

ILLINOIS

ASSETS: **\$37 BILLION**

REVENUE: **\$3.5 TRILLION**

MEMBERS: **3.2 MILLION**

JOBS CREATED: **18,950**



ILLINOIS CO-OPS AT A GLANCE

Co-ops in Illinois are working to build a better world by creating quality jobs, building community wealth, protecting the environment, reducing poverty and strengthening the local economy.

DILL PICKLE FOOD CO-OP

Dill Pickle began when a Chicago neighborhood decided to take control of its food system and run a business that strengthens the local economy and treats producers, staff and customers fairly.

ACE HARDWARE

Oak Brook-based Ace Hardware became a cooperative in 1973. With some 4,700 locations around the world, Ace Hardware empowers local, small business owners and charts more than \$13 billion in retail hardware sales annually.



ILLINOIS TOP CO-OPS BY SECTOR

CREDIT UNIONS: **450**

HOUSING: **178**

AGRICULTURE: **140**

INSURANCE: **100**

UTILITIES: **47**

ELECTRIC: **28**

CHILDCARE: **24**

ABOUT CO-OPS

According to federally-supported research by the University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives, co-ops inject \$3 trillion into the U.S. economy every year. Located in every state and every Congressional district in the U.S., co-ops create millions of jobs and offer solutions to meet challenging public policy issues—from affordable housing to early childhood learning. They spur economic growth in underserved rural America; empower individuals, families and communities; and ensure that Americans have access to high-quality goods and services at competitive prices from businesses they trust.

CO-OP BUSINESS MODEL IS FOR THE MEMBERSHIP, BY THE MEMBERSHIP

The Toolbox for Education and Social Action (TESA) creates and distributes materials and tools for social justice causes and helps other organizations build their own educational programming and tools to help build a better world.

Launched in 2010, TESA was committed to the cooperative business model from the beginning—its flagship product is *Co-opoly: The Game of Cooperatives*, which has been played in schools, homes and community centers nationwide and has been distributed internationally. Its products use ethically sourced and sustainable resources and its member-owners lean on each other when needed and reward each other equitably.

The power of the cooperative model means members share the burden during the hard times and benefit from the good times. A few years ago, TESA experienced a financial rough patch. Other businesses might have fired people or shut down. Instead, TESA—as a group of worker-owners—voted collectively to temporarily reduce their pay to keep the business open and ensure that no employees lost their jobs.

Since then, TESA's finances have improved to the



Co-opoly: The Game of Cooperatives, produced by the Toolbox for Education and Social Action (TESA) tests players' skill and solidarity. During the game, players start a cooperative and use teamwork to succeed. Co-opoly is ethically produced and printed by worker co-ops in the U.S. on recycled and sustainable materials.

point where they have increased pay beyond the rate it was before it was cut.

"That's because this isn't business as usual; this is a business that's for the membership and by the membership. After going co-op, I don't think we'd have it any other way," TESA said in a recent interview with NCBA CLUSA.

"The cooperative business model allows us to provide our services and products at affordable costs for everyone, while paying our worker-owners a decent living," they added.

Founded in 1916, the National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International is the trade association for cooperative businesses in the U.S. and an international development organization active in Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America. For 100 years, NCBA CLUSA has advanced, promoted and defended co-op enterprise, highlighting the impact that co-ops have in bettering the lives of individuals, families and communities.

NCBA CLUSA
The National Cooperative Business Association • CLUSA International

1775 Eye Street NW | 8th Floor | Washington, DC 20006
www.ncba.coop | 202.638.6222 | info@ncba.coop