**Candidate Statement - Kim Garmany**

Cooperatives have been at the center of my world for the past 20 years. In 2001, I began relationship with College Houses as an incoming freshman at the University of Texas that was in desperate need of affordable housing. During my four-year membership at the 21st St. Co-op, I developed my leadership abilities by organizing social events, serving as a house meeting chairperson, and helping new members get settled as the Membership Coordinator.  The skills and experiences that came from my time as a student co-oper have shaped the person I am today.

In my professional life, I’ve held positions in organizations that help people overcome barriers to a prosperous life. I’ve provided quality, affordable childcare to those in need, been a mentor to at risk youth, helped support a worker cooperative development center, and currently work to support students as they gain necessary life and leadership skills through governing and operating their cooperative homes.

The potential impact that NCBA CLUSA has as the national association for all US cooperatives is something that I have admired since participating in NASCO’s Emerging Leaders Program many years ago. As I near the end of my second term on the Board, I am so proud of the work that we have accomplished together on the NCBA Board of Directors in support of an inclusive economy.  I am excited to be considered for another term to continue the work of building a strong national network of cooperation among cooperatives while continuing to engage with and build upon the relationships that our organization fosters internationally.