BOARD CANDIDATES 2024

EAST END FOOD COOP

VOTING IS OPEN ONLINE & IN STORE FROM

OCTOBER 20 – DECEMBER 1

EASTENDFOODCOOP.SIMPLYVOTING.COM

NICO DEMKIN

What is your experience as member, volunteer, or staff member of the EEFC?

I was elected to the Board of Directors for a one-year term. Since then, I have attended meetings regularly, currently helping in the new GM search in particular. The current Board has many objectives at the forefront, and I am proud to assist in decision-making.

What experiences have you had with other co-operatives or non-profit organizations?

I am a former member of the Swarthmore Co-op. I am the Treasurer of Shikkaricon and the Assistant Security Supervisor of Tekko, through PittJCS. For Shikkaricon, I saw it incorporated as a non-profit in 2019.

What experience and skills (professional or business) or unique perspectives would you bring to the EEFC Board?

As stated, I served as a Treasurer on a non-profit. I work full-time as an Administrative Coordinator at a CPA firm. My experience in Administrative & Human Resources capacities allow me to both function at micro & macro levels.

What do you think are some important one-year goals for the EEFC?

Secure our mother-ship location, continue to review expansion efforts, focus on membership participation, and creating a more harmonious environment for membership, staff, & all parties.

Describe your vision for the EEFC five years from now.

My vision is to have a new GM hired and well into their role, our mother-ship location being secure, a new satellite location established, and increased membership participation.

Why do you want to be on the Board?

The current Board has a full plate of resilience, expansion/growth, reviewing the organizational structure, and returning previous amenities (like the Café). My elected term has been for a year, and

I want to retain my role to further advance the work of the Board.

HEATHER KENNER

What is your experience as member, volunteer, or staff member of the EEFC?

I have been a member of the EEFC for the last 4 years.

What experiences have you had with other co-operatives or non-profit organizations?

I have been a member of grocery co-operatives in every city I have lived in for the last decade. I have also worked for non-profits that were local (Pittsburgh), national, and now international.

What experience and skills (professional or business) or unique perspectives would you bring to the EEFC Board?

I bring a background working in the nonprofit field, an MBA, and working for an organization that has a certification program for various crops, focusing on people, nature, and a more sustainable future.

What do you think are some important one-year goals for the EEFC?

Important short-term goals are making a strategic plan for the future, getting buy-in from the member-owners and local community.

Describe your vision for the EEFC five years from now.

I would like to see the EEFC have the ability to be the primary store for those in Pittsburgh, with less reliance on big chains. I see EEFC increasing its local sourcing and being more critical of the food that it is sourcing.

Why do you want to be on the Board?

I have a strong passion for sustainable, ethical, and local food. I worked on a small, family farm for several summers where I was able to cultivate relationships with long-term customers and get a better understanding for growing food. This sparked a new relationship with our food system, inspired me to get my MBA in sustainable entrepreneurship, and led me to working for my current company. My driving force for the last ten-plus years has been around living a more sustainable and ethical lifestyle. I believe I have a lot of both personal and professional experience to bring to the Board to help continue to grow and shape the EEFC.

DESMOND ZHENG

What is your experience as member, volunteer, or staff member of the EEFC?

The EEFC has been my go-to grocery store in Pittsburgh since my undergraduate years at Pitt. To give back to my co-op community, I have had the pleasure of serving as your Board Director in the last year.

What experiences have you had with other co-operatives or non-profit organizations?

My mom transferred her love of co-ops to me, and we've been shopping at our local co-op since 2003. On a cross-country road trip, we were fortunate to visit co-ops in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, and Bozeman.

Outside of co-ops, I am currently a Teaching Artist for the Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse supporting community art programs around the city.

What experience and skills (professional or business) or unique perspectives would you bring to the EEFC Board?

As a sustainability consultant and young professional, I hope to bring to the EEFC Board my experience helping organizations plan and transition to more sustainable and resilient operations while maintaining growth, and provide my input and perspective on intersectionality, inter-generational collaboration, and sustainability.

What do you think are some important one-year goals for the EEFC?

Important one-year goals should build off the successes of our 2024 Board by increasing the resilience of the EEFC via initiatives to increase local supplier and membership engagement and leverage the strength of our co-op to solve local issues such as food desertification and energy security.

Describe your vision for the EEFC five years from now.

I envision the EEFC as a home of high quality, healthy grocery options in the greater Pittsburgh area, but also serving as a third space for community gatherings and driver of positive and sustainability change in our lives.

Why do you want to be on the Board?

I want to serve on the Board to make a sustainable impact in the co-op and hopefully affect long-lasting positive change in my community.

NICHOLAS LEISE

What is your experience as member, volunteer, or staff member of the EEFC?

I am currently completing a one year term on the EEFC Board of Directors. I am the acting Vice President on the Board as well as serving on the Executive Committee and Resilience Committee.

What experiences have you had with other co-operatives or non-profit organizations?

I routinely work with the local organization, Tree Pittsburgh, for volunteer workdays and fundraising events. Additionally, at my time in Penn State, I served on an operations Committee for four years, where we worked to plan and maintain the THON student run philanthropy.

What experience and skills (professional or business) or unique perspectives would you bring to the EEFC Board?

During my day job, I am a construction Project Manager. I am experienced with high level communication and leading a team to a common goal. I am involved in real estate negotiations, lease terms, construction management and budgets. Additionally, I own and operate a local landscaping business in Pittsburgh.

What do you think are some important one-year goals for the EEFC?

I will continue the good progress we have made with the café. Based on membership demands, we will expand on our current beverage bar to food sales. Additionally, I aim to lead initiatives to lower prices on popular food items.

Describe your vision for the EEFC five years from now.

In five years, I see the EEFC as not only a major competitor to Giant Eagle and Whole Foods, but an expanding presence throughout the city and surrounding suburbs. I am a native Pittsburgher, and I am confident the mission of the EEFC will spread further throughout the city.

Why do you want to be on the Board?

I am passionate about food and community. I have truly enjoyed my first year on the Board and am eager to continue the good progress I have contributed.

VOTE FOR THE BOARD

STAFF-ONLY SEAT

BYLAWS

EAST END FOOD CO-OPERATIVE, INC.

[2020]

ARTICLE IV: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

4.1 Powers, Duties and Terms.

The Board shall be composed of nine members elected from among the members in good standing of EEFC. An additional, optional, tenth Board seat will be reserved for a staff member who will be elected only by the staff members, if candidates are available.

MICHAEL MURPHY

What is your experience as member, volunteer, or staff member of the EEFC?

I currently work as a Cafe Specialist at the EEFC. I was hired to support the re-opening of the Beverage Counter.

What experiences have you had with other co-operatives or non-profit organizations?

As both a student and an employee at Duquesne University, I served as a liaison between non-profit organizations and the university community. For example, I worked as a conference planner for the 2023 National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, in collaboration with the director of Duquesne's writing center. Additionally, as a Resident Assistant, I connected students with local housing and financial support resources.

What experience and skills (professional or business) or unique perspectives would you bring to the EEFC Board?

Due to the interdisciplinary nature of my studies and my experience in student advocacy, I have engaged in DEI work, continuity of operations planning, and grant writing. I have also studied non-profit development strategies. I also have eight years of experience in the service industry. As a current EEFC staff member, I am committed to communicating with my coworkers and bringing a staff perspective to the Board.

What do you think are some important one-year goals for the EEFC?

In the next year, the EEFC should refine its plans for store relocation and/or expansion, deepen existing community partnerships, and encourage member-owner participation in crafting a vision for the future.

Describe your vision for the EEFC five years from now.

Five years from now, I want to see the EEFC inspiring other community organizations with its approach to co-operative principles, sustainability, labor, business operations, and the inherent ethical concerns of food.

Why do you want to be on the Board?

I want to join the Board as a staff representative. As a newer employee, I see this as an opportunity to deepen my understanding of my workplace and the needs of its customers and staff.

HOW TO VOTE

MEMBERS CAN VOTE ONLINE AT EASTENDFOODCOOP.SIMPLYVOTING.COM

- You will be required to log in to vote
- Your login is your Member Number. You can find your Member Number on the back of your Member Card. Remove the leading 4 and zeros as well as the last digit. Example: 4 00000 16989 7 = 16989
- Your password is your last name + your 5 digit zip code. Names are all lowercase with no hyphens, spaces, or special characters. Examples: Joe Smith, Jr. = smith12345, Jane O'Rochester = orochester12345, John Weaver-Cooperator = weavercooperator12345
- Vote for up to three (3) candidates. The top three vote getters will fill three-year terms. The remaining candidate will fill a one-year vacancy.
- If you have trouble finding your member number or need to confirm your password, please contact us at: election@eastendfood.coop

MEMBERS CAN VOTE IN PERSON AT THE CUSTOMER SERVICE DESK

- The primary member should present a photo ID at Customer Service
- Customer service will look up your membership in the database and print you a ballot with your name and member number already printed on it
- Place your ballot in the box located at the Customer Service desk

A FEW THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Voting begins 10/20/2024 and ends 12/1/2024
- We can only accept one ballot per membership number
- If a household has a membership, only one vote is allowed from that household
- If there are multiple votes from one membership number, ALL will be disqualified
- Do not allow anyone else to fill in your ballot or deposit it in the ballot box for you
- Proxy voting is not allowed per the East End Food Co-op Bylaws and Policies

ABOUT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A Board of Directors is a governing body charged with monitoring and leading the vision of an organization. The EEFC's Board of Directors is bound by the Co-op's articles of incorporation and bylaws, and follows a system of policy governance for overseeing the Co-op.

The Co-op's Board is elected by a vote of the Co-op's membership. It consists of nine members, two of whom can be a representative from the staff, as well as an optional tenth one-year term seat that is filled by a staff member and voted on only by other staff members. There is an executive committee consisting of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

The Board of Directors is responsible for:

- Financial oversight of the Co-op
- Engagement with and accountability to our Member-Owners
- Strategic planning and visioning
- Overseeing the General Manager