



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 30, 2019

Contact: Audrey Schwartzberg, ANCA Communications Associate, (518) 891-6200 or aschwartzberg@adirondack.org

Cooperative development leaders to convene in the North Country for two June events
Workshop and discussions will address growing interest in worker ownership

Saranac Lake, N.Y. — The interest and momentum around cooperative business ownership is growing throughout the North Country as regional business owners plan for retirement and the future of their companies. To address their questions and concerns, representatives from Northeast-based cooperative development organizations and worker-owned businesses will gather next week in the Adirondacks for two timely conversations about alternative business ownership models.

Presented by Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) and the [North Country Center for Businesses in Transition](#), the two events — a “Transitioning to Worker Ownership” workshop on June 5 in Blue Mountain Lake and “Lending to North Country Cooperatives: a Conversation About Financing and the Growth of Worker Ownership” on June 6 in Lake Placid — are free and open to the public.

“Since the Center’s launch in January, over 60 business owners have reached out to us, and about a quarter of them are asking about worker ownership and cooperative financing,” said ANCA Business Transition Coordinator Danielle Delaini. “Our liaisons and partners are out in their communities, talking to business owners and trying to support them however they can. These events are designed to address their needs.”

Regional business owners, aspiring entrepreneurs, financial professionals, business support providers and economic development staff are invited to attend both events.

The June 5 morning workshop will feature invited panelists who will share their experiences transitioning to cooperative models. Carolyn Edsell-Vetter will speak about her cooperative endeavor in Massachusetts, A Yard & A Half Landscaping Cooperative, and the Cooperative Fund of New England’s unique role in supporting this and similar projects. Ralph Beisler will share the story the Stamford ACE Hardware, a Stamford, NY business that converted to worker ownership in January 2019.

Following the panel discussion, Frank Cetera of the Onondaga Small Business Development Center at Onondaga Community College and Rob Brown of the Cooperative Development Institute will lead a presentation about the benefits and feasibility of worker ownership for small businesses.

“Hamilton County is very invested in the Center for Businesses in Transition because of our aging population,” said RaChelle Martz, Aide to the Director of Hamilton County Economic Development and Tourism and Hamilton County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) and community liaison for the Center. “Our mom and pop establishments are aging out and need help finding ways to sell their businesses. We are looking for any way that we can help them get assistance.”

The June 6 event will include perspectives and experiences from organizations working on financing for worker ownership and supporting the growth of cooperative development including Adirondack Economic Development Corporation, The Cooperative Development Institute, the Cooperative Fund of New England, The Democracy at Work Institute and the New York State Small Business Development Center. The conversation will address questions about financing, education, policy and resource development to support the growth of cooperative ownership in the region.

The “Transitioning to Worker Ownership” workshop will take place on Wednesday, June 5 from 8:00 to 10:30 a.m. at the Adirondack Experience museum, 9097 NY Route 30, Blue Mountain Lake. To register, visit the business transitions workshop series website at www.adirondack.org/CBITWorkshopSeries.

“Lending to North Country Cooperatives: a Conversation About Financing and the Growth of Worker Ownership” will take place on Thursday, June 6 from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. in the Annex Building of the Lake Placid Center for the Arts, 17 Algonquin Dr, Lake Placid. To register, visit www.adirondack.org/CooperativeLending.

Attached: one (1) PDF document and two (2) photos

Photo 1 provided by A Yard & A Half Landscaping Cooperative: A Yard & A Half Landscaping Cooperative is an employee owned business in Waltham, MA. Carolyn Edsell-Vetter, front left, is one of the panelists presenting at the June 5 “Transitioning to Worker Ownership” workshop in Blue Mountain Lake.

Photo 2 provided by Stamford ACE Hardware: Stamford ACE Hardware in Stamford, NY transitioned to a worker ownership model in January 2019. Ralph Beisler, front center, is one of the panelists presenting at the June 5 “Transitioning to Worker Ownership” workshop in Blue Mountain Lake.

The Center for Businesses in Transitions partnership includes the following organizations:

[ANCA](#) is an independent nonprofit organization growing the New Economy in northern New York. Using an integrated approach to sustainable economic development and prosperity where economic health, community vitality and ecological stewardship are equally important outcomes, ANCA focuses on creating opportunity for people with diverse backgrounds, experience and education levels.

[Cornell Cooperative Extension](#) links the research and extension efforts at Cornell University, the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station and the Cornell AgriTech, providing the knowledge to

maximize New York State's agricultural and natural resources. CCE's regional agriculture teams provide research-based information, programs and technical assistance to dairy, field crops, vegetable, tree fruit and grape producers all around the state. The [North Country Regional Ag Program](#) provides science-based information and services to producers and agri-business professionals, equipping all with the knowledge to profitably produce and market safe and healthful dairy products and crops, contributing to the viability of New York State agriculture. The North Country Regional Ag Team is supported, in part, by six county Cornell Cooperative Extensions including Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence, Clinton, Essex and Franklin Counties.

The [Franklin County Local Development Corporation](#), in partnership with the [County of Franklin Industrial Development Agency](#), exists to improve the quality of life in the Franklin County region by supporting economic growth, employment and community development. The FCLDC/IDA offers a broad range of services to help local businesses expand and succeed. From loans and tax incentives, to technical assistance, to buildings and business parks, we're here to help grow local business.

[Hamilton County Department of Economic Development and Tourism](#) and the [Hamilton County Industrial Development Agency](#) (HCIDA): HCIDA assists with the general prosperity and economic welfare of the citizens of Hamilton County. The primary objective of the agency is to encourage and foster entrepreneurial activity, business expansion and job creation. The Economic Development and Tourism Department advocates, promotes and helps to improve the quality of life in our communities both for our residents and our visitors. We help to foster the development of healthy businesses and institutions through marketing, networking, promotion, business assistance and outreach.

[Lewis County Economic Development and IDA](#), as a one-stop-shop, work together as the central office to provide business assistance and new business development in Lewis County, NY. The agency works locally and regionally to enhance business opportunities, help create jobs and maintain economic stability within Lewis County. Through the Naturally Lewis brand, we promote Lewis County as the 'natural choice' to live, work and do business.

The [St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce, Inc.](#) plays a pivotal role in strengthening and maintaining the economic health of St. Lawrence County. The mission of the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce is to cultivate, develop and support Chamber members and other businesses by creating a vibrant business climate that encourages growth and enhances the unique quality of life in St. Lawrence County.

The [Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce](#) (TACC) is a non-profit organization that serves, markets and promotes the Ticonderoga Area including Ticonderoga, Crown Point, Hague, Moriah and Putnam, NY. TACC serves as the areas Business and Visitor Center. TACC's Mission is to initiate and provide programs, services and leadership which will enhance a cooperative business community and create a vibrant economy, making the Ticonderoga Area an exceptional place to live, work and visit. TACC's Vision is to be the leading advocate for business, serving as a driving force in the economic vitality of the greater Ticonderoga Area, uniting communities and maximizing resources.

The [New York State Small Business Development Center](#) (New York SBDC) provides expert management and technical assistance to start-up and existing businesses across the state, at no cost. The New York SBDC program is administered by the State University of New York and funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration, the State of New York and host campuses.

###