

CEF 2018 Board Candidate Statements

A. Marsha Anderson:

I am interested in being a CEF Board member because I am extremely interested in clean energy issues and energy conservation. My undergraduate degree is in Natural Resources conservation. I've completed the Residential Energy Auditor training at Dunwoody and was the Home Energy Squad program administrator for over five years.

While working on the Home Energy Squad program, administered by the Neighborhood Energy Connection for Xcel Energy, I went into people's homes to install things to help them save energy. I also answered homeowner's questions either in person or over the phone and made recommendations for other energy saving measures. At the beginning of the program we also did blower door testing however the squads no longer do that.

I am currently enrolled in the Masters of Public and Nonprofit Administration program at Metropolitan State University. I am extremely interested in furthering the energy conservation mission in whatever way possible.

Volunteer/ Professional Affiliations:

- Residential Energy Auditor training
- Home Energy Squad Program Administrator (5+yrs)
- In booth for Neighborhood Energy Connection at Living Green Expo
- Did parades and events for Xcel Energy promoting energy conservation
- Worked with energy auditors around the state
- Earned Fundraising Certificate at the University of St. Thomas

B. Daniel Bakke

I am an active learner continuously engaged and researching business models that prove successful as we move forward into a new sustainable economy. I believe that there are opportunities for small & large businesses to improve their overall operations by implementing sustainable methodologies into their everyday practices.

I have been studying and working in energy efficiency and renewable energy for the past eight years. My broad educational background; in addition to my comprehensive knowledge of energy services and practical working qualifications have prepared me to successfully perform the responsibilities of a CEF Board member. My background includes an MBA with an emphasis in sustainability from Dominican University of California, an active AEE Certified Energy Manager accreditation, and I also currently work for an Energy Services Company developing federal energy efficiency, solar PV, and EV charging station projects throughout the country.

I am keenly interested and personally aligned with the goals of Cooperative Energy Futures. I would like to actively participate in an organization focused on bringing resiliency of the community through energy efficiency and power generation. If elected to the CEF board position, I will fully engage a range of technologies and services being used at large scale for use by everyday people. I believe an organization like CEF has the potential to make the greatest impact on global warming and on a local communities bottom line.

(B. Daniel Bakke, continued)

Volunteer/ Professional Affiliations:

- Project Developer at ABM
 - Develop scope and financing for Federal Energy Efficiency Projects
 - Spec and quote EV Charging stations in the Midwest and Federal Locations nation-wide
 - Develop scope and financing for Solar PV projects nation wide
 - Organize annual Energy Exchange convention and booth
 - Write proposals and grant applications for each project
- Project Director at New Light Energy Design
 - Design, manage, and coordinate energy efficiency improvements for multi-family, commercial and industrial facilities
 - Researched, analyzed and presented potential revenue streams including intelligent controls, LED lighting technologies, and car charging stations
- Sustainable Vehicle Ranking Intern at Sonoma Raceway
 - Successfully designed and developed a customized search and ranking tool that brought sustainability practices to raceway fans and members
- Green Business Certification and Sustainability Intern at Sebastopol Community Hospital
 - Strategized, planned, and implemented a hospital wide sustainability plan
 - Performed comprehensive energy, waste, and water audits with remediation recommendations
- Apprentice Electrician at Hitech Electric: Performed trade skills associated with position demands

C. Camille Bryant:

While studying chemical engineering, I developed an interest in all issues related to the environment and took courses that supported this interest. I learned about the use of bio-filters, the development of biomass fuel, energy cells and solar energy. Because power generation is a leading cause of air pollution and global warming emissions we can't effectively care for the environment without adopting more clean energy.

I am running for the CEF board because you do good work and your vision aligns with principles that I value. I am committed to supporting agency for underserved and low income communities. I am interested in using technology to address environmental issues and provide clean energy in an equitable way. I believe in the power of collective efforts as a means for people to effectuate control over their futures. I have talents, skills, and experiences that would help you continue to do good work.

I am uniquely positioned to contribute to multiple facets of the work necessary for CEF to be successful in its mission. Having worked as a project engineer I developed technical expertise in project management that included coordinating design of equipment, developing specification for procurement, establishing and monitoring budgets and timelines as well as dealing with regulatory compliance issues. I have a law degree and the legal acumen to interpret different areas of law. In addition, I have an understanding of cooperatives that has been strengthened by my role on the Mississippi Market Food Cooperative Board of Directors.

(C. Camille Bryant continued)

Volunteer/ Professional Affiliations:

- Manage investigations, identify and analyze applicable laws, write correspondence, motions, memoranda and briefs for cases.
- Research and monitor multiple areas of law.
- Project management for large capital and complex engineering projects
- Defined, planned and managed the budgets and schedules of capital projects for manufacturing plant, which included identifying options, preparing estimates and financial justification.
- Managed the regulatory compliance of five facilities by interpreting environmental rules, following changes in the law and analyzing the impact of laws and compliance measures on manufacturing objectives.
- Completed environmental permitting for manufacturing facilities.
- Negotiated with regulatory agencies to accept plan for the elimination of pollution control equipment.
- Spearheaded a new era of community engagement for the Minnesota Association of Black Lawyers (MABL) as the community outreach chairperson.

D. William Churchill Hammond

We live in a world where our growing population continues to outpace its need for energy. As Americans, we constitute roughly 5% of the world's population, yet we consume one fourth of its energy. Simply put, if the rest of the world lived like we do, we as people would not survive. Our way of life is not sustainable and a change needs to be made. I believe that change starts at home- literally.

I'm a passionate, mission driven individual who has traveled through 60 countries and lived on three different continents. I've lived and worked as a non-American and I believe those experiences would be beneficial to the mission your initiative is working to fulfill. I've also worked in state (Minnesota House of Representatives), federal (U.S. Department of Treasury), and international (U.K. Parliament) government, while managing multiple social and political campaigns domestically and over-seas. As with any campaign, your message is only as good as your ability to fund it, and I would be able to assist with fundraising, partnerships, and introductions.

Volunteer/ Professional Affiliations:

- As mentioned above, I've worked on many different levels of government as a campaign manager, policy analyst, fundraiser, and constituent/ community activist.
- I've also worked as a consultant or in partnership with:
 - International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (Washington D.C.)
 - Midwest Renewable Energy Association (Central, WI)
 - Clean Lakes Alliance (Madison, WI)
 - UK Cancer Research (London, U.K.)
- I recently graduated with an MBA (fall 2016) and currently work as a consultant with Optum/ UnitedHealth Group in Minnetonka, MN.

E. Ahmad Kian

I have a passion for elimination of waste, this passion led me to start a lighting efficiency company where typically reduce electric consumption of our customers by 70%, which equals to 70% carbon foot print reduction.

Our hope is to convince the same customers and many more to join the journey of waste elimination and replacing the source of their remaining power needs to Renewable Energy. As a father of 2 and a member of this society, I feel this is my calling.

My 25 years of engineering and management experience, the successful launch of multiple sustainability organizations along with my entrepreneur spirit should be an asset for the CEF board and accomplishing its vision.

Volunteer/ Professional Affiliations:

- Graduate of University of Minnesota, Mechanical Engineering
- Masters degree in Management of Technology from University Of Minnesota
- 25 years of experience in engineering, operation, supply chain, executive role in large and small companies
- Founder and President of Apadana Lighting
- Founder and CEO of Apadana Solar
- Has lived in South Minneapolis for 35 years with strong roots in the community
- Passionate about carbon foot print reduction and renewable energy
- My mission is to eliminate mercury filled lighting products and responsibly recycle them

F. James Luker

My interest in environmentalism started in High School when "Silent Spring" was required reading. My enthusiasm for exploring alternative energy solutions has grown over the years. With the help of my nieces we were able to talk several farmers west of Rochester to install wind turbines; overcoming there objections and concerns about the wind mills destroying their vistas and the red lights making them feel less rural.

I applied for solar heating panel financial assistance but was denied because they would have been installed on a non-homestead property. I pushed back, my claim being that the house was heated by electric baseboards - arguably the least efficient heating source available. After being denied again I recently installed a heat pump having seen "mini-splits" in use around the world but not in my backyard.

In my role as President of our condo I led discussions on alternatives to window air conditioning in our 100 year old building. We decided the best solution was the very efficient heat pump and installed seven units, placing the condensers on the roof. The best by-product of this install was introducing so many of our neighbors & friends to this emerging technology.

It saddens me when I think how much our economy relies on fossil fuels; I was disappointed when during the last election the Kentucky coal minors didn't receive what they wanted- education & training on solar energy. Instead they were granted the right to mine more coal. Searching for a BOD position where my experience in managing nonprofits and my Finance skills can be put to good use.

(F. James Luker, continued)

Volunteer/ Professional Affiliations:

- Helped Libyan refugees at a camp in Greece
- After breaking my ankle on vacation in Mexico I noticed how many people had injuries or disabilities that required crutches yet they were going without. Upon my return I organized co-workers, friends & neighbors to round up spare crutches to be sent to my contact in Mexico. We were able to deliver over 100 pairs of crutches plus several scooters to advance our cause.
- I am a Certified Accountant with several years of experience; recently I had an engagement for a local nonprofit and found out what I was missing most of my life - giving back.
- While on assignment with Land O'Lakes I worked closely with the dairy cooperatives

G. Sean McLaughlin

My interest in climate action started in 2000, when I read Al Gore's "Earth In The Balance". While reading it, a great weight descended on me as I grasped in detail the peril that climate change presents for human civilization. This weight has never left me. If anything, it has increased as my understanding expands, particularly of how difficult it is to generate concern and passion around what I feel is the central problem of the 21st century.

I have long respected the work that CEF has been doing. And while for the past three years I have done work that runs parallel to CEF's efforts, I now feel that my own work has run its course, and that the best use of my energy would be to help enhance and accelerate CEF's work.

My expertise is in the built-world, particularly green building and efficiency in the residential market. I also have skills and knowledge around the challenges involved in affordable housing, housing with dignity, and connecting green building with affordability. I am very interested in building a stronger relationship between green efficient housing and CSG's geared for lower income folks and communities of color. I am also very interested in how green building and renewable energy can create jobs in those same communities. Serving on the Board of CEF would, for me, provide an opportunity to learn more about the development and implementation of CSG's, and how we can use distributed generation and micro-grids to build local community power.

Volunteer/ Professional Affiliations:

- Owned and ran Sean's Renovation for 25 years
- Founded and ran Carbon Zero Home Inc. for 3 years
- Completed a low carbon renovation of a 123 year old home in 2017
- Certified Greenstar Professional -- with a Gold status project
<https://greenhomeinstitute.org/greenstar/>
- Past member of Neighborhoods Organizing for Change, and member of their Environmental Justice committee
- Spent the past year working on reducing lead exposure rates among children in North Minneapolis

H. Robert Mlenek

Since I live in south Minneapolis investing my time into the community is important to me. Finding ways to improve energy usage and support the local community towards a green/carbon free foot print is key toward saving our environment. As an avid outdoors guy, I find that giving back in this way would be a great way to utilize my skillsets in finance/accounting. I have also joined today so I'm a member!

Volunteer/ Professional Affiliations:

My expertise in board governance, finance, accounting, auditing, general community volunteering, etc. would be valuable to your organization. I have an MBA, accounting degree, and a CMA certification. Also I am currently the CFO and Treasurer for a company called TrustedChoice.com; legal name is Consumer Agent Portal, LLC.

I. Pouya Najmaie

I have been studying/working on environmental science and policy for over 25 years. My undergraduate studies at the University of Minnesota involved Environmental Sciences with a concentration on Policy and Law and my graduate studies at the Humphrey Institute for Public Policy (also University of Minnesota) involved Science Policy, Environmental Policy, and Technology Policy. During this period one of my concentrations was on renewable energy policy.

About three years ago I met Timothy Denherder-Thomas (CEF's general manager) and started working with CEF staff as a volunteer. A little while later I joined on as a board member of CEF while continuing to working as volunteer staff. As of August of 2017 I have started working very intensively as CEF volunteer staff. I have been working 20+ hours a week with CEF staff to secure financing for our first 8 solar gardens. Other than Timothy, I have spent the most time, and have the most knowledge, of CEF's extensive negotiations, trials, and overall efforts towards securing financing for these first 8 solar gardens. Furthermore, other than Timothy and Bruce (a paid CEF staff) I have the most extensive knowledge and experience of CEF's financial models, future financial opportunities, and overall future business strategy. Overall, other than paid staff, I think it would be safe to say that I know the most about the inner-workings of CEF and its ambitions as a coop and have put in the most hours working toward these goals. It would be an honor for me to continue serving on the board of an organization I believe so thoroughly in and have spent so much of my recent life working with.

Volunteer/ Professional Affiliations:

- Studied Environmental Policy (and more specifically renewable energy policy) in undergraduate and graduate school.
- Worked very closely with CEF as volunteer staff for the last 3 years, including even more intensive work (20+ hrs/wk) for the last 8 months helping to secure current financing, future financing, future site locations, future partnerships, etc. This experience has given me intimate knowledge of every aspect of CEF's inner-workings and its strengths and opportunities.
- Just appointed (as of this April), through Mayor Frey, to be on the Minneapolis Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee.

J. Benjamin Tsai

I am running for the Board of CEF because I want to apply the 15 years of cooperative and financial planning experience that I have to furthering the mission of CEF. I am excited by the multiple social-benefits to be found in community solar development, including job creation and training, establishing cooperatively owned businesses, and broadening access to renewable and affordable energy. I would be honored to work as a board member of CEF to create social change and community empowerment.

As a co-founder of The Hub Bike Co-op in Minneapolis, I have over 15 years of experience in strategic planning, financial management, marketing and human resource areas. I have helped build partnerships across sectors, working with multiple stakeholders ranging from small businesses to large institutions such as the University of Minnesota. I have navigated the complexities of multiple business expansions. As a new Board member, it would be fulfilling to contribute my skills and experience to furthering the CEF vision. Thanks for your consideration.

Volunteer/ Professional Affiliations:

- 2002 - 2018 Co-founder and CEO of The Hub Bike Co-op, a mission-driven, worker-owned cooperative that provides full-service bicycle sales, service, and education. The Hub currently has three Minneapolis locations and over 32 full-time employees.
- Business and Financial Management Duties:
 - Created multi-year budgets and cashflow projections
 - Lead executive and board level strategic planning, inclusive of multiple stakeholders
 - Developed analytics and benchmarking in the areas of finance, operations, HR, and marketing
 - Authored responses to RFPs and grants, gaining awards such as a contract for The University of Minnesota Bicycle Center
- Directed legal consultants in areas such as articles, bylaws, HR policies and contracts
Personnel Committee Member (Human Resources) Duties:
 - Authored policy guidance documents and ensure consistency
 - Optimized decision making processes, job authorities, and meeting facilitation methods
 - Assessed compensation and benefit frameworks
- Marketing and Outreach Committee Member Duties:
 - Developed annual marketing plan and budget
 - Lead customer survey development and analysis

K. Scott Vargo

My undergraduate degree in geography and my graduate degree in public policy both included coursework in environmental policy. I also worked at the Neighborhood Energy Connection for multiple years in the Hourcar unit, the mission of which was to preserve the environment through the reduction of fossil fuel use. These experiences, combined with my personal interest in preserving the environment for the enjoyment and health of future generations, drew me to apply for the Cooperative Energy Futures board position.

(K. Scott Vargo continued)

I believe this organization leads an important role in connecting the macro-level dialogue on climate change to local-level action with positive results. Many feel unable to affect positive environmental change, but the fact that Cooperative Energy Futures gives people an effective tool to do just that is personally inspiring.

I bring a broad skill set in communication, marketing, nonprofit management, cross-sector collaboration, organizational results management, and strategic thinking. I also believe that my younger age will bring a different perspective to the strategic direction of the organization and its outreach to the next generation.

I am not currently a member of Cooperative Energy Futures, but would be happy to join contingent upon my election to the board. I want to note that I do currently purchase 100% renewable energy through Xcel! Thank you for your consideration.

Volunteer/ Professional Affiliations:

- EDUCATION
 - MA in Public Policy - University of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs (2017)
 - BA in Geography - Macalester College (2013)
 - Innovation & Entrepreneurship Certificate - Stanford University
 - Certificate of Nonprofit Management - Humphrey School of Public Affairs
- SKILLS » event management » facilitation (ToP® & OST) » financial analysis » performance management » policy analysis » project management » strategic planning » volunteer management
- ABILITIES » design thinking » cross-sector collaboration » macro + micro communication » team building
- RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
 - Hourcar - (former subsidiary of the Neighborhood Energy Connection), roles & responsibilities as marketing manager:
 - Developed and implemented robust communication and retention strategies and tactics for 2,500 members
 - Improved the ability to make strategic decisions by initiating a staff-wide values workshop; implementing a new budgeting system in the marketing department
 - Grew brand awareness by: expanding social media (2,300 followers) and web (30k visits/mo.) presence; coordinating staff and volunteers at 50+ self-managed events
 - Xperitas - Board Secretary Responsibilities include: developing board skills assessment, strategic planning and management, workforce development consulting