

CASC

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR
STUDIES IN CO-OPERATION

ACÉC

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE POUR
LES ÉTUDES SUR LA COOPERATION

CASC NEWS

Welcome to the spring 2010 edition of the CASC newsletter!
This edition includes an update from the CASC board,
information on the CASC conference, and news from our members.

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

Board Elections ♦ Four directors currently on the CASC board have terms expiring at the 2010 AGM: Tanya Gracie, Luc Thériault, Robin Puga, and Catherine Leviten-Reid. Three of these individuals are interested in letting their names stand for a second term, but any CASC member in good standing can run for the board. If you can't make our AGM but wish to run for the board, please contact us. We will ask you for a brief biography to circulate at the AGM. We will also ask you to both complete the membership form for 2010/11 and pay next year's membership fee. If any of you is interested in running for the board but want more information on the time commitment you will have to make as a director, please email Luc Thériault at luct@unb.ca.

Member Survey ♦ This spring, we sent an electronic survey to our members in order to gauge the value of the services we provide and to get feedback on future directions. Thanks to all of you who participated; we are happy to report that 50 percent of our members responded. Highlights from the survey include:

- a high level of satisfaction regarding current CASC services, such as the newsletter, workshops, the banquet, and keynote speakers at

the annual congress; we need to work on improving the quality and accessibility of the CASC website

- suggestions to ensure greater attendance at future conferences: further integrating junior researchers and students into the workshops and increasing the interaction with colleagues internationally and from Québec
- suggestions for other forms of communication such as a more interactive website that would allow for social networking (either through the site or via a link to another site) and viewing video; there was also a suggestion to publish selected proceedings and to consider a mentorship opportunity at Congress between senior and junior CASC members
- an indication from 90 percent of respondents that CASC and ANSER should remain distinct associations but should continue to work closely together; respondents acknowledged that there are overlapping memberships, but people felt strongly that CASC's co-operative focus is valuable and should remain a distinct area of study
- suggestions that CASC should explore developing and/or strengthening partnerships with CIRIEC Canada, CIRIEC Europe, the ICA research committee, the Association of Coop-

erative Educators, and the Canadian Co-operative Association

- strong feelings about the value of the annual congress, the support of young scholars, and networking opportunities among researchers and between researchers and practitioners
- a clear understanding of the amount of work being proposed for volunteers and an awareness that the types and variety of future CASC services/activities will be dependent upon resources and interest; building international relationships and partnerships is seen as a key activity for the future, along with supporting and developing young scholars and continually working to attract new members

Participants included twenty-four who identified as being affiliated with academia, two with government, five with a community agency, and eight with “other,” which ranged from member associations to independent consultants. Of those who identified with academia, three were students and the rest were faculty/staff. There was great diversity in the length of time that respondents have been involved with CASC, ranging from one to three years, through to ten to twelve years, and some who have been involved for twenty-five to thirty years.

The CASC board would like to thank Tanya Gracie for all her hard work administering the on-line survey, reporting to the board on results, and writing the summary for our newsletter. Survey results will be presented at our AGM in June.

CASC Award of Merit ♦ The CASC board would like to invite you to submit nominations for the 2010 CASC Award of Merit. The award is to recognize an individual’s outstanding leadership and contributions to the field of co-operative studies, their mentorship of students and others in understanding the intricate workings of co-operatives, and to acknowledge their ongoing support of CASC.

CASC recognizes that we have many leaders in our midst who have contributed in a variety of ways to raising the profile of co-operatives and co-operative studies through their research on the co-op model. The theme of this year’s conference — Community Building through Co-operative Research — recognizes the valuable contribution research plays in supporting the healthy growth of the co-op sector and the important relationship between theory and practice. The award is one way to recognize the contribution researchers make to addressing the real life challenges co-operators face, documenting insights, and chronicling the vibrant growth of the movement.

Past winners of the award include Alain Roy, Jack Quarter, Ian MacPherson, Lou Hammond Ketilson, and Leslie Brown.

The deadline for nominations is 23 April 2010. Please email Joy Emmanuel at joye@telus.net, providing the individual’s name and a short statement explaining your reasons for the nomination. The award will be presented at the CASC conference in June.

CASC Scholarships ♦ Last year, the CASC board offered scholarship winners a one-year membership to our association and complimentary registration to the 2010 CASC conference. We are happy to announce that all four scholarship winners will be presenting at our conference this year in Montréal!

Constitutional Amendments ♦ Last year, we proposed that there should be a permanent seat on the CASC board for a representative of the institution housing the CASC secretariat. This director would also serve as the secretary/treasurer. After debating and tabling this amendment at last year’s AGM, we would now like to propose the following: if there is no one from the institution housing the CASC secretariat on the board of directors of the association, a representative from this institution would have an ex

officio position. The individual, as either a board member or ex officio member, would serve as the secretary/treasurer. Thus, we are proposing that section 5.1 be modified to read as follows: “There are seven positions on the CASC board. All are elected by the CASC membership. If no individuals from the institution housing the CASC secretariat are elected to the board in any given year, then this institution will assign a representative who will hold an ex officio position. The individual representing the institution housing the secretariat will serve as secretary/treasurer.”

The second amendment concerns the institutional membership category. Although institutions can become members of CASC, our constitution doesn't specify the maximum number of individuals from within these institutions who can join. We are thus proposing to add the following to section 3.5: “This membership category consists of a maximum of 3 individuals from one institution.” This amendment was proposed at last year's AGM, but was also tabled. The CASC board would like the membership to reconsider the amendment this year.

Documenting the History of CASC ♦ Jorge Sousa has provided the following update on the project: “We have sifted through all of the printed information available to us through the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives and have some interesting tid-bits to share with members. Now, the interviews have been a bit slower from the gate. Challenges have included trying to satisfy peoples' busy schedules, trying to contact former members, and the usual following-up. I am happy to report that interviews are continuing with more success and we hope to have at least ten by the end of June. Our goal has always been to initially contact folks who are not currently involved with CASC, but were active at one time. We are now moving towards the more active members. So, if you get a call or an email, please consider participating as your insights would be invaluable. In terms of presenting the findings to the membership, in consultation with Catherine

we have decided to share those next year. That means there will be more time for you to participate. So don't be surprised if Deb or I corner you at Congress and ask you to share some of your experiences as a CASC member. As always, participation is voluntary. If you have any questions/suggestions/comments, please contact me, Jorge Sousa, at sousa@ualberta.ca.”

CONFERENCE UPDATE

Abstracts ♦ We are pleased to report that we received forty submissions to the CASC conference. This compares with the forty-four we received last year.

Highlights ♦ Michel Lafleur of the Institut de recherche et d'éducation pour les coopératives et les mutuelles de l'Université de Sherbrooke will deliver the keynote address. Our wine and cheese will take place on the evening of 1 June, and will be held jointly with the Social Economy Student Network. On 3 June we will have joint sessions with ANSER and CIRIEC-Canada; the joint banquet with ANSER will take place that evening. Hélène Simard, president and executive director of the Conseil de la coopération et de la mutualité du Québec, will speak at the banquet. Our annual general meeting is a key event that takes place during the conference; it is tentatively scheduled for the afternoon of 3 June.

Funding ♦ We have limited funds available to help cover the costs of travel to the conference. We are continuing our tradition of providing financial support to students, although the amount available this year will be fairly modest. If you are a student presenting at our conference and require financial assistance, please email Catherine at catherine.levitenreid@usask.ca so that we can further discuss the level of support we may be able to provide.

Registration ♦ You can register for the conference by going to the Congress website at

www.congress2010.ca, which also provides information about accommodations and travelling to Montréal.

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

New SSHRC CURA Supports Co-operative Research ♦ In partnership with four Canadian universities, CCA has been awarded funding of \$1 million over five years to conduct research on the social, economic, and environmental impact of co-operatives.

SSHRC's CURA program supports the creation of alliances between community organizations and postsecondary institutions to foster innovative research, training, and the creation of new knowledge in areas of importance for Canada's social, cultural, or economic development. John Anderson, CCA's director of Government Affairs and Public Policy and the lead co-op sector researcher on the project, noted that Canada's co-operative sector plays a significant role in helping Canadian communities meet social, economic, and environmental challenges, but that the extent of that role has not been quantified. "Members of the co-operative sector know that these enterprises have far-reaching impacts for their members and communities they serve, yet the true value of co-operative enterprise is not well understood," he said. "The research that will be conducted through the CURA aims to examine the full impact of co-operatives on Canada's social, economic, and environmental fabric,

and demonstrate their value to Canadian communities."

Dr. Sonja Novkovic, professor of economics at Saint Mary's University and the lead academic researcher for the project, said the CURA's research team will create a network of national and regional research clusters that will develop measurement tools and study topics such as the nature of the "co-operative difference" as it relates to social responsibility and accountability, the impact of member and employee participation on a co-operative's performance, and the role of credit unions in building wealth. Additional topics will examine infrastructure support for co-operative development, how to replicate co-operative innovation, and co-operative responses to market failures.

Co-operative Socialism ♦ CASC member John Courtneidge has published several articles recently on co-operative socialism in the *CCPA Monitor*. He "... present[s] some ideas, materials, and suggestions that [he] hopes can help map a peaceful path out of the unsustainable, violent mess called capitalism." More specifically, Courtneidge defines capitalism, argues that we really need to be focused on the "co-stewardship" of resources, and provides a seven-point action plan to create a better world. This action plan includes the conversion of for-profit corporations to worker co-operatives and the development of community banks. Contact John at john@courtneidgeassociates.com for more information or for copies.



Luc Thériault, CASC board member, standing in front of the Rochdale Pioneers Museum in the summer of 2009

Thanks to Jocelyne Tougas
for translating the spring 2010 edition of the CASC newsletter!

◆ **Next Newsletter Deadline** ◆

The CASC newsletter is published twice a year.

The next deadline is 15 October 2010.

Submissions can be sent to casc.acec@usask.ca

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