



NEWS RELEASE

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Jim Barr named Canada's first Global Co-operator

Ottawa — Veteran co-operator Jim Barr is the first recipient of the Global Co-operator Award, an annual tribute established by the Canadian Co-operative Association to honour individuals who demonstrate an extraordinary commitment to the international development work of the Association and its fundraising arm the Cooperative Development Foundation of Canada (CDF).

"I can't imagine a higher accolade than to be described as a builder," said former Saskatchewan premier Roy Romanow before presenting the award to Mr. Barr at CDF's gala fundraiser in Saskatoon this May. "Jim is a builder, and for the past fifteen years he has taken on a succession of building jobs – often behind the scenes – that have strengthened CCA's international development work."

Mr. Barr's association with Canadian credit unions spans over four decades. He was first elected to the CCA Board in 1990 and held a number of posts including a brief stint as president in 2000. While president of CDF from 1996 to 2000, Mr. Barr transformed the Foundation, more than doubling its fundraising under his stewardship.

A long-time supporter of international co-operative development, Mr. Barr has inspired many other champions to step forward and do the same.

Before presenting the award, Mr. Romanow said friends and colleagues describe Mr. Barr as tireless. "He starts early and he works late. Some folks aren't convinced that he sleeps at all."

"Canadian co-operators share their knowledge, expertise and resources to fight poverty in the developing world through the international development program of the Canadian Co-operative Association," says CCA President Dave Sitiram. "Our work is rooted in the values of co-operation and owes its success to the Canadians like Jim Barr who live out these values by making international co-operative and credit union development a priority."

This February Mr. Barr met with tsunami survivors in Sri Lanka, and he is currently spearheading CDF's national fundraising campaign to rebuild credit unions and communities both there and in Indonesia.

"Jim has succeeded because he has put his own, personal credibility on the line in everything he has done," commented Mr. Romanow. "After more than 46 years working for co-ops and credit unions, that credibility is substantial."

"I am truly humbled and honoured to receive this award," Mr. Barr said to the over 800 attendees. "There are so many people more deserving than myself, people who have contributed more to credit unions than I. I would especially like to acknowledge CUMIS for their tremendous commitment to CCA and their support to me over the years. They gave me the freedom to get as involved as I have."

Mr. Barr is Senior Vice-President of Corporate Relations and Corporate Secretary for the CUMIS Group, a co-operative organization he first joined in 1959. He and his wife Margaret live in Ancaster, Ontario.

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