



Building BC's
Co-operative
Economy

Co-ops in Schools 2016-17 Annual Report
BC Co-op Association

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Overview



The Co-ops in Schools (CIS) program continued its goal of increasing awareness of the co-op and credit union sector amongst students, while connecting our membership to schools. This year the program grew to new schools, connecting more students to the sector, and expanding into new regions across the province.

The CIS program connected the sector to students in multiple disciplines from, BCIT, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Langara College, Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, University of British Columbia Okanagan, University of the Fraser Valley, and University of Victoria.

Over an 8 month period students received mentorship from various credit union and co-op sector representatives, engaged in co-op learning activities, experienced a co-op crawl, received lessons on co-op enterprises, and led high school students across the province in learning about co-operatives through writing co-op business plans.

Our CIS partners this year contributed to aiding and facilitating the learning of students both in high school and post secondary programs. Our partners contributed to the program by mentoring, networking, providing financial planning lessons, judging and giving feedback for business plans, and touring students around on the co-op crawl.



Awareness

CIS provided education about the co-operative business model and principles, promoted co-ops and credit unions as solutions to consumer needs, and showcased our members' work by using them as examples in lessons. CIS highlighted to youth how co-ops address community development, sustainability challenges, and economic constraints.

One of the most popular aspects of the CIS program has been the Co-op Crawl. High school students and post secondary students in Abbotsford, Kelowna, Metro Vancouver, and Victoria attended 'Co-op Crawls' in which they toured their local co-ops. This was a chance for students to apply the theoretical co-op knowledge they had been learning and practically experience a co-operative.



Students in Victoria visited CHF BC Vancouver Island, Modo, Stocksy, and Peninsula Co-op.



Students in Metro Vancouver visited Vancouver Co-op Radio, Circle Craft Co-operative, and The Vancouver Tool Library.



Students in Abbotsford toured Prospera Credit Union, Otter Co-op, and Yarrow Eco Village Co-operative.



Students in Kelowna experienced BC Tree Fruits, Interior Savings, and OGO Car Share.

Reach

The CIS program has been able to reach students in a way that provides meaningful access to our membership. As a non-profit representing the sector, the BCCA can access students and introduce co-op messaging to students in order to engage and inspire them.

85

Students participated in the CIS Program

400+

Students educated through classroom presentations

3000+

Students reached through BCCA awareness efforts

90%

Of students increased their knowledge of co-ops and credit unions as a result of the program

13

Co-ops visited on crawl in 4 regions



We talked about co-ops, and how he got to work for one. We talked about the difference between his role at a co-op and at a previous corporation. We also talked about how he got to be where he is in his career, and what I could do to get to a similar place.

-UBCO student on their BC Tree Fruits mentor



Mentorship

This year students were connected with mentors from BC Tree Fruits, CCEC Credit Union, CHF BC, Coast Capital Savings, The Co-operators, Cumis, First West Credit Union, Interior Savings, Modo, Peninsula Co-op, Prospera Credit Union, Vancity, and Victory Gardens. Over an 8-month period students and mentors met monthly to aid students in professional development, build relationships, and learn from one another. Mentors were able to provide their guidance along with sharing their wisdom, and co-operative knowledge. The mentorship portion of CIS provides organizations direct access to students looking for career

95% of respondents feel more confident as a result of the program.

Overwhelmingly, the mentorship aspect of the program was received favorably amongst both the students and the mentors.

When asked what the most satisfying part of the program was mentors responded with:

"The impact that you can make with the experiences and advice you can provide to your mentee but also the amount of things you can learn from the students as well!" – Vancity

The program was great, and inspiring. I truly see the value in supporting a program like this as a mentor and as an organization. – CHF BC

"The excitement I felt for them when I knew I'd been able to give good advice."- Vancity

"Being able to share experiences in the hopes of helping them make better choices and decisions in their future careers." –Interior Savings

Utilizing & Mobilizing the Sector

This year the CIS program united more members, highlighted and showcased our members work, and attracted non-members to participate. We greatly thank all of our funding partners who contributed greatly to the success of the program, we couldn't have done it without you!



In addition, we thank all of the co-ops which supported the program through mentorship, prizes, judging, and contributing to the co-op crawl.

- Circle Craft Co-operative
- BC Libraries Co-op
- Devco - FWC Development Co-operative
- Modo
- Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC)
- OGO Car Share Co-op
- Otter Co-op
- Realize Strategies
- Stocksy Co-operative
- Victory Gardens
- Vancouver Co-op Radio
- Yarrow Eco Village

Looking Forward

The CIS program has plans to maintain the successful components of the past two years, and expand into new regions, allowing our members across the province access to youth in their area.

