



CO-OP MERIT AWARD RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED

The Saskatchewan Co-operative Association (SCA) has announced the eight recipients of the 2020 and 2021 Saskatchewan Co-operative Merit Awards.

Both 2020 and 2021 Merit Awards will be presented during an Awards dinner and ceremony on October 18th in Regina. Details on the Awards and the ceremony are at <https://sask.coop/events/co-op-merit-awards>. Biographies and headshots are available by emailing SCA executive director, Victoria Morris, victoria.morris@sask.coop.

CO-OPERATIVE YOUTH LEADER

2020

WES FILSON

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 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.



2021

JOSH NOBLE

Josh Noble takes innovative approaches to promoting the co-operative model. In 2018, Josh joined Canada's Emerging Co-operators (CEC), a management committee of Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada. When he was elected chair he developed the role into a position of mentorship to support the development of new CEC leaders. Josh was elected to the board of Lloydminster & District Co-op in the midst of the global health crisis, and has helped the organization rediscover its co-op roots and the co-operative values



KIM SCHMIDT

Kim Schmidt's roots in Shaunavon informed her values and her appreciation of co-operatives and credit unions. 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 leader right away, staffing eleven camps between 2005-2019. Kim has also had a long-time volunteer relationship with Kin Canada.



LIFETIME CO-OPERATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

2020

STUART DYRLAND

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.



BRAD SCHULTZ

From a Co-op Camp staffer, to credit union mentor in Africa, to Chair of the FCL board, Brad Schultz has gathered a lifetime of co-operative experiences. Brad began his credit union career as a teller and progressed to manager of retail services. In 2011 and again in 2012 he travelled to Africa for what he describes as a series of life-changing mentorship experiences. In 2014 he joined the board of Federated Co-operatives Limited and in 2018 was elected president and board chair.



2021

MILT KERPAN

Milton Kerpan had a passionate quest to improve member service. He was a guardian and promoter of co-operative values. Milt joined the board of directors of Advantage Credit Union in 2001. After the merger of Affinity, Advantage and Spectra credit unions in 2013, he became a member of the Affinity board of directors. He sat on the board of directors for The Co-operators Group Limited for three years and was a member of the SaskCentral board of directors for a decade. Sadly, Milt passed away in December 2020.



KEITH NIXON

If you wanted something done in the Saskatchewan credit union system, chances are you would have called upon Keith Nixon. 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. The recently retired CEO of SaskCentral has been a strong influence in the Saskatchewan and Canadian credit union systems for more than four decades. He has had major roles in the development of Saskatchewan’s credit union Act, the formation of Concentra Bank and the creation of the Canadian Credit Union Association.



LORI SANDERS

Lori Sanders was elected to the board of Sherwood Co-operative Association in 2001. Soon elected president, Lori led the board and the co-op through intelligent and sustainable growth. The co-op became a community leader in serving its members through its locations, products, and with its employees’ commitment to exceptional member service. She retired from the board in 2021, leaving the organization with a culture that has the co-operative principles as its core, and a commitment to the difference co-ops can and do make to their local communities.

