

# #BeLikeHoward

## Howard Bowers Fund Invites Food Co-ops to Support One Another

BY MARIN BADER

**N**amed after the former manager of the Hyde Park Cooperative in Chicago, the Howard Bowers Fund is the embodiment of the 5th and 6th cooperative principles: education and training, and cooperation among cooperatives. These principles guide the Howard Bowers Fund’s mission of providing the funds for training and education for members, staff, and board members of cooperatives. The Fund alleviates the financial stresses that added education and training can place on cooperatives and clears the road for development of talent and cooperative growth.

### Impact of the Howard Bowers Fund

Since 1994, the Bowers Fund has provided over \$500,000 in grants, offering the kind of assistance food co-ops need to open strong and stay competitive—assistance with staff and board training, and scholarships to attend professional conferences that allow them to network with peers and learn from industry experts.

In 2017, the fund gave \$40,788 in grants, sponsorships, and scholarships. Fifteen food co-ops received direct grants, and in addition seventeen food co-ops received a total of twenty-five scholarships to attend the CCMA (Consumer Cooperative Management Association) conference. The Fund supported participation in the CCMA, Up & Coming, and Small and Strong Conferences.

In 2018, twenty-five people attended CCMA on scholarships from the Bowers Fund. Already this year six food co-ops have received grants to support staff and board training, with more grant opportunities available.

### Cooperation among cooperatives

The Howard Bowers Fund relies on the support of food cooperatives all over the country. The 2018 fundraising campaign is already underway and off to a great start, thanks to donor support. This year at CCMA, more than 50 organizations donated over 150 items to the silent auction. The Bowers family generously donated an Apple watch for the drawing prize. In total, the Howard Bowers Fund raised \$20,014 from CCMA 2018 and exceeded last year’s efforts!



PHOTO: COOPERATIVE GROCER NETWORK

The Cooperative Development Foundation, which manages the Howard Bowers Fund, has set a goal of raising another \$20,000 between August 1 and October 31, 2018. Cooperatives are welcome to apply creative ways to raise contributions—such as inviting customers round up their purchases at the register, donating a percentage of Co-op Basic sales, or organizing a drawing for co-op treat bags. Co-ops can even simultaneously support the Fund and discourage waste by donating every time a customer brings a reusable bag.

### Display a Bowers Fund quilt

This year, co-ops have a very special reason to donate. The first five cooperatives to donate \$500 or

more will be able to host one of the co-op quilts for two months before November 2019. Many cooperatives proudly display the visually striking quilts in their stores as a symbol of cooperative strength and their commitment to the cooperative principles.

### Donate

To donate online, supporters can go to [cdf.coop/bowersfund](http://cdf.coop/bowersfund). Alternatively, checks may be written to the Cooperative Development Foundation with Howard Bowers referenced in the memo line and mailed to the Cooperative Development Foundation at 1775 Eye Street NW, 8th floor; Washington, DC 20006.

### Grant applications

CDF is currently accepting applications for the fall 2018 grant cycle. Applications are due September 15, 2018 and can be found at [cdf.coop/bowersfund](http://cdf.coop/bowersfund). Applications for the spring 2019 grant cycle are due February 15, 2019. •

