership team was a great experience and one that he reflects on often as to the value he gained in their approach to the co-operative business model. Visiting with Retail co-op boards across Western Canada was a highlight and one he fondly looks back on. In 2019, he made the difficult decision to step down as president to return to his hometown and spend more time with his family. Brad accepted the role of VP of Finance with Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation, which continues to connect him to his community and the local farmers.

Brad Schultz is a firm believer in and supporter of co-operatives and has seen the positive impacts they have on communities, both in Canada and internationally. He is known for his genuine concern for the communities where he lives and works, which is seen through his volunteerism at work events and personal interest groups. He has had a lifelong career with co-operatives and credit unions and praises his international experiences for rebooting his passion in the sector.

Combining his involvement in both credit unions and retail co-ops, Brad has amassed more than 56 years of co-op sector service into his career so far (29 credit union, 21 retail co-op and 6 FCL). In honour of these contributions, we are pleased to recognize Brad Schultz with a 2020 Lifetime Co-operative Achievement Award.



Milton Kerpan

*2021
Lifetime Co-operative
Achievement Award*

Milton Kerpan had a passionate quest to improve member service. He was a guardian and promoter of co-operative values.

Milt served as a member of the board of directors of Advantage Credit Union from 2001-2013. After the merger of Affinity, Advantage and Spectra credit unions in 2013, he became a member of the Affinity board of directors.

As vice-chair of the Affinity Governance Committee, Milt was instrumental in the restructure of Affinity's governance model which keeps the credit union firmly rooted to the needs of its members, supports co-operative values and principles, and provides valuable feedback and oversight to the board of directors. In 2018 Milt assumed the role of chair of the Affinity Governance Committee and he led this committee until he retired from his director role in April, 2020.

Milt actively participated in many significant decisions through his work on the Affinity Credit Union board and its committees. But always at the basis of his decisions was the genuine desire to do what was best and right for the members. He was committed to improving the member experience, as well as ensuring the long-term sustainability of the credit union.

From 2010 until 2013, Milt was president of Advantage Credit Union. In a 2013 interview that profiled Advantage, he said, "...when we make a decision, [we consider] what is the impact on our members, how is this going to enhance member service and member experience. And that has consistently, around the board table, been the focus of our organization. The continued growth of putting the members first is very important."

Milt had a love of learning and education. He was an accredited Canadian Credit Union Director. He completed the Credit Union Director Achievement Program and attended the Rotman CUES Governance Leadership Institute Director Certification Program. His passion for learning and continuous

education was no doubt fuelled by his background as a teacher, principal, and director of education.

Milt inspired many of his director colleagues to reach higher and to aspire to greater opportunities within the credit union system. He participated in the provincial and national co-operative sectors, too. He sat on the board of directors for The Co-operators Group Limited from 1976 to 1979 and was a member of the SaskCentral board of directors from 1982 until 1992.

Milt's love of his community and the people in it was obvious by the countless hours he spent volunteering in Watson and area. He served each volunteer role with commitment, compassion, and dedication. He was a lay presider of his church and a member of the Knights of Columbus. He was married for 50 years to Liz; they had three children and eight grandchildren. Later in his retirement, Milt began to garden and was immensely proud of his perennial flower bed that he designed and nurtured with care.

Milt was a very committed board member. Serious and down-to-earth, but always with an impish smile. His depth of character and commitment to community was immediately apparent to anyone who met him.

Sadly, Milt lost his battle with cancer and passed away on December 29, 2020. Milt's lighthearted, positive, and caring attitude are missed by the many who were privileged to cross paths with him over the years.

We are pleased to recognize Milt's decades of contributions to co-ops and credit unions with a Lifetime Co-operative Achievement Award.

Keith Nixon

*2021
Lifetime Co-operative
Achievement Award*



If you wanted something done in the Saskatchewan credit union system, chances are you would have called upon Keith Nixon.

The recently retired CEO of SaskCentral has been a strong influence in the Saskatchewan and Canadian credit union systems for more than four decades. From the development of Saskatchewan's Credit Union Act, to the formation of Concentra Bank, to lending an ear to a staff member in need, "Just Call Keith" was a common adage.

Keith began his credit union career as a trainee at Earl Grey Credit Union. His career took him through a number of Saskatchewan credit unions and sector stakeholders until he landed for good at SaskCentral in 1987. He held various positions at SaskCentral, most notably an eight-year tenure as CEO. No matter the role, Keith earned the trust and respect of employees, directors, system partners, and colleagues near and far.

While Keith was working with the Credit Union Deposit Guarantee Corporation in the early 1990's, he assisted five credit unions that were interested in merging. With no precedent to follow, Keith began the research and contacted the people needed to develop a plan. The amalgamation led to the creation of Prairie Centre Credit Union, and also served as a template that could be used for future mergers. The great success of the initiative was a tribute to Keith's vision and leadership.

As director of government relations at SaskCentral, Keith took the lead on the development of what was to become the Saskatchewan Credit Union Act, 1998. The resulting Act was a careful balancing of operational needs of credit unions, corporate governance of credit union members, and the obligations of regulators and the provincial government. The Act was seen as a model for similar legislation throughout Canada.

In the mid 2000's, Keith led the Provincial Image Committee to develop branding and promotional statements for the Saskatchewan credit union system. Many credit unions continue to use them today. He was instrumental in the transformations of SaskCentral and Concentra Bank and played a lead role for Saskatchewan in the creation of the Canadian Credit Union Association, Aviso Wealth, and the Prairie Payments Initiative.

For the last ten years, Keith was a strong voice for change in an incredibly complex national credit union system and was a committee member or director on the boards of many sector stakeholders.

Keith earned a reputation for his wealth of knowledge, and "Just call Keith" became a maxim that represented his work within the credit union system. That adage went beyond his familiarity with credit unions to his overall compassion for people. Russ Siemens, past board chair of Innovation Credit Union, recalls being in Keith's office when he received a call from a staff member who was going through a challenging personal time. They needed to "Just call Keith" for support and encouragement. Keith took the call and provided exactly that, something he did over and over again. His unyielding belief that everyone deserves a fair chance contributed in his volunteer role on the Regina Adult Learning Centre Foundation and Board.

Keith championed the vision for a stronger culture at SaskCentral. His support led to ongoing rankings on the Best WorkPlaces in Canada list, and continually improved culture and employee engagement scores.

Keith's passion for co-operatives extends beyond credit unions as he served on the Public Policy Committee of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Association and served two terms as elected director on the board of Sherwood Co-operative Association.

Of all his greatest achievements, though, Keith says that his family is at the top of the list. He enjoys music and played in a family band. He also loves animals and loves to spend time outdoors, whether he's sledding, camping, or fishing.

Keith is known for his integrity and honesty. A quiet leader who didn't need to dominate to be effective. In proposing Keith for this award, his nominators said, "He was consistent and accountable with his words and actions, ensuring people felt valued and supported, which earned him great trust with his employees, as well as credit unions and stakeholders across Canada. Simply put, he had integrity and was a great example for others to follow."

Keith Nixon maintained an undying pride and passion for the credit union system. He set forth a vision where credit unions could embrace their co-operative roots, while still evolving as needed to continue to serve members well into the future.

For forty years, no matter his role, the best interests for credit unions were always top of mind for Keith Nixon. We are pleased to honour him with a 2021 Co-operative Lifetime Achievement Award.



Lori Sanders

*2021
Lifetime Co-operative
Achievement Award*

When faced with a challenge, Lori Sanders assesses the situation, evaluates it, and then moves into action. As board president of Sherwood Co-operative Association, it's a pattern she followed again and again, to the benefit of her co-op and its membership.

Lori was elected to the board in 2001, just as the co-operative began grappling with plans for long-term sustainability and market share. Soon elected president, Lori led the board and the co-op through an organizational review.

Lori steered the board towards a vision that Sherwood Co-op – through intelligent and sustainable growth – would be a community leader in serving its members through its locations, products, and with its employees' commitment to exceptional member service. Addressing it was a challenging process, the guiding principle was always looking out for the best long-term interests of the co-op's members. This new plan ensured project costs and ongoing operational costs would be more than offset by the revenue generated by the new and renovated locations. As a result, the co-op significantly and profitably expanded its operations.

The co-op now serves 67,000 members, has sales of \$250M and operates 22 locations in six communities. Market share of the Regina urban gasoline market has increased more than four hundred per cent and members receive annual patronage refunds. Directors credit these results to strong and consistent leadership at the board table and an empowered general manager who can deliver on the board's vision.

Sherwood Co-op is primarily an urban co-operative that often operates in a different environment than its more rural counterparts. Recognizing this, Lori was the driving force behind the creation of the 5-Delegate Chairs Committee, where board presidents of the largest retail co-ops in the Co-operative

Retailing System (CRS) could meet and discuss lessons learned, opportunities, and challenges. (The committee's name is derived from the number of delegate positions assigned to each of the largest co-ops.)

The co-op is committed to diversity and being representative of its membership and their communities. It tracks employee and management diversity statistics including the number of women and Indigenous persons. Lori has guided Sherwood Co-op into a leadership role surrounding reconciliation. The board has prepared a resolution compelling FCL to make Indigenous education available to CRS employees and retail board members before the end of 2022. The resolution will be presented to the FCL membership next year.

Professional development of Sherwood Co-operative's CEO is mandated, and strongly recommended for board members. As president, Lori encouraged the co-op's directors to enrol in Federated Co-operative Limited's Director Development Program so that they had a common framework to use for their decision-making and strategic planning. With some urging from board chairs like Lori who saw the opportunity for enhanced director training, FCL recently launched an Advanced Co-operative Governance course. This third level of director education further strengthens the governance training of all board directors within the Co-operative Retailing System.

Lori's own governance style as president was to guide, but not control, discussion around the board table; to be a leader, a coach, and a facilitator. Lori recognized the relative strengths that each member of the board brought to the table, and skillfully drew out that expertise in discussions so that the knowledge was shared and questioning was encouraged. John Stevenson, the current board president, says Lori always sought true consensus rather than consensus of just the vocal. She had an unrelenting mission to keep the board governance-based and maintain a long-term strategic vision, he adds.

Following her personal plan of assessing and taking action, Lori Sanders retired from Sherwood Co-operative Association in 2021 after ensuring a succession planning strategy was in place. Her legacy as president is to leave the board and the organization with a culture that has the co-operative principles as its core, long-term strategic planning as its most powerful tool, and a commitment to the difference co-ops can and do make to their local communities.

Congratulations, Lori, for being recognized with the 2021 Co-operative Lifetime Achievement Award.

Co-operative Merit Award Recipients

Following is a list, in reverse chronological order, of all Co-operative Merit Award Recipients since 1980. As we honour new recipients this evening, we also remember the past recipients who shaped Saskatchewan's co-operative sector.

2019

Affinity Credit Union
Conexus Credit Union
Fran Moran
Morley Doerksen

2018

Brett Fairbairn
Marianne Jurzyniec
Gordon Young

2017

Betty Bauhuis
Wayne Kabatoff
Jordan Lemire
Pieter McNair
Dean Walde

2016

Beryl Bauer
Earl Hanson
George Keter
Lorna Knudson
Marilyn McKee

2015

Mary Beckett
Beth Henderson
Donald Russell
Ken Sherwin
Morris Smysnuik
Karen Timoshuk

2014

Ronald Breadner
Herb Carlson
Harold Chapman
Lori Winnitowy

2013

Advantage Credit Union
Heather Hale
(Grover) Harvey Heavin
Bev Maxim
Andre Perras
Sandy Richards
Ilene Roy

2012

Saskatchewan Co-operative Youth
Program

2011

Roger Herman
Bob Kirkland
Patrick Lapointe
Lisa McEachern

2010

Myrna Bentley
Ben Chung
Warren Crossman
Neale Morton
Grant Tyson
Consumers' Co-operative Refineries
Limited

2009

Karl Baumgardner

2008

Sid Bildfell
Mary Flynn
Levern Horvey
Edward Pretty
William Walter

2007

Michael Crowter
Robert (Bob) Allan Effa
Tricia McNair
Wayne Thompson (P)
Laura Vance

2006

Duane Bristow
Ivan Clayton Earl
Richard Kiedrowski
Mich Ozeroff
Joseph E. Parent
Access Communications Co-operative Ltd.
Co-operative Health Services Association
(Regina) Ltd.
Farmer Direct Co-operative Limited

P denotes posthumous award

2005

Dennis Banda
Louis Bertoia
Vern Buck
Keith Casewell
Joe Dierker
Wayne Pearson
Concentra Financial & SaskCentral
Kindersley Co-op Women's Guild

2004

Kenneth Bender
Elwood Harvey
Maurice Kostichuk
Gene Krepakevich
Rudolph Leiter
Marvin Weins

2003

Jim Crighton
Loretta Eastley
Wayne Haughn (P)
Ed Mitrenga
Albert Phalke
Vern Pusch
Daryl Snider (P)
Bill Turner

2002

Myrna Hewitt
Victor Johnson (P)
Norbert Lepage
Gordon MacKenzie
Don Slind
Duold Textor
Bryan Tudor
The Environmentors Co-operative (Core
Neighbourhood Youth Co-op)

2001

Alex Basaraba
Harry R. Bastness
Kenneth James Douglas (P)
Daniel S. Palsich
Shirley Ellen Sanderson
Ernst Wengel

2000

Martin Arndt
Harold Crossman
Ken Elder
Ronald Johnson
Leroy Larsen
Wilmer Senft
John Vinek

1999

Beryl Bauer
James Cinnamon
George Cristo
Victor Hay
Bryan Kirk
Russell Simpson
Enos Sproat
New Beginnings Housing Co-op Limited

1998

Edward Gebert
Fred Headford
Eleanore King
James MacDonald
Quint Housing Co-operative

1997

Leander Buhr
Joe Hinz
Robert Montgomery
Terry Phalen
George Potter
Wesley Robbins
John Vrabioff (P)
Federated Co-operatives Ltd., Agro
Division

1996

Harold Chapman
Milton Fair
Larry Gislason
Vernon Leland
Raymond Luterbach
John Trew
North West Credit Union Ltd.
Prairie Dog Alternative News
Co-operative

1995

Herman Boehler
Walter Dupin
Don Milne
Bernard Mundell
Joyce Rasmussen
James Van Eaton
Prairie Centre Credit Union Ltd.

1994

Jake Berg
Norm Bromberger
Art Gray
James Marjoram
Paul Martyniuk
Robert Mickleborough

Clifford Murch
Brock Turner
Thora Wiggins

1993

Eldon Anderson
James Conly
Stanley Dwornik
Albert Folmer
Lloyd Loyns (P)
Carl Lukey
George Murphy
Garf Stevenson

1992

Ken A. Elder
Harold Johnson (P)
Arthur Parrott
Ronald Pike
Ambrose Rieder
Trevor Shepstone
Milford Switzer

1991

Raymond A. Arthur
Leo J. Hayes
Alvin H. Hewitt
James F. Johnson
Wilfred W. Morgenstern
George A. Sanderson
Murray E. Smith
Dr. Gordon A. South

1990

Ronald Bishoff
Ivan Burden (P)
Wesley Glydon
Charles Hewitt
Fred Lowndes
Harold Olive
Robert Thomson
Allan Wagar
Harvey Wessner
Aubrey Wood

1989

William E. Bergen
Gerry A. Doucet
Roger T. Gray
Dr. Leo Kristjanson
Ervin Ross Lee
Robert C. Lee (P)
Roger Lundquist
Clint Manning
G. Lloyd Matheson

Donald H. McTaggart
Harry W. Moffatt
Clifford M. Thompson
Arthur W. Young (P)

1988

Robert H. Cowan
Emmett Johnson (P)
Norman R. Lowe
Albert Mennie
Frank M. Mulatz
Harrison I. Sherwin
Leslie R. Tandler
Edward K. Turner
Archibald J. Wells (P)

1987

Norman Baumung
Carl Christenson
Howard Haug
Bill Kelly
Ted Lingren
Avery Sahl
Elmer Sjolie
Keith Sproule
George Tarr
Jim Wright

1986

Lorne Dietrick
Wilfred Ellert (P)
Stan Ferguson
Lloyd Gavelin
Dr. Orville Hjertaas
Ralph Hjertaas
Victor Keep
Alvin Latrace
Ralph Miner
Jack Trevena

1985

Jacob Bassendowske
Arthur Fuller
Grover Heavin
Norma Lee
Bill Marshall
John McDermott (P)
William McLeod (P)
Ernest Muggli
Violet & Clarence Pyett
Cortland Shaner (P)

1984

Everett Baker (P)
Andrew Barbarin

M. Leland Brown
E. A. (Ted) Boden
Thomas W. Cator (P)
Jacob (Jake) Fehr
Paul Kernaleguen
Norbert Koch
Walter Nelson
Harold A. (Buck) Wagner

1983

Henry Andres
Karl Bartelt
Thomas Bobier (P)
Verner Freed
Thomas Hextall
Dr. William Howell
Paul Riviere (P)
James Scrimbit
Clifford Smith (P)
James West

1982

Collin Belt (P)
J. Edmond H. Bilodeau (P)
Tobaldo H. Bourassa (P)
George Burden (P)
Arthur Doucet (P)
Victor Easton
John Hubbard
Bjorn (Barney) Josephson
Donald Lockwood
Breen Melvin
Walter Mills
Dan Westman

1981

David Alexander Cunningham
Evald J. Hansen (P)
Lorayne Janeson
Wilfred H. MacLeod
Dr. Wilson Parker
Dr. George W. Robertson (P)
Cecil (Smokey) A. Robson
Donald G. Tullis
Dr. George Urwin (P)
Dr. Clifford Whiting

1980

Dr. B. N. Arneson
Dr. Harry Fowler (P)
Bjorn Johnson (P)
Dr. Lewis Lloyd
E. A. Partridge (P)
A. F. Sproule (P)