

FLASH!

BOWERS FUND AND CCMA LOVE AFFAIR REVEALED

BY ANNIE HOY

The Bowers Fund kicked off CCMA 2016 with an outdoor reception featuring lovely food and the Queen Mary Band, whose members all work at River Valley Co-op in nearby Northampton. There were reunions of all kinds, and you could hear the many happy greetings among cooperators who found each other after a year or more apart. Bowers Fund advisors momentarily silenced the crowd to remind them of the many scholarships given to help members attend the conference, adding to numerous grants to startup co-ops around the nation. This year the Fund provided 27 scholarships totaling \$10,000—with an additional \$1,000 from the Co-op Development Foundation.

CCMA 2016 also held a spectacular silent auction that pitted cooperators one against the other for some of the best-ever swag, services, and collectibles; and there was beer, wine, shirts, shopping bags, and so much more! Two quilts were offered—one went to CDS Consulting Co-op, to be displayed in a number of lucky co-ops around the country, while the other quilt will stay at Portland Food Co-op for an entire year. The Bowers family generously made the Apple Watch drawing possible, and we thank them for helping raise nearly \$2,000.

When we added up the proceeds from the drawing, the quilts, and the silent auction, the total came to nearly \$12,000! On behalf of the Bowers Fund, I thank you for your big-hearted giving. We deeply appreciate your financial support at CCMA and encourage you to participate in celebrating Howard Bowers Day during Co-op Month in October. Find us at cdf.coop/bowersfund.



Members of the Renaissance Community Co-op in Greensboro, N.C., were awarded the Startup of the Year by Food Co-op Initiative.



Dan Arnett, cooperator in chief at Central Co-op in Seattle and Tacoma, Wash., accepted the co-op's award for Innovation and Achievement.

Initiative announced the 10 new co-ops that had opened their store in the past year. (For the complete list, see "Milestones and More" on page 4.)

Food co-ops are encouraged to nominate from among their peers outstanding co-op leaders and businesses that deserve wider recognition. These annual awards are overseen by Cooperative Development Foundation. Marilyn Scholl presided over this year's awards ceremony, and National Co-op Grocers sponsored the event.

The 2017 award for **Cooperative Excellence** was presented to City Center Market in Cambridge, Minn., and its general manager, Gayle Cupit. After previously serving as the board president, Cupit became general manager in 2009 and has guided this small-town co-op through recovery, then growth and expansion that has generated strong local support.

Recognition for **Cooperative Service** was awarded to Sean Doyle, general manager of Seward Co-op in Minneapolis and a graduate of the Saint Mary's University master's program in co-op and credit union management. During the most recent three years of a career dedicated to cooperatives, Doyle has guided Seward Co-op through challenging expansions to two additional retail and production facilities, following an earlier strongly successful expansion of its original store. Doyle and other Seward leaders also led conference workshops on meeting co-op diversity challenges.

A second **Cooperative Service** award was presented to Sharon Murphy, who is retiring from her general manager position after 36 years of leadership contributions at Whole Foods Co-op in Duluth, Minn. The co-op is thriving, opened its second store earlier this year, and now has 160 staff and 10,000 members. To accept the award, Murphy sent a short video giving a straightforward and soft-spoken thanks and farewell.

The award for **Cooperative Innovation and Achievement** went to