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Arise Architects Co-operative partners/member-owners, Yvonne Ip, Danielle Gignac and David McAuley, at the celebratory event on October 24, 2019 in Guelph ON.

LOCAL FIRM PIONEERS CO-OPERATIVE ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE IN ONTARIO

GUELPH, ON – October 31, 2019 – October 24 marked a milestone in the history of Arise Architects Co-operative - formerly known as J. David McAuley Architect Inc. Its recent transition to a worker co-operative business has established the forty-one year-old firm (the oldest architectural firm in the City of Guelph) as a pioneer in co-operative architectural practice in Ontario.

The decision to evolve into a co-operative business about two years ago, seemed to be a natural fit, notes Danielle Gignac, one of the firm’s partners/worker-owners: “In many ways, our methods have been co-operative for some time, with our commitment to working together to improve our communities, and our collaborative approach to design.”

Adds Yvonne Ip, another Arise partner/member-owner who has a long personal history of involvement in co-operatives: “Co-operatives have a triple bottom line that includes social, environmental and financial returns. These are the returns we aim for both as a business and in the architecture we practice. Becoming Arise Architects Co-operative was a no-brainer.”

The firm's strong environmental ethic and a passion for building sustainable communities are very much aligned with co-operative business values, making it the perfect candidate for a traditional business to co-operative business succession.

As a member-owned, worker co-operative – i.e., membership is voluntary for and open to employees who have democratic control of and participation in the operations and finances of the co-operative – the transition signifies more than just a simple name change. It marks an intentional transfer of ownership which organizes the employees in business practice and in professional practice, within a democratic and co-operative framework.

The transition also means creating an equitable, vibrant workplace that draws on the [co-operative principles](#), and considers itself responsible to its member-owners and to its community.

And that community is wide. Known for their use of both traditional and new and innovative materials and long-lasting, durable construction, David McAuley, partner/member-owner has designed churches in over 200 municipalities across Ontario, as well as other projects from Cornwall to Kenora, Windsor to Rock Falls.

As for the past success of the firm, David McAuley attributes it to a collaborative approach, which he also envisions will propel them through the transition and well into the future. Comparing the workplace shift to a baton relay, he says: "You need to work together to make a smooth transition."

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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ABOUT THE ONTARIO CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION (OCA): Co-operatives are a different kind of business model that are driven by people, planet and profit. OCA supports, develops, educates and advocates for Ontario's 1,500+ co-operative businesses. We exist to strengthen and unite the co-operative movement and we believe that co-operatives are the solution to creating stronger communities, which help to build a better world. Visit us at <http://www.ontario.coop> for more information.

ABOUT ARISE ARCHITECTS CO-OPERATIVE: Arise creates architecture that elevates community through sustainable, visionary design. They are driven by the conviction that great communities arise out of a collective sense of belonging and are places where people care about one another and work together to reach their shared goals. Arise is Canada's first-ever architectural co-operative. Visit them at <https://arisearchitects.com/> for more information.