

Candidate Statement: Lance Rantala

After serving on the NCBA CLUSA Board of Directors during the past three years, I feel even more optimistic about the growth potential for cooperative businesses and membership. As our country continues on its road to recovery from the Great Recession, the alarming imbalance between corporate profits and stock prices versus employment and wage growth fortifies my hopeful viewpoint regarding a radical change of sentiment among consumers and the snowballing expansion of the cooperative business model.

After spending more than half of my professional life employed by purchasing cooperatives—primarily in the building materials sector—my passion for cooperatives has grown. So much so that I recently volunteered to serve on a startup food cooperative's board in my hometown called the Chicago Market. It has been very rewarding to see how a local community can come together in pursuit of a common goal. I feel extremely fortunate to have found a career in this extraordinary cooperative industry.

I am forever grateful for the friendships I have developed and knowledge imparted by my peers during the last 14 NCBA CLUSA National Purchasing Cooperatives Conferences. The success of BLUE HAWK—a purchasing cooperative serving independent HVACR wholesalers—can be largely attributed to my involvement with NCBA CLUSA.

Hence, similar to past and present board members, I would like to give back to the cooperative community by continuing to volunteer my time and commitment to NCBA CLUSA.

I will remain a vocal advocate for the ideal of “co-ops supporting co-ops” and hope all cooperative members will adopt this steadfast principle. I believe my collaborative style will continue to be an asset to the board as we explore ways to maximize our collective patronage to fellow cooperatives, which will strengthen our local communities.