

Sprouting Seeds of Radical Education
ESSAYISTS AND EDITORS

Venkatesh Balakrishna, India

After a long career in development focused on disability rights, development and organizational development, I am currently serving as President of the Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR) Global Network. In this capacity, we initiated a global campaign in 2021 to have CBR recognized in a key World Health Assembly policy statement to ensure “the highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities.” I am an advisor to WHO on INCLUDE, an online training program using CBR Guidelines and based on core values of self-determination, self-advocacy and inclusion for persons with disabilities. I have provided consulting and training services in more than 30 countries, pioneering ways to mainstream disability into existing rural development initiatives since 1987 based on these core values. Two great achievements in my life are: 1) with Action on Disability and Development India (ADD India) which partnered with more than 180 NGOs that are impacting the lives of over 100,000 persons with different disabilities and their families; and, 2) with a cross disability district federation in Andhra Pradesh India which has a total membership of 28,000 persons with different disabilities. Each office of the federation is held by persons with different disabilities and is well-represented by women with or without disabilities.

Darren C. Brown, Canada

Born, raised and living on Jeddore Harbour, Nova Scotia, at an edge of the beginning of the North Atlantic, the patterns and cycles of Nature shape who I am. Facilitating harmonious, just and sustainable learning and change within richly diverse and complex communities and organizations defines my creative professional passion. The desired result of my work is to secure just inclusion, promote equity and advance participatory learning experiences. I am a trained graphic facilitator and integrate graphic techniques and visual elements into collaborative learning and thinking designs. I have been working nationally, internationally and interculturally for over 30 years.

Deborah (Debbie) Castle (Co-editor), Canada

Being an editor of writers in a collective is a new-found love of mine! I have co-authored several books in the spiritual domain and been co-editor of the Seeds to Sprouts series. I currently think of myself as a soul having a human experience and truly appreciate the level of engagement with all those involved in this creative project. As a community partner, I participate as a lead consultant on learning inquiries and strategic thinking conversations with people in organizations in the Americas, Asia and Africa. 2021 has been a remarkable year of taking my facilitation skills online and discovering we can create an intimate environment to explore the potential and possibilities inherent in all our relations. I am very appreciative of time spent in realizing my Master and Doctoral studies, as well as meditation, as the foundation of my understanding. It’s an honour to work with this group of writers.

Shaiju Chacko, India

I am a priest of the Catholic Diocese of Jammu-Srinagar in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir in the north of India. I joined the development sector in 2006. In 2011, I earned a Master Degree in Social Work from the University of Delhi and followed it up with the Coady Diploma Program the same year. Upon returning from the Coady, I joined the ambitious employable skill development project of the Central Government as the Project Co-ordinator for Don Bosco Tech Society (DB Tech). The aim of the project was to provide employable skills to school/college dropouts. DB Tech, as an implementing partner, has been instrumental in training more than 18,000 youth of Jammu & Kashmir, a region known for extreme anti-govt sentiments and active militancy for several decades. This project opened new opportunities for youth of diverse backgrounds to come together. As a priest, it was a journey of self-discovery and meaningful engagement with multiple stakeholders ranging from community members to government officials. In 2015, I took charge as the Director of Catholic Social Service Society, the social organ of the Diocese. This responsibility helped me reach out to the rural folk, particularly women of Self-help Groups to help them set up livelihood options while engaging with different programs of the organization. In 2018, I received an opportunity to return to Coady as a Fellow to reflect on my journey and on how my Coady experience helped me to navigate the complexities and shaped the leader in me.

David Fletcher (Co-editor), Canada

I have been involved in community development and social justice work since the 1980s. Over the years I have had the privilege to work with people wanting to create a better world in Nigeria, Canada, South Africa, The Gambia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, China, Nepal, India and a few other places along the way. I work as a facilitator and adult educator and have been applying those skills in sectors such as community health, rural development, anti-racist education, personal change, youth leadership, advocacy, food sovereignty, and the revitalization of indigenous knowledges. Indigenous knowledges is one of my greatest interests, for which I earned a PhD degree in 2018 from the University for Development Studies, Ghana, for research with the Dagara people. I have played many roles over the years with civil society organizations and universities: from consultant to project officer, program manager to education director. From 2007 to 2019 I was full-time senior teaching staff with the Coady International Institute and served as the Director of Education. Since leaving the Institute, I have become a partner in People Development Ltd, and worked with the African Nova Scotian community, with various NGOs in India, and with writing and other efforts, have continued to support social justice movements on the African continent and elsewhere. I have a strong meditation practice which I am happy to share with others, and am keen to help people to use video technologies to document and report on their work for change.

Ehab Gamal, Egypt

I am a 29-year-old political and social activist, and Human Rights Defender (HRD), from Egypt. Committed to social development and inclusive change, I hold a Bachelor of Law from Cairo University, and a Diploma in Civil Society and Human Rights from the Faculty of Economics and Political Science also from Cairo University. I have studied and been mentored in governance, transparency and accountability, community facilitation and youth leadership. For this, I have been awarded certificates from the Coady International Institute of St. Francis Xavier University in Transparency, Accountability and Governance, and Global Youth Leadership. I am a past recipient of the Lazord Fellowship for Civic Leadership at the American University in Cairo. I have been working in civil society since 2008 and helped to co-found and manage different youth NGOs, as well as diverse spaces and movements in Egypt and the Middle East before being forced into

optional political exile, leaving in 2017. I am currently in charge of the Youth Driving Change program at one of Denmark's largest privately funded child rights organizations and am studying for a Master Degree in Global Studies and International Development at Roskilde University in Copenhagen.

Nawal Ghatas, Egypt

I am the founder and chairperson of Haddouta Mesreya Association. My interest and work is mainly focused on transformative learning and adult education which was inspired by my learning journey at the Coady in 2007. It completely captured my whole attention and motivated me to pursue my MA. I value and appreciate working with disadvantaged people regardless of their background, education, social status, or religion. I enjoy facilitating the process of helping people to perceive themselves, others and the world around them to create a meaningful life. I am privileged to be working and volunteering with adult learners now for more than 20 years with different organizations inside and outside Egypt; including as a facilitator for four years with a Coady project in Egypt on transparency, accountability in good governance. The facilitation journey continues with Coady graduates especially in Haddouta Mesreya and other NGOs. Previously, I was a program manager with Coptic Orphans organization for six years where I implemented several initiatives including professional training and awareness programs. Beforehand, I enjoyed working with adults as a teacher in the Theological College for two years. Gifted with an adventurous spirit, adoring traveling, exploring and learning about and from different cultures, I volunteered in five countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Nepal, India, and USA with women, youth, and refugees. Being a lifelong learner, I hold MA in Higher, Adult and Lifelong Education from Michigan State University, a Diploma in Development Leadership from the Coady, BA in Theology, and BS in Agriculture. My learning journey continues for a deeper understanding of myself and the world around me.

Olga Gladkikh (Co-editor), Canada

I'm an Advocacy and Citizen Engagement specialist with more than 35 years of diversified experience as an adult educator and communications practitioner. This includes overseas consultancies with local, national and international NGOs in Asia, Africa, South Pacific, Caribbean, Eastern Europe, as well the US and Canada. After a long association with the Coady Institute, I am currently a co-creator with People Development Ltd., a Canadian consultancy group that specializes in people-centered development (www.pdtld.net). The main focus of my work is to help citizens and their organizations strengthen their capacity, agency and voice to influence change and to participate actively in the decisions that affect their lives and livelihoods. I have a MA in Journalism and a BA (Honours) in Psychology, both from the University of Western Ontario, and completed course work and research towards a PhD (ABD) in Adult Education from the University of Nottingham in the UK. I stand in solidarity with change agents around the world who contribute toward achieving a just world for all within their own spheres of influence and action.

Anuj Jain, Canada

Joining the Coady Institute in 2010 was a turning point for me. I was moving away from direct implementation and becoming an educator, reflecting with other community-based practitioners and exploring the meanings of leadership for social change. The Coady became the place to meet many exceptional development leaders, and educators, many who became lifelong friends. I am glad to be part of this book of reflections of our individual and collective journeys, spreading the seeds of transformative education. I now manage Facilitators for Social Change, incubating disruptive/innovative ideas and managing

learning partnerships — globally and at home in Antigonish. My development sector journey started by accident, when I joined Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) in India in 1987 after doing a MBA and not wanting to sell soap or fax machines. My perspectives about life, communities, gender, inequity, poverty, and social justice changed completely. There I learned about adult transformative learning as the basis of social change and had the chance to be part of the women's Self-Help Group Movement in its formative years. I joined CARE in 1991 and engaged in several small and large scale programs for women's economic empowerment. The experience from India paved the way for me to go to Zambia, and then USA, to work with CARE's global portfolio in the economic sector, furthering programming for rural and local market systems across Africa, Asia, Middle-East and Latin America. I also managed a portfolio of CARE's programs in Asia from 2005-10 in the health, education, food security, disaster management, financial and economic inclusion sectors, based out of Thailand. I continue to engage in several community initiatives, and live with my wife Jyotsna in Antigonish.

Pamela Johnson, Canada

I am currently employed as a faculty member of Conestoga College in the Community and Social Services Management Graduate Program. I have a strong desire to see greater equity and access for all. My interests have led me to work and research into securing sustainable and good housing for people living with disabilities, and in building a strong intersectional analysis and broader representation of content and materials in the classroom. I was attracted to working at the Coady Institute initially because of my family's roots in the co-operative and credit union movements in the Acadian region of Prince Edward Island. While at the Coady, I worked as a Program Teaching Staff in the International Centre for Women's Leadership. My fondest memories are of my time in the classroom and of my collaborations with graduates of the program, which both left an indelible mark on my heart and strongly influenced my continued work in social justice. I hold a MBA in Community Economic Development, a degree in Psychology, and have completed course work for a Master of Social Work and Counselling. I am experienced in developing participatory action research in both local and international contexts, and have been invited to speak as a panelist focusing on my work on gender, disability, the application of intersectional analysis, and participatory action research.

Bashirata Kamal, Ghana

I hold a Master's in Labor and Global Workers Rights with a minor in Adult Education from the Pennsylvania State University, a degree in Human Resource Management, a Diploma in Development Leadership, and an Advanced Diploma in Journalism. I hold several other certificates in Inclusiveness, Diversity and No Discrimination in the World of Work; Youth Leadership; Gender and Development; Gender Equality and Mutual Gains Negotiations; and Gender and Organizational Development. I am a cohort of the Ghanaian Women's Social Leadership Program at the Robert F. Wagner Institute of New York University. I am a feminist and unionist who works as a Gender and Labour Expert with the General Agricultural Workers' Union (GAWU) of the Trades Union Congress-Ghana (TUC). I spearheaded constitutional amendments to create women's structures that ensure their visibility and integration in the Union and developed the Union's first gender policy in 2016. I lead various Union campaigns on the provision of child care facilities at the workplace, strengthening maternity protection, occupational safety and health, and eliminating violence and sexual harassment in the workplace. I have held leadership positions as a student, serving as the Women's Commissioner of the National Union of Ghana Students in 2008, and the Assistant Secretary of the National

Youth Council of the TUC. I was instrumental in the establishment of the National Youth Council and the development of the gender and youth policies of the TUC in 2012 and 2016.

Cynthia Khoury, Egypt

I am an independent trainer, facilitator and graphic facilitator. I worked at CIDA for 15 years in project management and monitoring the implementation of working plans. I have also been a Scout leader for more than 25 years. I am passionate about working with people at all levels and seeing development happening in them and being part of this change so people can be “masters of their own destiny.” I have always been doing some kind of facilitation with children and youth through different educational programs through volunteer work nationally and internationally. My experience at the Coady as a participant and a co-facilitator was a turning point for me as it grounded my facilitation skills and gave me a meaning, a framework and style. I learned new talents that helped me become more creative, yet simple and easy. One of the major things I learned is graphic facilitation; it makes the inclusion and participation of all participants very easy, practical and spontaneous. The spirit that reigns at the Coady makes one act with inspiration and confidence. Being surrounded by like-minded people boosts my creativity, confidence, productivity, and above all, it makes me happy, supported and at ease. I was privileged to work with Coady staff in Antigonish and in Egypt, and took part in forming the Coady Graduates Network in Egypt. The Coady spirit keeps me on the learning side wherever I am and I am grateful for this.

Nanci Lee, Canada

I am a Chinese-Syrian poet and adult educator working at Tatamagouche Centre. Grants (now gone), loans and community bursaries made it possible for me to study so I care a lot about equity and community's role in it. In 2002, I came to M'ikmaki (Nova Scotia) to work on community or member-owned finance and transformative adult education at the Coady Institute. My work has focused on economic models small enough to focus on relationships and shared ownership, networked enough to take on structural issues such as asset and inheritance rights, and gender-based violence. I also believe deeply in sharing our stories, dialogue and meaning-making. For me, these are key to connecting, changing norms and narratives, and collective healing.

Susan MacKay, Canada

I have over 20 years of experience working in various academic, educational, unionized, and community environments. Enthusiastic about educational leadership, teaching, and lifelong learning, my facilitation experience ranges from teaching English in Fukushima City, Japan; developing employment workshops for two career resource centres; facilitating international and specialty cuisine community cooking classes; leading groups through Laughter Yoga exercises; delivering anti-bullying education for a provincial union; and facilitating my own program, The PATH (Positive, Appreciative, Teamwork, Holistic) to Workplace Wellness. I am passionate about community development and working with anti-poverty organizations, in particular focused on food insecurity, energy poverty, and affordable housing. Of all my professional experiences, my role as the events and public education co-ordinator at the Coady Institute was one of the most impactful in my life. As an international event planner, it was a privilege to create Cooking with Coady, community cooking classes hosted by Coady participants, and organize numerous events in celebration of the 50th anniversary, including the India/Nepal Study Tour. Were it not for the experience of working at the

Coady, which nourished my genuine interest in and deep concern for creating a more just and equitable world, I would not have applied for the Master of Adult Education program. With a heart full of gratitude, I thank the Program Teaching Staff whose encouragement and mentorship was foundational to me becoming an adult educator.

Suran Maharjan, Nepal

I am a development practitioner by profession and by passion. I was inspired to be in this sector from my childhood as I was active in the child club in my hometown. I grew up as an engaged and active citizen for community development and learned various approaches to development. Following the same passion, I volunteered in several organizations and campaigns after school, and focused my post-secondary studies in the area of social science and development. I hold a Master Degree in Co-operation and Development from the Institute for Advanced Studies, University of Pavia (Italy), with a specialization in development economics and project management. I am a 2009 Diploma graduate of the Coady Institute, and served as an Education Program Assistant in 2012. Currently, I am working as the Youth Program Manager in VSO Nepal where my focus is strengthening the outcomes of youth contributions. Prior to VSO, I was with Action Aid International Nepal where I developed and facilitated the Global Citizen training course for youth from Denmark and Nepal. In my early career, in 2008 I co-founded Xplore International that works on the theme Information and Communications for Development for Development (ICT4D). I have a special aptitude for the use of technologies for development.

John Milad Gad, Egypt

I am an Egyptian artist, combining many roles in my work – I'm a director, an actor, an educator, an author, an art therapist, a narrator, a screenwriter and an advocate. Bringing learning, the arts and healing together led to the development of Art for Social Change and Transformation, the approach I developed after years of working to help people express their deepest hurts and sufferings. I write about this approach in my essay in this book. I founded an artistic troupe called 'WeLessa' (There is Still More), whose performances address issues of human rights and freedoms, especially those of immigrants, women and rural people in Egypt. In our work we help people understand and overcome the challenges they face in daily life. With new understanding, people develop re-enactments of the violence they have experienced and rise to new levels of self-awareness and community strength. In 2014, it was a great honour in my life was to be awarded a prize for supporting civil society using the arts from the Clinton Global Initiative, and to have President Obama publicly appreciate my work during a gathering hosted by the United Nations.

Victoria Morcos, Egypt

I am grateful for the opportunity to share the tremendous self-discovery and turning point experiences I had during my time at the Coady in 2014 when I accomplished my Diploma in Development Leadership. The adult education methodologies had a great impact on my life/career path, especially considering I had been a management professional for 16 years working in the multinational corporate sector, and seven years in the development sector on USAIDS projects, and at AUEED (Association of Upper Egypt for Education & Development) on development resources. However during those years, my implicit/hidden passion for development appeared in my engagement in different charity activities. Upon returning to Egypt, I became an active member in the Coady Graduates Network (CGN) in Egypt, a co-founder of Haddouta Mesreya Development Association; and co-facilitator with other CGN friends transferring our learnings to NGOs.

Currently I am working as a projects consultant in AUEED, applying the adult education approach in projects. My Diploma in translation French/Arabic, France (2004), BSc in Languages, Egypt (1988), and mixed work experience, equipped me with practical skills in development that were crystallized at the Coady. My passion for adult education became my lifestyle and part of my own development of practical human values in communications, and an approach to awaken people through counselling, especially traumatized women in my community. My dream is to contribute to planting the seeds of love and understanding in human beings to make the world a better place to live.

Alice Ndlovu, Zimbabwe

I am a development practitioner with 12 years of experience working with grassroots organizations and communities in livelihoods, gender, child protection and agriculture programs. I hold a Master Degree in Development Studies from Midlands State University; Certificate in Working with Children at Risk from University of Kwazulu Natal, South Africa; Certificate in Building on Local and Indigenous Knowledges for Community Resilience, Community Driven Health Impact Assessment, and a Diploma in Development Leadership from the Coady International Institute. Currently, I work as the Administration and Operations Director for Muonde Trust through locally-driven educational, agricultural and community extension programs, and a healthy dose of action research, backing indigenous development efforts that maintain the connections between spirit, community and ecology. I have a wealth of experience in livelihoods, research and working with Indigenous communities in dealing with issues of climate change and different innovations. Before joining Muonde, I worked as a Livelihood Officer with the Bethany Project implementing livelihood programs with a variety of local people. I have also co-facilitated two regional workshops in Kenya and Ghana on Building on Local and Indigenous Knowledges for Community Resilience. These workshops enabled me to interact and visit different Indigenous communities. I have co-authored an article entitled, "Climate Change and Social Sustainability: A case of polycentric sustainabilities." I have a passion for Indigenous knowledge systems, gender and climate change.

Daren Okafo, Canada

For the past 25 years, I've tried to make sense of how community, creativity, technology and learning combine to enable spaces for collective recognition, identification and response to injustice, inequity, and oppression. In 2001, while working at CKDU Radio in Halifax, I took up a youth fellowship position at the Coady, ostensibly *exploring innovative approaches to education and public information* – that's early 2000's lingo for the web-tech guy! The open curiosity, the warmth of staff and the passion for shared, critical adult learning and grounded community innovation was overwhelming, and my brief internship provided the fertile ground for launching what has become an integrated career in adult learning, learning innovations and technology, both at the Coady and beyond. More recently, I've been the head of Innovations and Research at the Irish National Adult Literacy Agency, and managed learning programs at the Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia. My broader identity as a new media technologist and artist plays a significant role in my work as an adult educator and learning technologist, and I've endeavoured to carefully integrate these often divergent elements into an integrated practice. Before leaving Antigonish, I synthesized my experience as a technologist, educator and learner into a Master in Adult Education, bringing full circle my experience of learning, guidance and mentorship under the gifted and heart-centric team of educators, thinkers and change-makers at the Coady that I've come to call friends and family.

Mary Ramsis, Egypt

I am a facilitator and community development practitioner with more than 20 years of diversified experience. I work with different community groups and grassroots organizations supporting them to discover their own power to lead change in their lives through partnership strengthening and knowledge sharing. I am a 2011 graduate of the Coady Diploma in Development Leadership who experienced personal transformation through the program. I was influenced by the Coady's worldview of using adult education strategies for leadership and empowerment. I went on to do further research for a Master Degree in Participation, Power and Social Change at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex. This study, in addition to the Coady's reflective experience, inspired me to empower community groups using action research methodology to develop and appreciate their local knowledge. This is what I am applying in my current capacity as a Program Manager at Drosos Foundation, relying on the values and the essence of adult education as core principals of community empowerment. I am always learning, whether formally or informally, following my interests in leadership, learning organizations, adult learning and power analysis. I am a co-founder, active member and animator with the Egypt Coady Graduates Network. I also co-coordinated a partnership project involving Coady grads in Egypt focusing on transparency and accountability in governance, and as a research fellow helping pilot the Coady Connects platform for graduates. My experience at the Coady helps me to live and spread development values that put human beings at the heart of all the professional or volunteer work I do.

CS Reddy, India

I have over 30 years of experience in the development sector, particularly in the microfinance and livelihood sectors focusing on community-based models of microfinance and livelihoods. I am founder and CEO of APMAS and President of Sadhikaratha Foundation, two Indian not-for-profit national level technical support organizations with a vision of a sustainable women's self-help movement in India. For eight years I taught international certificate courses on community-based microfinance in Canada, Ethiopia and India with the Coady Institute. I work closely with Government of India and State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Telangana, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh on various policy issues and provide advice on program implementation. I have written and spoken about the women's Self-Help Group (SHG) movement in India and am passionate about creating strategies to sustain it. I provide leadership in promoting self regulation of SHGs & SHG federations, promoting farmer producer organizations (FPOs) as viable business entities engaged in agriculture value-chains, and facilitating Government-NGO collaboration to maximize impact. I have the pleasure of leading a national network of major SHG promoters called ENABLE to engage in evidence-based policy advocacy.

Maureen St Clair, Grenada

I am a community and relationship builder, artist, peace educator, activist and writer. Born and raised in Canada, with Grenadian citizenship, I have lived in Grenada, West Indies, for more than 25 years. The Grenada Revolution was an impetus towards finding my own path rooted in transformative popular education. I have worked on a multitude of development projects with various Grenadian NGOs and community-based organizations over the years and am one of the co-founders of the Grenada Listening Project. For over 15 years I was an Associate of the Coady International Institute facilitating courses such as Foundations in Leadership, Adult Education and Community Development, and Community Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding. My passion lies in creating brave, inclusive spaces that enable people collectively to do the work of self and community healing and building with a social justice and trauma-

informed lens. I am deeply committed to the power of compassionate communication and the creative arts as pathways to personal and social transformation.

Daniel Toro, Hungary

I am a knowledge management consultant at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) with a background in international development and social studies. My main interest is connecting people around their common interests to learn from each other in order to change. My work focuses on designing and facilitating virtual learning network events and managing thematic exchanges among policy practitioners. By providing support to management of an FAO-EU partnership program, which is implemented in 20 countries around the world, I am gaining new experiences and learning every day about how networks function and behave. Previously I worked as a project co-ordinator for EduCare in Dharamsala, India, involved in establishing community based youth networks and self-help groups. My experience includes working on the implementation of the internal knowledge management and communication strategy for UNICEF's Supply Division in Copenhagen, Denmark. I have also worked as an intern for the Hungarian Delegation to the European Parliament.

Lazarus Udayakumar, India

I entered the field of development by chance, not by choice, as I had wanted to become a teacher. I had been dreaming of one day going to the Coady International Institute to attend the Diploma Program in Development Leadership. It had been a dream for 28 years! When it became a reality in 2014, my view of community development and leadership was transformed. I am thankful for the transformation the experience brought in my career. Courses such as Building Resilient Communities and Learning Organization and Change had a great impact on me and I try to effectively apply what I learned in my ongoing work with communities and organizations. Since 1981, I have been involved in working for the development of disadvantaged people from all walks of life from the grassroots to policy-making levels. I worked with two organizations based in Germany and then with a grassroots level community organization in India. I am now a freelance consultant offering services to NGOs in projects, road mapping, networking and leadership. My special focus is working with Coady graduates in India and helping them with their projects. Currently I am involved in a transformative project with two other Coady graduates.

Maina (Sebastian) Wambugu, Kenya

I have more than 28 years of rich experience in community-driven interventions and integrated initiatives acquired while working for several profit and public benefits organizations. I am currently working for Youth Action for Rural Development (YARD), an organization I founded and which has grown to become a regional powerhouse that has touched the lives of thousands of people, especially farmers, children and women. Besides YARD, I have held many Board positions with other NGOs, schools, CBOs, and faith-based institutions. Over time, I have acquired many competencies that have enabled me to participate and add value at policy and implementation levels. My uniqueness derives from the fact I have had to overcome many challenges, which have also acted as my motivators, to reach my current level. I grew up with multiple challenges including working as a small child to pay my school fees. In 2019, the Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operative Development appointed me as one of the Directors of the New Kenya Planters Co-operative Union-NKPCU, a new state corporation with a total of 750,000 smallholder coffee farmers and 3,000 coffee estate growers across the country. Our mandate is to help bring coffee back into profitability and earn incomes for the farmers through good farm practices, milling, marketing and value addition.

Corey Wesley, Anishinabek Nation

I am an award-winning social entrepreneur and an active member in my community of Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada. I specialize in working with youth and Indigenous populations as a Sport & Occupational Performance Coach, as well as a traveling motivational speaker. I am a member of the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, which consists of 49 First Nation Indigenous communities of Cree and Ojibway heritage in Northern Ontario. As a Master of Kinesiology graduate with a minor in Economics, I attended the Learning Organizations and Change Certificate at the Coady International Institute in 2017 to further my strengths in contributing to the betterment of Indigenous communities in my home territory. I am also a husband and father of four children, who are highly active in music, ice hockey, and gymnastics.