



**FROM DREAM
TO ACTION:
THE TRANSFORMATIVE
POWER OF
CO-OPS, LABOR,
AND COMMUNITY**

**2023
UNION CO-OP
SYMPOSIUM**

CO-OP
CINCY



**1 worker
1 vote.org**

@COOPCINCY

**#DreamToAction
#2023UnionCoopSymposium**

LOGISTICS

Locations

All Symposium sessions and exercises will be at Christ Church Cathedral (318 East 4th Street Cincinnati, OH 45202). Friday's Cheers to Cooperatives celebration will be at Site 1212 of the Art Academy of Cincinnati (1212 Jackson Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202).

Transportation

Public transit is available between Christ Church Cathedral, the Art Academy of Cincinnati, and the conference hotel. The Connector, Cincinnati's free streetcar system, offers service between locations near Christ Church Cathedral and the Art Academy of Cincinnati, as do multiple bus lines. For detailed info on routes, please consult a map service such as Google Maps. Please note that rideshare services (Uber or Lyft), Cincinnati Red Bike, and scooters are also available.

Food

Friday's lunch will be provided by Edibles-n-Such, a Black woman-owned business that has been serving Greater Cincinnati for more than 39 years.

Friday's dinner (at the Cheers to Cooperatives event) will consist of tapas provided by Texas Joe, a catering service and food truck run by a third-generation Mexican-American.

Saturday's lunch will be provided by Olive Tree, a catering business started by a Syrian refugee.

Coffee donated by La Terza.

Interpretation

Interpretation will be available during all general meetings (opening exercises, etc.). Interpretation will be available at sessions based on interest. Provided by Cincinnati Language Services Cooperative.

Accessibility Needs

If you need assistance with accessibility, please seek help from a volunteer wearing a purple name tag.

Wifi

Network: *Christ Church Cathedral Guest*

Password: *cccguest*

Composting & Recycling

Composting will be provided by Queen City Commons, and plasticware will be recycled by volunteer Linda Davis.

Questions

Have a question? Please find a volunteer with a purple name tag.

WELCOME!

Co-op Cincy and IworkerIvote are delighted to present our 6th Union Co-op Symposium. Your presence is an encouragement and a tangible sign of your support for creating an economy that works for all.

Overview

Through two kinds of sessions, the 2023 Union Co-op Symposium will explore how to forge a new economy rooted in connection.

Day One is the day for dreaming. After an activity that opens participants to multiple ways of knowing (mind, body, and spirit), we will break into smaller groups. The groups will co-create a specific vision (dream) that truly energizes and inspires. The day will close with keynote addresses offering concrete examples of dreaming boldly.

Day Two is the action day. Groups will turn their attention to practices, tactics, and strategies for realizing the specific vision they developed. The day will close with sharing and activities that focus on deepening solidarity and staying in the work for the long haul.

Session facilitators and participants will include co-op members, labor leaders, representatives from Mondragon, faith community members, ESOP leaders, representatives from finance institutions, and more.

The **Cheers to Cooperatives celebration** from 7-9 p.m. Friday, October 20 will include drinks, food, a star studded speaker line-up, and more!

Thank You to Our Sponsors

This Symposium is made possible by the gracious support of our sponsors, who are featured on pages 10-14.

Viewing of *Works for All*

Since 2011, Co-op Cincy has been building a more equitable economy in Greater Cincinnati by nurturing a network of worker-owned businesses. *Works for All* portrays the cooperatives in Co-op Cincy's network, which are led by people marginalized from the mainstream economy, and Co-op Cincy's approach to training and ongoing support. The documentary was produced by Mark Dworkin and Melissa Young, who made the earlier documentary *Shift Change* about democratic workplaces. *Works for All* will show 8:30 am on Saturday, October 21 in the Undercroft at Christ Church Cathedral.



The filmmakers with Co-op Cincy staff and network members.

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

DREAM DAY: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20

8:30 am • Registration & Refreshments (Undercroft)

9:00 am • Welcome & Connection Exercise (Undercroft)

9:25 am • Opening Experience (Undercroft)

11:25 am • Lunch (Undercroft)

12:15 pm • DREAM SESSIONS 1

- **Mutualism: Learning from Emilia-Romagna, Mondragon, & Argentina to Energize the Solidarity Economy** (Undercroft)
- **Place-Based 'Maker' Ecosystems: Re-localizing Textile Manufacturing and Beyond** (Stage)
- **More Than Just Money: Restorative Investing & Capital** (Lounge)
- **Cannabis & Co-ops: Building High-Paying & Empowering Jobs** (Forum)
- **Manufacturing Renaissance: Rebuilding Our Manufacturing Sector Inclusively** (Room 301)
- **Dignified Work: Individual & Collective Responsibility in Democratic Workplaces** (Yoga Room)
- **Policy & Co-ops: Creating Policy-Enabling Environments for Worker Co-ops** (Chapel Lower Level Meeting Room)

2:05 pm • Break (Undercroft)

2:30 pm • DREAM SESSIONS 2

- **Unleashing Workplace Democracy: The Power of Labor & Co-ops Together** (Undercroft)
- **Community Ownership of Solar: How Worker-Owned Solar Installers, Purchasing Co-ops, & Rural Electrics Can Partner To Power the Country** (Room 301)
- **Own the Metrics: Building a Broad Movement for Sustainable Development** (Forum)
- **Affordable Housing: Cooperatives, Land Trusts, & Faith Assets in Transition** (Stage)
- **Black Ownership: Creating an Economy For Us, By Us** (Chapel Lower Level Meeting Room)
- **Immigrants and Co-ops: Decolonizing and Leveling up the Cooperative Movement** (Lounge)
- **Broadening Ownership: Reducing Inequality & Creating a Thriving Tri-State via Employee Ownership** (Yoga Room)

4:25 pm • Concluding Session (Undercroft)

7:00 pm • Cheers to Cooperatives (Art Academy of Cincinnati)

ACTION DAY: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21

8:30 am • Viewing of Works for All & Refreshments (Undercroft)

9:15 am • Welcome & Re-Connection Exercise (Undercroft)

9:30 am • Opening Experience (Undercroft)

10:00 am • ACTION SESSIONS 1

- **Mutualism: Learning from Emilia-Romagna, Mondragon, & Argentina to Energize the Solidarity Economy** (Undercroft)
- **Place-Based 'Maker' Ecosystems: Re-localizing Textile Manufacturing and Beyond** (Stage)
- **More Than Just Money: Restorative Investing & Capital** (Lounge)
- **Cannabis & Co-ops: Building High-Paying & Empowering Jobs** (Forum)
- **Manufacturing Renaissance: Rebuilding Our Manufacturing Sector Inclusively** (Room 301)
- **Dignified Work: Individual & Collective Responsibility in Democratic Workplaces** (Yoga Room)
- **Policy & Co-ops: Creating Policy-Enabling Environments for Worker Co-ops** (Chapel Lower Level Meeting Room)

12:00 pm • Lunch (Undercroft)

1:00 pm • ACTION SESSIONS 2

- **Unleashing Workplace Democracy: The Power of Labor & Co-ops Together** (Undercroft)
- **Community Ownership of Solar: How Worker-Owned Solar Installers, Purchasing Co-ops, & Rural Electrics Can Partner To Power the Country** (Room 301)
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- **Broadening Ownership: Reducing Inequality & Creating a Thriving Tri-State via Employee Ownership** (Yoga Room)

3:00 pm • Break (Undercroft)

3:30 pm • Ending Exercise (Undercroft)

4:00 pm • Send-Off (Undercroft)

1st Sessions • 12:15-2:05 pm Fri & 10 am-noon Sat

Mutualism: Learning from Emilia-Romagna, Mondragon, & Argentina to Energize the Solidarity Economy (Undercroft)

While connecting with the wisdom of long-established cooperative ecosystems as well as the fresh perspectives of budding cooperative ecosystems, participants will share questions, learnings, and insights on how to deepen and catalyze our regional ecosystems in a way that helps consciously shape a future where the planet and people thrive.

Contact person: Kristen Barker, kristen@coopcincy.org

Place-Based ‘Maker’ Ecosystems: Re-localizing Textile Manufacturing and Beyond (Stage)

It’s possible to employ ourselves and our communities by making goods in the US again. The Industrial Commons is an exciting example of a thriving, apparel-based cooperative network that’s re-localizing apparel manufacturing in North Carolina. Learning from The Industrial Commons and others, this session will delve into the nuts and bolts of how to create and strengthen place-based cooperative “maker” ecosystems, relocalize apparel manufacturing, and create transparent value chains where worker rights are centered. *Contact person:*

Brandon Hoff, brandonz@heritagehill.com

More Than Just Money: Restorative Investing & Capital (Lounge)

Restorative investing and capital represent a transformative approach to finance that prioritizes equitable wealth distribution and the empowerment of marginalized communities, especially those impacted by systemic racism. Rooted in principles of justice and inclusivity, restorative investing redirects resources to uplift those historically kept in cycles of disadvantage, focusing on healing, restoring, and reinvigorating these communities. By challenging traditional financial paradigms that prioritize profits over people, this approach aims to bridge the racial wealth gap and foster shared prosperity. Inspired by the ethos of restorative economics, the objective is not merely financial return, but societal healing and holistic community development. It’s about more than just money; it’s about recalibrating the financial system to be in service of all, ensuring an equitable, inclusive, and resilient economic future. We invite impact investors and community builders to embrace this revolutionary approach. *Contact person: Derek Peebles, derek@asbnetwork.org*

Cannabis & Co-ops: Building High-Paying & Empowering Jobs (Forum)

The United Food and Commercial Workers Union has identified union co-ops as a tool for building worker power, investing in sustainable

1st Sessions • 12:15-2:05 pm Fri & 10 am-noon Sat

communities, and pursuing racial justice in the cannabis industry. These businesses combine democratic governance and ownership with strong labor protections and institutional resources. This dream session will explore how to build union co-ops in the cannabis industry and unlock financing. *Contact person: Dennis Olson, dolson@ufcw.org*

Manufacturing Renaissance: Rebuilding Our Manufacturing Sector Inclusively (Room 301)

Advanced manufacturing is the foundation for economic democracy in Mondragon and Emilia-Romagna. We need to rebuild our manufacturing sector in a way that's profoundly inclusive, including via the dramatic expansion of worker-owned companies as well as companies owned by entrepreneurs of color. We need industrial policy at the national, state, and local levels that reflects these objectives and provides funding and other support. We take the values of cooperatives and employee-owned companies as a foundation and an alternative to current industrial policy, which is guided by securing the personal wealth of a very small segment of our society. Specifically, we will build a movement inspired by the Basque Country and other international models that promote advanced manufacturing, economic democracy, and community development. Our partnerships will include labor, community and faith-based organizations, manufacturing companies, cooperatives, local government, and the environmental movement. *Contact person: David Robinson, drobinsom@mfgren.org*

Dignified Work: Individual & Collective Responsibility in Democratic Workplaces (Yoga Room) • Interpretation available

In this session, we will explore the border between personal responsibility and the role of the collective, seeking to reconcile our personal and collective traumas with the dreams we want to make real. We will consider the following: What does it mean to be a leader in a democratic workplace? What does sovereignty of labor mean for us (as worker-owners, cooperative advocates, workers)? What's the role of personal growth in a democratic workplace? How can we re-imagine workplace democracy through community and resource synergy? Join us for an honest exploration of our own values and needs in democratic workplaces. *Contact person: Paloma Correa, paloma@coopcincy.org*

Policy & Co-ops: Creating Policy-Enabling Environments for Worker Co-ops (Chapel Lower Level Meeting Room)

We'll share examples of municipal policy efforts that have been successful, including in Massachusetts, Colorado, California, and Washington, and how worker co-op advocates can move policy forward in their towns, cities, regions, and states. *Contact person: Mo Manklang, mo@usworker.coop*

2nd Sessions • 2:30-4:25 pm Fri & 1-3 pm Sat

Unleashing Workplace Democracy: The Power of Labor & Co-ops Together (Undercroft)

Worker-ownership is a proven strategy for achieving many goals of the labor movement, as well as for creating resilient, family-sustaining jobs that workers own and control. What's stopping us from having unions embrace co-op development as an essential tool for rebuilding the labor movement? What's stopping the cooperative movement from joining forces with labor to overhaul our economy and put people over profits? *Contact person: Ellen Vera, ellen@coopcincy.org*

Community Ownership of Solar: How Worker-Owned Solar Installers, Purchasing Co-ops, & Rural Electrics Can Partner To Power the Country (Room 301)

Solar power can knit together disparate urban and rural communities, creating shared purpose and wealth. To make solar this transformative, we have to ensure everyone, and especially communities that have borne the brunt of the current energy system, has access. The Inflation Reduction Act has given us many of the tools we need. But it's up to us to unite and build the solar-powered world we want. *Contact person: Lola McAllister, lolademcallister@gmail.com*

Own the Metrics: Building a Broad Movement for Sustainable Development (Forum)

If we all do our part to build sustainable communities and economies, the UN's sustainable development goals present a manageable challenge. This is not just a challenge for Fortune 500 corporations and sovereign governments; it's one for those of us in the social and solidarity economy. We can lead by example, showing that greenwashing is unacceptable; that inclusive governance is doable; that ownership needs to take a seventh-generation perspective of profits; and that social transformation of the economy can be humane and inclusive. We need to catalyze community wealth in a way that doesn't recreate the problems of the current economy, but instead fosters business and organizational development that aligns with the sustainable development goals. *Contact person: Christina Clamp, christina.clamp@gmail.com*

Affordable Housing: Cooperatives, Land Trusts, & Faith Assets in Transition (Stage)

How can we find ways for caring people from faith and other communities to create housing opportunities that allow people to overcome racial, social, income, and wealth inequalities? How can we secure below-market real estate and turn it into perpetually affordable

2nd Sessions • 2:30-4:25 pm Fri & 1-3 pm Sat

housing where residents build assets? This session will seek to create an alternative to traditional models of renting and owning based on participatory management, paths to wealth-building, and perpetual affordability. It will include representatives from Renting Partnerships (resident-managed housing with a pathway to wealth building), limited equity co-ops, faith-based communities and social justice groups that own property, community land trusts, community development financial institutions, and multi-employer trusts focused on real estate.

Contact person: Katy Heins, kheins@communitychange.org

Black Ownership: Creating an Economy For Us, By Us

(Chapel Lower Level Meeting Room)

How can we strengthen and deepen relationships among Black professionals and business owners to create supportive business communities that share resources and foster connection? How can we tap into our collective power to overcome challenges such as racial trauma, historical distrust, and systemic disempowerment? In this dream session, we will delve into the impact of Western society's emphasis on individual gains. We will examine how to cultivate trust and connection as the foundation for a thriving Black economy.

Contact person: Cynthia Pinchback-Hines, cynthia@coopcincy.org

Immigrants and Co-ops: Decolonizing and Leveling up the Cooperative Movement (Lounge) • Interpretation available

How can we erase systemic barriers and center immigrant voices while making a regenerative, inclusive economy? Join us for this collaborative session. *Contact person: Ana Martina, ana@colmenar.coop*

Broadening Ownership: Reducing Inequality & Creating a Thriving Tri-State through Employee Ownership (Yoga Room)

If we bring together leaders involved in ESOPs, B-Corps, Conscious Capitalism, and worker co-ops, there is breathtaking potential to broaden ownership and reduce inequality. Across the country, 2/3 of privately owned businesses belong to baby boomers. Private companies generally provide 50-60% of the jobs in a community, yet only 20% of businesses have a succession plan. The upcoming wave of retirements by baby-boomer business owners could be a destabilizing crisis. Or, local leaders could turn this potential disaster into an unprecedented opportunity with the help of organizations like Co-op Cincy and the Ohio Employee Ownership Center, which provide assistance and access to funds enabling owners to sell to their employees. Imagine the impact a powerful group of leaders can have by inspiring business owners to sell to their employees, broadening ownership and helping create a Tri-State where all people have an opportunity to thrive. Join us for this powerful session! *Contact person: Chris Bennett, chris@coopcincy.org*

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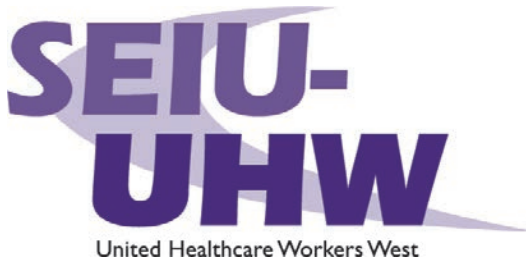
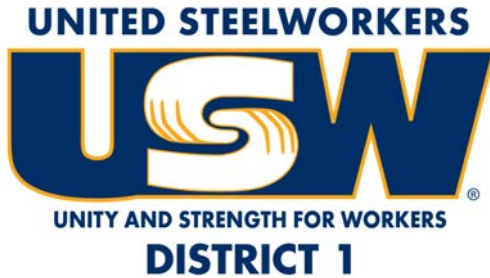
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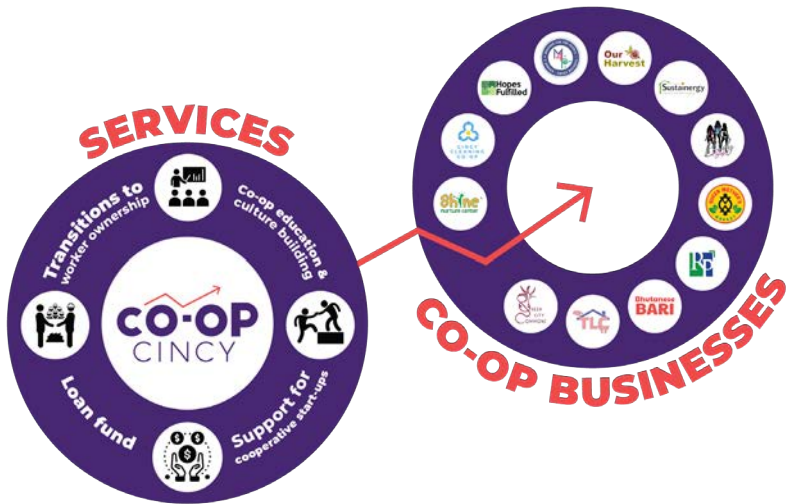
BUILDING ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY

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About Co-op Cincy

Co-op Cincy supports a growing network of worker-owned businesses in Greater Cincinnati. Our goal: an economy that works for all.



Key Programs

Co-op U: Co-op Boot Camp

What is Co-op U? A training and support program that helps teams develop a worker-owned business. Participants:

- Develop a successful business plan of their own
- Benefit from weekly virtual trainings and 1-on-1 mentorship
- Receive assistance incorporating and structuring their business
- Have an opportunity to access financing

Learn more at coopcincy.org/co-op-u

Business Legacy Fund (BLF)

The BLF helps broaden ownership to individuals from marginalized groups, including people of color, women, and blue-collar workers, by:

- Enabling retiring business owners to sell to their workers, preserving their business while securing their own retirement
- Enabling owners to broaden ownership while continuing to work with the business

Learn more at businesslegacyfund.org

Our Co-op U manual, Worker-Owner Workbook, t-shirts, and tote bags will be available for purchase at the Symposium.



Co-op Cincy nurtures a resilient, interconnected network of worker-owned businesses in Greater Cincinnati. Our goal: an economy that works for all. Learn more at coopcincy.org.



1worker1vote is a resource for workers and businesses interested in creating union co-op business models. Learn more at 1worker1vote.org.

Remembering Tom Conway

We are deeply grateful for Tom Conway, who recently passed. He was a phenomenal human who made extraordinary contributions to the United Steelworkers as well as the labor movement as a whole. We honor Tom and the United Steelworkers for their game-changing leadership on inspiring the development of union co-ops across the United States. He will be deeply missed.