



# Cooperative Fund of New England

Financing Cooperatives since 1975 [www.coopfund.coop](http://www.coopfund.coop)

## CFNE News

Summer 2017

Volume 11, Issue 2

### What Is a Cooperative?

A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.

### Values

Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity.

### Our Mission

We work for economic, social, and racial justice by advancing community-based, cooperative, and democratically owned or managed enterprises with a preference to assisting cooperatives in low-income communities by:

- providing financial products at reasonable rates
- developing business skills
- offering an investment opportunity that promotes socially conscious enterprise

Visit us on line at [www.coopfund.coop](http://www.coopfund.coop) to learn about our borrowers; print out our loan application; download our prospectus; and find links to our borrowers, other community development organizations, socially responsible investing sites, and cooperative business assistance sites.

## Loans Approved and Funded

In the first four months of 2017 the Cooperative Fund made 19 loans which totaled over \$1.7 million and at this writing we have over \$2 million in loans approved and awaiting funding.

Since its inception, CFNE has now disbursed over \$47 million in 861 loans. We continue to grow and thrive.

Year to date 2017 loans were made to a variety of borrowers including start-ups and established co-ops, new borrowers and seasoned repeat borrowers.

We now have our loan inquiry and application process on line. Our flexible strategic loan products are meant to support our borrowers and help them access the funds and technical assistance they need.

Worker cooperatives funded include **Boston TechCollective**, a worker cooperative computer support company in Somerville, MA; **CERO**, a worker-owned composting cooperative in Dorchester, MA; **A Yard and A Half**, a landscaping company in Waltham, MA; **WarrenStreet Architects** in Concord, NH; and **Sol Chariots**, a pedicab company in Providence, RI.

Community nonprofits recently funded include **Nonotuck Community School**, a parent cooperative in Florence, MA, for the purchase of their building; **Nuestras Raices**, in Holyoke, MA, for the purchase of a bus that is being retrofitted with refrigeration equipment and will be used as a mobile farmers' market; and **Vermont Association for Training and Development**, in St. Albans,

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Nonotuck students in Florence, MA



Midcoast Fishermen's Co-op crab processing in Port Clyde, ME



North Avenue Housing Co-op residents in Burlington, VT

## Conferences and Outreach

There have been so many national and regional cooperative conferences (some even at the same time) that CFNE staff members have to divide and conquer. Maggie Cohn attended the "Up and Coming Conference" in Milwaukee, WI, for start-up food cooperatives. Betsy Black went to the NOFA Conference and the CCMA (Consumer Co-op Managers Association) in Minneapolis with Rebecca and Dorian Gregory. Maggie and Deborah Hawkins attended the ECWD (Eastern Conference for Workplace Democracy) in New York City. Micha Josephy



Maggie attended the Food Cooperative Initiative's recent Up and Coming conference in Milwaukee, WI

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**A reunion of Cooperative Hall of Fame members in Washington, DC**

Don't you think that sometimes cooperatives are the best kept secret? Some of us are trying to change that. I had the opportunity to attend a presentation on the Cooperatives for a Better World project at this year's Cooperative Issues Forum that preceded the Cooperative Hall of Fame (HOF) at the National Press Club. I also had the privilege to attend a meeting of past HOF honorees. Some of us are pictured above. We hope to encourage cooperative promotion, perhaps forming a Hall of Fame "SCORE" (business assistance team) and/or speakers bureau offering advice, strategy and connections for cross-sector outreach. It sounds like a great way to grow and assist new and growing cooperatives. I am excited by the prospect.

At the same time the current work at CFNE is voluminous and dynamic. The number of presentation opportunities at conferences is vast and varied. The size of the Fund keeps climbing. We are up to almost \$26 million in total assets! Money is flowing in and out and in again. Demand remains strong for our services. The staff is really busy jumping and hopping to keep up with it. It's a fun dance. Thanks for joining in.

Your feedback is welcome and your support is appreciated!

— Rebecca Dunn

*P.S. The requested latest grand baby shot follows:*



**People at CFNE**

We welcome Leah Fury to the Cooperative Fund team as a Loan and Outreach Officer in northern Vermont and New York state. Leah will assist Betsy Black by visiting borrowers, attending conferences, and providing assistance to potential borrowers. After graduating from the University of Washington in 2012, Leah began diving into alternative finance as a collective member of Regenerative Finance and member leader with Resource Generation, and then working in microfinance at a CDFI in Vermont for two years. Leah says, "I am so excited to have joined the Co-op Fund's passionate and experienced team to expand my understanding of the cooperative economy and work together towards a future of social and racial justice through supporting economically resilient and equitable communities."



**Leah Fury**



**Rebekah Hanlon**

**Board News**

The CFNE board met in Hadley, MA, in March, Portland, ME, in June and will meet in New Hampshire in October. Meetings include committee and staff reports and a continued development of our next strategic plan. We are well on target for meeting the production goals of the current plan that ends in 2017.

Rebekah Hanlon has just announced that she will be stepping off the CFNE board. New replacement board candidates are being considered. We are sorry to report that Mary Hoyer finished her term on the CFNE Board with our June meeting. After a 25 year association with CFNE as a board member, as a loan outreach officer, and then again as a board member, Mary's skills, input, meeting facilitation, and generous loyal participation will be sorely missed. It has been a privilege to have her associated with the Fund.



**Mary Hoyer**

**2016 Annual Report available**

The Cooperative Fund's 2016 annual report is now available. It was printed by Red Sun Press, a worker co-op and CFNE borrower. Its theme is "Building Bridges in a Cooperative Economy". It highlights how CFNE has served and connected investors, borrowers, technical assistance providers and other lenders. Through its many relationships CFNE has built bridges and strengthened our cooperative economy and community.



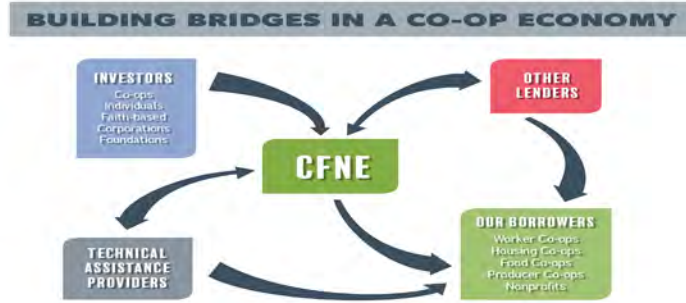
You can get an electronic version from our website [www.coopfund.coop](http://www.coopfund.coop). Let us know if you need extra hard copies to pass on. We also encourage everyone to use Red Sun Press for your own printing needs.

**Cooperative Fund Investors and Grantors**

Thanks to new investors Kresge Foundation, the Maine Community Foundation, and the Maine Heritage Trust. We particularly appreciate that the Kresge and Community Foundation social investment loans are each accompanied by a grant. Jen Southard from the Maine Community Foundation said "we are glad to support your work here in Maine." Kresge Foundation is lending \$1 million to the Cooperative Fund of New England to support the development of resident/member-owned and managed cooperative housing, and healthy food retail projects in cities in Southern New England. We are particularly honored because Kresge had more than 130 applicants and CFNE is one of only 10 recipients nationwide. "We wanted to test the demand for a standardized product of patient capital for CDFIs," said Joe Evans, the foundation's portfolio manager, Social Investment Practice, "and to demonstrate to other investors an efficient approach to meeting the capital needs of low-income communities." Any grants or donations received can be used as match money for our pending US Treasury CDFI (Community Development Finance Institution) Fund application.

## Cooperation Building Bridges

Our work promoting cooperation includes working with other lenders to support cooperatives. We are participating in loans with banks and Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI's), bringing our expertise as an added value in lending to a variety of new borrowers. Shared Capital Cooperative, our sister CDFI in the midwest shared two New York food co-op loans with us and the Genesis Fund, a CDFI in Maine, shared a loan to a manufactured housing co-op. CEI in Maine is working with CFNE as both a co-lender, lead lender, and a participant lender to Island Employee Cooperative and Wellspring Greenhouse, and (soon) Berkshire Food Co-op. We have also worked with NCB on loans in New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine. By working with other lenders we are able to leverage funds, cooperate, and help other lenders understand how cooperatives are a successful economic development vehicle and a good place to lend funds.



## Advocacy for Co-ops in New England

With five bills in the Massachusetts state house focused both on housing co-ops and worker co-ops, bills in the Maine state legislature to support co-op conversions, Rhode Island working to pass its first worker co-op statute, and the City of Boston establishing a Worker Co-op Initiative, we are seeing more co-op policy movement in New England than we have in years. While some of the worker co-op bills in Massachusetts will need some changes to gain widespread support, we are excited to see momentum building to align public policy with cooperative development. CFNE personnel are more involved in many levels promoting, testifying, and contributing to such advocacy when appropriate.



Above: Start-up co-op representatives at NFCA annual meeting. Below: CFNE staff members at CCMA in Minneapolis at the Tour de Co-op and at NFCA in Greenfield, MA

## Conferences and Outreach

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presented at the NCRC (National Community Reinvestment Coalition) conference with Stacey Cordeiro from BCCO (Boston Center for Community Ownership) and Andrew Stachiw from TESA (Toolbox for Education and Social Action). Leah Fury attended the Vermont Employee Ownership Conference and the Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility conference.

Employee ownership may be finally arising as a real strategy for achieving broad based economic prosperity. Cooperative Fund of New England is very favorably mentioned in a newly released report by Marjorie Kelly and the Democracy Collaborative about impact investor opportunities in employee ownership. The study reports that CFNE is one of only 6 CDFIs out of 800 focused on lending to cooperatives. The study may help the growing field of impact investing to fully recognize the key opportunity offered by employee ownership as a means and strategy for tackling economic inequality.



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### STAFF

Rebecca Dunn  
*Executive Director*  
[rdunn@coopfund.coop](mailto:rdunn@coopfund.coop)

Betsy Black  
*Northwestern New England  
Loan and Outreach Officer*  
[betsy@coopfund.coop](mailto:betsy@coopfund.coop)

Maggie Cohn  
*Southeastern New England  
Loan and Outreach Officer*  
[maggie@coopfund.coop](mailto:maggie@coopfund.coop)

Leah Fury  
*Northern New England  
Loan and Outreach Officer*  
[leah@coopfund.coop](mailto:leah@coopfund.coop)

Dorian Gregory  
*Southwestern New England  
Loan and Outreach Officer*  
[dorian@coopfund.coop](mailto:dorian@coopfund.coop)

Deborah Hawkins  
*Northeastern New England  
Loan and Outreach Officer*  
[deborah@coopfund.coop](mailto:deborah@coopfund.coop)

Micha Josephy  
*Program Manager*  
[micha@coopfund.coop](mailto:micha@coopfund.coop)

Beverly Perry  
*Office Assistant*  
[beverly@coopfund.coop](mailto:beverly@coopfund.coop)

To be added to our mailing list, invest in, or borrow from CFNE, email: [cfne@coopfund.coop](mailto:cfne@coopfund.coop).

And, don't forget to check us out on Facebook and Twitter.

The Cooperative Fund of New England (CFNE) was founded in 1975 by co-op activists and social investors to provide financial assistance to food cooperatives. Since then, the organization has expanded its focus, offering development loans and technical assistance to a wide range of co-ops and nonprofit groups that share CFNE's vision of equality, justice, and social responsibility.

As a "virtual" geographically dispersed organization, CFNE serves the New England region through an administrative office in North Carolina and five outreach offices in New England.

Cooperative Fund of New England is a nonprofit community loan fund. CFNE provides loans and technical assistance to cooperatives and nonprofit community-based organizations. CFNE is a U.S. Treasury certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI).



# Cooperative Fund of New England

Celebrating 40 years of financing co-ops [www.coopfund.coop](http://www.coopfund.coop)

Administrative office address:  
5533 Peden Point Road  
Wilmington, NC 28409

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## Loans Approved and Funded CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

VT, for working capital. Seasonal working capital was made available to distribution/marketing cooperatives including **Midcoast Fisherman's Co-op** in Port Clyde, ME and **Crown O'Maine** in North Vassalboro, ME.

We lent to manufacturing housing co-ops including **Medomak Mobile Home Co-op** in Waldeboro, ME, in participation with the Genesis Fund for property purchase and **North Avenue Cooperative** in Burlington, VT, to acquire two homes.

Loans were made to retail food cooperatives including **Fare Share Food Cooperative** in Norway, ME; **Wolfeboro Community Food Cooperative**, a start-up in Wolfeboro, NH; and **Springfield Food Cooperative** in Springfield, VT.

We were very excited to finally fund **Boston Community Cooperative's** much delayed second property purchase for The Canopy Housing Co-op. After losing an opportunity on a property intended as its second project, the co-op members identified another. Then, unfortunately as the closing neared in 2016 the



**Canopy Housing Co-op resident in Boston, MA**

owner/seller died the day before the closing. The patience and fortitude of BCC members finally paid off when the co-op purchased the property in April. Our loan was eventually funded for purchase and renovation of a housing co-op for members with children and families.

At this writing the other loans awaiting funding include the following borrowers:



**Ribbon Cutting at the Wolfeboro Food Co-op in Wolfeboro, NH**

**Berkshire Co-op Market** in Great Barrington, MA; **Ewing Controls**, an engineering worker co-op conversion in Greenfield, MA; **Woodbelly Pizza**, a worker cooperative in Montpelier, VT; **Morrisville Food Co-op** in Morrisville, VT; **Firehouse Housing Co-op** in Worcester, MA; and **Democracy Brewing**, a start-up worker cooperative in Boston, MA.