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Denver development network gains international notice of cooperative educators

Denver, Aug. 2, 2017 — The Community Wealth Building Network of Metro Denver recently received the 2017 John Logue ACE Award from the Association of Cooperative Educators at Regis University in Denver.

The award honors the late Kent State University professor, often known as “Brother Logue,” who founded the Ohio Employee Ownership Center, which has helped more than 15,000 Ohioans become employee-owners. The Logue award celebrates those whose educational programs, technical assistance or research help create democratic work environments and economic sustainability for communities.

Award presenter Steve Dubb, author of *Conversations on Community Wealth Building*, commended the Denver network for its leadership, highlighting its successes in bringing community economic and social change agents together to create a more inclusive and equitable society in Metro Denver.

Two examples of Denver’s community wealth building in practice are Comal Heritage Food Incubator and Westwood Food Cooperative that assist Spanish-speaking communities and others to grow their own food and develop businesses using their produce and culinary traditions.

The wealth building network was founded in 2014, and in May, hired its first Fellow, Yessica Holguin, who has extensive experience in community development. Her fellowship is funded by The Denver Foundation and Gary Community Investments, two leading foundations in Metro Denver. Network members include the Colorado Enterprise Fund, Mile High Connects, Denver Office of Economic Development, Re:Vision, Rocky Mountain Employee Ownership Center, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, and a number of community activists.

ACE presented three other awards. Bill Stevenson, director of the Cooperative Development Center of Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, received the William J. Nelson Award for his contribution to the association’s Institute. The young cooperator trophy went to Nat Locke, a graduate student of Hamline University of Minnesota, who helped create educational programs including the Cooperative Empowerment curriculum. Luc Morin, executive director of Conseil de la coopération de l’Ontario, is 2017’s Outstanding Contribution to Cooperative Education and Training Award recipient for inspiring new Francophone cooperators in Ontario, Canada.

Created more than 60 years ago, this cooperative conference promotes education about cooperation across geographic, cultural and language divides. This year’s conference theme was Passing along Passion for Democratic Principles, and focuses on new methods of democratic education, youth education, and platform (Internet) cooperatives. Supporting the conference are CoBank (presenting sponsor), the CHS Foundation, The Denver Foundation, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, La Coop fédérée of Quebec, the Ralph K. Morris Foundation, GROWMARK, Inc., Vancity credit union of Canada, The Cooperative Foundation, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives and many more. Additional information is at www.ace.coop.

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