



For Immediate Release

2015 Co-op Spirit Award recipients represent many parts of Ontario

Guelph, ON October 23, 2015. Co-op leaders are in every corner of Ontario. This is especially evident in 2015 as the Co-operative Spirit Awards recognize contributions in northwestern, northeastern and southern Ontario at the Co-op Conference and Celebration at Milton's Teatro Conference and Event Centre on Oct. 28.

TeamWerks Co-operative of Thunder Bay receives recognition in the category of co-operative engagement. The co-op is owned by survivors of mental illnesses, and provides them employment that both provides social supports and a sense of belonging and accomplishment.

Peggy Baillie of Eat Local Sudbury Co-operative Inc. receives her award for co-op development. She is a founder of the Ontario-wide Local Organic Food Co-ops (LOFC) Network that has supported the growth and strengthening of Ontario's more than 100 sustainable local food and farm co-operatives.

London's **Ian Shewan**, a partner of Leners LLP, is the recipient of the award for advocacy and government relations. Shewan has been a member of legislative-review working groups of the Ontario Co-operative Association and chair of its Regulatory Affairs Committee. He is thanked for using his extensive legal experience to advocate for policy and legislative changes that enable a sustainable, diverse, well-governed and growing co-op movement in Ontario.

Ontario's largest dairy co-operative captures the award for co-operative education. **Gay Lea Foods Co-operative Ltd.** has a long tradition of educating its members. It recently launched development programs for delegates, directors and employees: *Leadership in Governance: by farmers for farmers* and *Lighthouse*.

The 16th annual Co-operative Spirit Award ceremony will be conducted over a special luncheon. "This year's award recipients are impressive and join an equally impressive alumni of dedicated co-operators," says Audrey Aczel, Ontario Co-operative Association communications and event manager.

Principle Six, or "Co-operation among Co-operatives" is the key theme of this year's conference. The event, organized and hosted by the Ontario Co-operative Association, brings together leaders, stakeholders, staff and members from new, emerging and established co-ops for a full day of learning, networking and celebration. Students, interns, and others new to the co-op sector and/or considering starting a co-op also find value in this conference. For more information, visit: www.ontario.coop

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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The Ontario Co-operative Association believes that co-operatives build a better world. We are the trade association and capacity-building organization that develops, engages, educates and advocates for Ontario's 1,300 co-operative businesses. On Co-op is an information and resources network with a mission to *lead, cultivate and connect co-operatives*. Visit www.ontario.coop. facebook.com/oncoop. twitter.com/ontariocoops.



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