

Nominee Name: Michele Bridges

ELFCO Owner number: 2180

Email address: Michele@bridgesincommunication.com

Please answer the following questions:

Why would you like to serve on the ELFCO Board of Directors?

- To help the coop become successful again, and to become a sustainable part of our community.

What is your dream for East Lansing Food Cooperative?

- For the co-op to be successful and able to make a healthy profit.
- For the co-op to have a sustainable membership
- For it to be cost-effective for members to shop at the Co-op and for new members to join.
- For the new coop to include: small sit down Café, coffee, baked goods and smoothie bar, and possibly hot and cold lunch and dinner bar. For the coop to run the café themselves and prepare the food they sell, as I believe this can be a way for the coop to make money and set us apart from other health food stores. To offer tasty, creative, and great café items that no one else carries as this will help to make the coop a destination. To include food for vegan and vegetarian diets and other dietary needs (IE gluten free), both desserts and meals, with the meals containing reasonable amounts of protein even for vegan and gluten free meals.
- For the co-op to be a recognized/known establishment in the community and neighborhood it serves, and for students and new residents to be aware of its existence.
- If possible for the coop to have volunteers that do services for the coop to keep down costs.

How should the East Lansing Food Cooperative reimagine itself to serve our owners and the community?

- Create a very inviting atmosphere that lends itself to the community it serves. Make it community friendly (places for people to sit down and enjoy their meals). Make it's contents attractive and inviting, including the outside of our building.
- Have a new name that includes "_____Community Food Coop".
- To participate in on-going community events to bring awareness to our existence and what we have to offer.
- Hopefully to provide events for it's members to participate in that brings us together for the community.

What do you think ELFCO's role in our community should be?

Why cooperatives?

5. A Cooperative is an experience that is shared by its members. For a food co-op, it's members should have the opportunity to purchase healthy food at a reasonable price, and to purchase larger amounts of an item at a discount. It used to be easier to feel like you were part of a food co-op, as members had the opportunity to volunteer and receive discounts for their services. Many co-ops have done away with the volunteer experience, due to government restrictions. I think that volunteering can help one feel

more connected to their co-op and community as it is a great way to get to know members of the community it serves.

Please offer any additional thoughts you would like ELFCO owners to know about your interest in ELFCO's future.

In the mid to late 80's (1980), I volunteered and worked at the coop; Starting out by volunteering when I was a MSU student at the Grand River Store. Later I worked at the Northwind store and was one of 2 buyers for the store. I also was in charge of the co-op specials and marketing them to our members. I helped bring new food items to our store such as "Chamberlin Bakery Breads" from Detroit and Wolfmoon Muffins. So.... I have a history w the coop and a strong desire for it to continue to exist, strive and be a strong part of the community as it was at the time I worked and volunteered there. My first MSU degree is also partially in Retail Management.

Especially now, we need ways to bring like minded people together to make the earth a better place to live in, and for it to be here for future generations. I want to be a part of this movement, and the COOP is a great place for this to happen.