

Success Stories

Throughout our more than twenty years of professional experience, we've helped people and communities all throughout the Northeast take greater control over their lives through cooperative ownership. Below are a few examples:

New Hampshire Community Seafood

The NH fishing industry is facing cuts in quotas and overwhelming pressure to sell at low-cost auctions that are out-of-state. But one cooperative supported by CDI is bucking the trend, bringing together fishermen and consumers in an innovative multi-stakeholder model, NH Community Seafood. Consumer members pre-pay for fresh seafood, delivered weekly within 30 hours of catch, thanks to partnerships with Yankee Fishermen's Cooperative and Seaport Fish.



Two fishermen from New Hampshire Community Seafood

Edgeway and Twin Coach

These two neighboring manufactured home communities were facing issues of decaying infrastructure and unfair rent practices. After nearly two years of working with CDI, Edgeway and Twin Coach bought their communities and turned them into cooperatives on the same day. Aided by CDI, the residents immediately began improving their living conditions and making their rent practices fair.



CDI working with members of the Karen tribe living in Hartford, CT, in Saw Than's Asian grocery market

What is a cooperative?

A cooperative is an organization that is:

- Owned by its members
- Democratically controlled by its members
- Operated for the benefits of its members

Simply put, in a co-op, each member gets one share of the organization and one vote in its governance. Co-ops come in all shapes and sizes. Some are owned by three people, some are owned by hundreds or even thousands. A co-op can be owned by workers, consumers, producers, residents, artists, businesses, and more.

CDI believes cooperatives can help transform the lives of individuals, towns, cities, and even the country. Because co-ops are democratically owned and run by those they're meant to serve, they allow people to work together to create viable businesses and good jobs that improve communities and promote shared values.



The Island Employee Cooperative, Deer Isle, ME

Island Employee Cooperative

When news got around that the owners of three businesses on the island of Deer Isle, Maine were going to retire, CDI and a team of advisors worked with the employees to explore the option of forming a worker cooperative and buying the businesses themselves. Over the course of a year, CDI assisted in organizing the incorporation and cooperative structure, securing financing, and training the board of directors and the new worker-owners. Ultimately, the transition resulted in the largest worker co-op in Maine. Now, the co-op is re-investing money in improving wages, benefits, and education and training for the workers.



The Edgeway and Twin Coach Estates Homeowners Associations celebrate becoming resident owned communities thanks to CDI

How CDI Can Work With You

For over twenty years, CDI has helped start and strengthen all types of cooperatives across the Northeast. CDI has also worked to transition existing businesses into co-ops through employee and community buy-outs.

CDI brings focused and engaged assistance on every cooperative issue, including:

- Financial, feasibility, market, and business planning
- Governance and decision-making
- Community outreach
- Board and membership trainings
- And more

We offer up to 10 hours of free assistance in many areas, followed by fee-based services. Our New England Resident Owned Communities (NEROC) program has no upfront costs. Some projects may be eligible for reduced rate services under USDA grants. For others, we can assist in obtaining funds to start your development process.

Working with us is simple. Just call or fill out our online request for assistance form at www.cdi.coop. We look forward to hearing from you!



CDI staff and board during a planning retreat

Testimonials

Here's what people have said about our work:

Nancy Brosz, President of the Tri-Park Cooperative Housing Association, says CDI did “a thorough job of assessing strengths and weaknesses of our cooperative in terms of board function and infrastructure as well as looking at the long term needs.” They add, CDI “is super helpful, professional, honest, and keeps [their] word.”

Carol Czaja, General Manager of the North Country Food Co-op, says CDI “has done such an excellent job - we are grateful... for all the assistance provided for our project.” They added that CDI’s “major strengths include the knowledge and resources to articulate a vision into action through careful financial planning, securing of member support and purposeful communication with co-op [Board of Directors], staff, member-owners, and the community at large.”

Larry Union of Northeast Biodiesel says, “CDI was able to provide much needed administrative and logistical support as well as valuable funding contacts for our start-up operation.” Similarly, **Niaz Dorry of the Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance** says “CDI has brought an essential piece of the puzzle to the table for the fishermen and fishing communities. From Co-op 101 to other organizational expertise, the communities have...”

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

www.CDI.coop

We make democratic ownership work for everyone.

COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

We can work with you to:

- Start a cooperative, from concept through launch
- Strengthen your existing co-op
- Organize a resident owned community
- Create co-op models for local food enterprises
- Transition existing businesses into co-ops by facilitating worker or community buy-outs

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