

## **Put a Face to Cooperative Month**

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As we celebrate cooperative month we all try to communicate the unique value package of cooperatives. There are lots of great talking points including the economic impact of cooperatives, their importance in rural communities and their importance in keeping markets competitive. Research shows that the public trust cooperatives and cooperative firms rank high in employee satisfaction. Cooperative boards tend to “drive it like they own it!” It’s rare to hear of a cooperative engaging in unethical or unnecessarily risky behavior. Cooperatives provide an amazing economic benefit to their members. Cooperatives generally offer market prices and the members receive both cash and ownership through the magic process of patronage. Cooperatives are the only business form that live by a set of guiding principles.

Despite all of those great stories many people do not understand what a cooperative is or even stop to consider how they may be making a difference. The best way to communicate any point is to put a face with the message. This cooperative month consider asking some of your board members, your employees and your valued members to describe what the cooperative means to them. You will get some great messages that you share on website, post to social media, quote in a press release or just shout from the street corner! Here’s my quote:

The cooperative difference is the people behind the profits!