

People's Participates in Co-op Day at the Capitol

As part of the Board's Education Action Plan, Board Directors are working to increase awareness about the cooperative business model. Directors have lectured at local colleges, developed a PowerPoint presentation (available on the Co-op's website at www.obpeoplesfood.coop), and established two \$1,000 scholarships, which require college-bound students to research the cooperative business structure.

One exciting opportunity for cooperative advocacy materialized at the "2016 Co-op Day at the Capitol" event held on March 15 in Sacramento. Board Directors Ofelia Alvarado, Stephanie Mood, Andi Briceno and Jamie Decker joined the California Center for Cooperative Development and other cooperative business representatives on the steps of the State Capitol. An information booth displaying the O. B. People's Organic Food Market's banner was visited by many capitol guests and staff.

Board Directors also paid visits to Senate and Assembly consultants from the Agriculture and Economic Development Committees and with several legislative representatives. They discussed the monetary impact of cooperatives, stated the need for robust start-up financing, worked to garner monetary support, and stressed the need for recognition of cooperatives as a viable business model.

One noteworthy meeting took place with Senator Ben Hueso who displayed great interest in the Imperial Beach food cooperative forming in his district.

Board members returned with names of those responsible for legislative bills that can specifically name "cooperatives" as a category for funding. Future advocacy efforts will continue to promote the benefits of cooperatives.

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