

# Learning from Each Other— Inspiring Change

## MOBILE LEARNING SESSIONS

Mobile Learning Sessions are a step above regular tours. They allow participants to meet the founders, members and customers of cooperative organizations, and experience, first-hand, what makes each special.

*Tour buses leave Murray D. Lincoln Campus Center at 10:00 a.m. and return by 5 p.m. Lunch is provided.*

### TOUR A

## Amherst, Holyoke, Hadley and Northampton, MA

“We all do the work, we all make the decisions, we all benefit from doing those things well,” boasts the website of **Collective Copies** (71 S. Pleasant St., Amherst) a worker-owned and union print shop. The co-op started as a result of a strike to improve working conditions in 1983. Workers joined the United Electrical Workers and formed their own digital print shop, now with two locations that include products from other worker co-ops. It returns 10 percent of its profits to the community and is committed to using sustainable processes and materials. Also dedicated to freedom of speech and continuing a proud printing house tradition, it created Levellers Press in 2009 that works with publishers and authors throughout the United States. Collective Copies is a founding member of the United States Federation of Worker Cooperatives.

It was a new mother who created the forerunner to worker co-op **Simple Diaper & Linen** (418 Dwight Street, Holyoke). Angie Gregory founded a diaper service in 2009 after the birth of her second child. In 2012 the business officially became a worker cooperative. In addition to providing organic cotton diapers and laundering services, the co-op offers compostable



*This map is a guide; routes taken may differ.*

diapers and materials, and washes and refreshes linens (sheets, blankets and more), being kind to the environment. The co-op is a member of the Valley Alliance of Worker Cooperatives.

**UMassFive College Federal Credit Union** (200 Westgate Center Dr., Hadley) was created nearly 50 years ago by employees of the University of Massachusetts System. In 1971, Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke and Smith Colleges were added to the field of membership. Now from locations in Hadley, Northampton, Mercy Medical Center (new), UMass Amherst and UMass Worcester, and shared branches and ATMs, the financial co-op serves more than 32,000 members. It offers members Co-op Points for participating in the

credit union, including its educational workshops such as Understanding Credit and Paying Down Debt. The credit union also maintains a financial literacy blog.

**Lunch:** Franklin Community Co-op will provide a catered lunch at the credit union. The cooperative started as a buying club to obtain naturally grown food. (Read more about Franklin Community Co-op in the description of Tour B)

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## TOUR A (continued)

**River Valley Market** (330 N King St., Northampton) is a consumer cooperative that specializes in local, organic food. It opened in 2008 and now has about 6,500 members and more than 130 employees. Members donate a percentage of their patronage dividend rebates to the co-op's low income

membership program, allowing new families to join. It is also part of the River Valley Co-op Community Fund to support cooperative development. Additionally, the cooperative serves as a mentor to other co-ops. River Valley Market is also known for member workshops held in its community room.

## TOUR B Greenfield, MA

Greenfield is designated as a Green Community and is home to about 18,000 people.

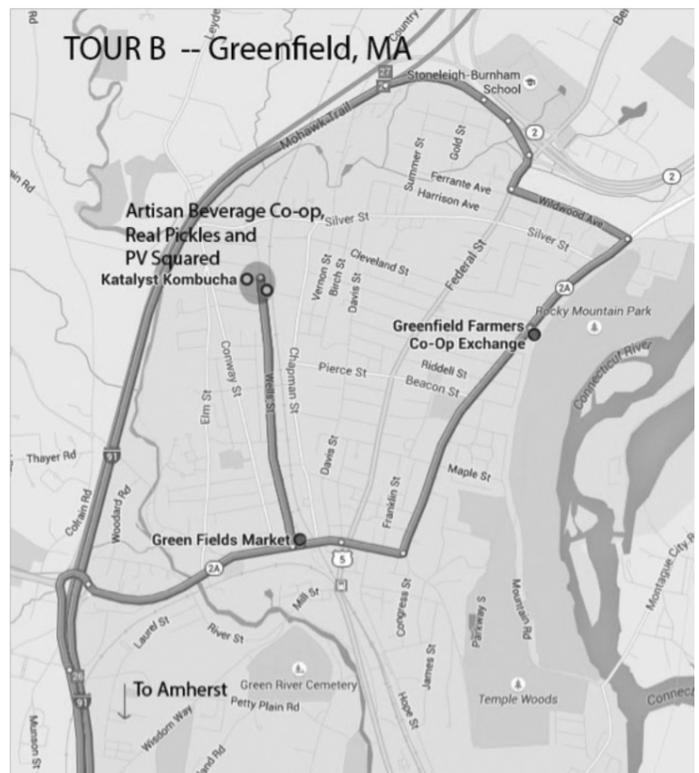
Your first location here will be **Greenfield Farmers Co-op Exchange** (269 High St.). Four farmers started to pool purchases of animal feed in 1918. Today, the cooperative is owned by more than 700 farm members and is the largest locally-owned farm supply venture in western Massachusetts.

Natural food store **Green Fields Market** is part of the Franklin Community Cooperative. Green Fields Market opened at 144 Main St. in 1993, and remains an anchor business in the municipality. Under the leadership of new General Manager John Williams, Franklin Community Co-op aims to achieve greater transparency and engagement with its 2,400 members. The co-op is on the boards of the Valley Co-operative Business Association and the Valley Alliance of Worker Co-operatives. Tourgoers will enjoy lunch here.

**Artisan Beverage Cooperative** (324 Wells St.) grew out of two companies producing teas, meads and ginger beer. Sharing missions to promote environmental stewardship, democratic governance, sustainable agriculture and to support the local economy, owners of Katalyst Kombucha LLC and Green River Ambrosia LLC collaborated to create a worker cooperative in 2013.

Your next stop is **Real Pickles** (311 Wells St.), a producer of traditionally pickled foods, using only vegetables sourced from local family farms. Products are only sold locally, too, reducing their environmental costs. Although launched in 2001, Real Pickles converted to worker ownership in 2013. Workers are now developing new skills for their roles as owners through training and education. They have also shared their expertise in raising capital with other organizations.

Also located at 311 Wells St. is **PV Squared** (Pioneer Valley PhotoVoltaics), a worker cooperative and our final tour location. The co-op's published goal is to create sustainable, living-wage jobs and strengthen the local economy. It designs and delivers solar systems for homes, as well as commercial and community locations in Pioneer Valley and surrounding areas. PV Squared is a founding member of the Valley Alliance of Worker Co-operatives.



**North of UMass Amherst is the Green Community of Greenfield.**  
**Note: routes to tour locations may change.**