

# **Syracuse Cooperative Market Board of Directors CANDIDATE APPLICATION**

Name	Meagan Weatherby
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## **Candidate Statement**

### **I. Describe your involvement with the Co-op. Include amount of time spent and specific activities, if appropriate.**

I joined the Co-op's Board of Directors in January 2014. During my two terms I have served as Co-President (2015), Vice President (2017), and President (2016, 2018, 2019). I have participated in the Board Perpetuation Committee each year, including chairing that committee in 2014-2015 and 2017-2018; joined the Bylaws Committee in 2019; and previously volunteered on the ad hoc committee for the Co-op's Backyard Permaculture Garden.

### **2. Describe any volunteer or paid experience relevant to serving as a Co-op Board member.**

I work as the Development & Communications Manager at Cooperative Federal, a non-profit, mission-driven credit union that was "born" inside the Syracuse Cooperative Market back in 1982. My responsibilities include program management, grant writing and reporting, engaging with community partners, overseeing outreach and communications, and collaborating on business and strategic planning. I began my tenure at Coop Fed in 2005, originally serving as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA (2005-2007) before joining the staff and eventually the management team. With a role focused on community development, I work to strike a balance between strategic goals, the collective needs of our membership, and our core mission: fostering social and economic justice in Syracuse. Many of the skills I have learned in my career – from interpreting financial statements, to preparing Annual Reports, to business planning – aid my service on the Syracuse Cooperative Market's board.

### **3. What do you see as our Co-op's role in the broader community?**

Our Co-op has been a cornerstone of CNY's cooperative economy for nearly five decades. As a conduit between Syracuse households and sustainably produced food, SCM has been a pioneer in the natural foods movement and a friend to local farmers. SCM is a defining characteristic of the Westcott neighborhood, part of our beloved walkable (and bike-able) community. It's a locus of energy where you can't help but run into your friends and neighbors; where you can really believe that the purchases you make support conscious businesses, local jobs, and the creation of a stronger, fairer economy.

Finally, it's an embodiment of the next challenge for the cooperative movement: as the economic and food-system landscape evolves, how do we stay competitive, relevant, and responsive to our members and the community at large? Those are the questions our board and leadership team must grapple with today.

#### **4. Please provide a personal statement, including anything you feel is relevant to your candidacy.**

Our world needs an interconnected set of solutions in order to overcome a tangle of problems. People and the planet are starving for real nourishment, for thoughtful policies that see beyond short-term profit. We're starving for a different way to interact with each other and the institutions around us; for meaningful, safe, and fair jobs. Sometimes, we're just straight-out starving.

To me, our best hope for finding those solutions is creating a solidarity economy. Starting right here, where we live and work, we can make choices that gradually transform ourselves and our communities. We can use our successes and our failures to enrich kindred work in other communities; to build bridges between those communities until the solidarity economy is everywhere.

SCM is part of the solution in Syracuse. As a member of the board, I will work to keep SCM strong, sustainable, and engaged with this vision.



**Meagan Weatherby**