

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Joel Lalonde elected Board Chair of the Ontario Co-operative Association

GUELPH ON, OCTOBER 31, 2018 – Board member and Past Treasurer, Joel Lalonde, representing Central 1 Credit Union, has been appointed Board Chair of the Ontario Co-operative Association (OCA).

Lalonde takes over the role from predecessor Janice Johnson of GROWMARK, Inc., who was Chair for the past two years.

“I am excited to take on this role at such a dynamic time in the organization as we continue to grow our mandate and the movement in Ontario. I am also looking forward to bringing more of my credit union colleagues to the membership table and continuing to develop a solid base of active, co-operative members at OCA,” says Lalonde.

One of Lalonde’s first initiative’s as Chair is to invite all credit union CEOs from across the province to join OCA’s membership. In recent months, he has been working with the OCA staff and directors at Central 1 to open up the membership to credit unions, for the first time since OCA’s inception in 2002.

Adds Lalonde: “We are stronger as a movement when we all work together to support and promote our co-operative values at a time when values in business are needed most.”

OCA's Executive Director Erin Morgan says: “Our members are organizations that believe in the co-operative principles and who are invested in the future of the movement. With their commitment, we are able to deliver co-operative education, advocacy and research, as well as create networks, tools and resources that support the success and sustainability of all Ontario co-operatives. We believe that financial co-operatives have a lot to contribute and see them as part of the greater movement.”

OCA’s membership is currently constituted of over seventy organizations and individuals that represent diverse business sectors including: agriculture, finance, insurance, energy, childcare, housing, transportation, worker, consumer and social co-operatives, co-operative associations and federations, as well as sector stakeholders and partners. Through its membership, they represent approximately 85% of English-speaking co-operatives in Ontario.

For more information on joining OCA, contact Member Relations Manager Jennifer Ross at 519.763.8271 x. 22 or at jross@ontario.coop.

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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.

Over sixty members attended OCA's Annual General Meeting on October 18, at the Springfield Golf and Country Club in Guelph ON, where the new Board, representing a diversity of co-operative business sectors, was elected by the membership:

Joel Lalonde (Chair), Central 1 Credit Union; Michelle Vieira (Vice-Chair), Ag Energy Co-operative; Crystal McNerney, CHF Canada Ontario Region (Secretary); Janice Johnson, GROWMARK, Inc.; Maureen Gillespie, The Co-operators; Hugh Nelson, Y's Owl MacLure Co-operative Centre; Sally Miller, Canadian Worker Co-op Federation; Jennifer Woodhouse, Gay Lea Foods Co-operative; and Laura Toombs (Youth Director), Ag Energy Co-operative.

To learn more, visit ontario.coop. facebook.com/ONcooperatives. twitter.com/ONcooperatives, or contact Erin Morgan, Executive Director at 519.763.8271 x 30 or at emorgan@ontario.coop.