

Erbin Crowell

CANDIDATE STATEMENT

It has been an honor to serve on the board of NCBA CLUSA, and a privilege to work with fellow directors and our committed staff as we have worked to achieve our mission. I feel particularly fortunate to have served my term as chair as we have navigated the challenges of the pandemic, represented our co-ops before policymakers, and engaged our movement in a dialog on building greater racial and economic justice both here at home and at the international level. I would welcome the opportunity to continue to serve on the board as we continue to advance our vision for a more inclusive, resilient and sustainable economy and society through co-operation.

NCBA CLUSA's strength lies in our ability to bring together co-ops and mutuals from across sectors, industries, and communities to address the challenges and opportunities before us. I began my career in a worker co-op where I first saw the potential of collaboration among worker, producer, grocery, and financial co-operatives in both domestic and international development. This experience convinced me of the power of our model as a better way of doing business, leading me to pursue a Master of Management: Co-operatives & Credit Unions from Saint Mary's University in Nova Scotia on a scholarship from National Cooperative Bank (NCB). My subsequent work in co-operative development eventually led me to my current position as Executive Director of the Neighboring Food Co-op Association, a co-operative of food co-ops dedicated to supporting collaboration, innovation and the shared success of our members.

I believe that the ability of our movement to fulfill its potential lies in being able to reach people from all walks of life, to be relevant to all aspects of their lives, and to help them see a better future through co-operation. This means building a *cross sector* movement that can offer a viable alternative to business as usual across the economy. It is in the space between our co-ops and the opportunities we have for greater collaboration within and across industries where we can see the possibility of a more inclusive economy, grounded in our shared Co-operative Identity — the values, principles, and model that set us apart.

As a director, I have focused on working collaboratively with my colleagues and our staff to clarify our vision, stay focused on our mission, and leverage our shared strength for shared impact and success. It has been my pleasure to serve our association, including chairing the task force that developed our inclusive economy vision, working with my colleagues and our CEO on the executive committee, and completing my term as chair the board last year as we worked to serve our members and the wider movement at a critical time. Thanks to our members, our dedicated board, and our

committed staff, NCBA CLUSA has made vital progress over the past few years, and I believe that we are well positioned for the future. It would be an honor to serve you on the Board of Directors as we move forward, together.