



## **Announcing the 2018 Gary Gillam Award Recipients**

TORONTO, May 3, 2018 – Alterna Savings and Central 1 Credit Union (Central 1) are pleased to announce Brent Zorgdrager – Chief Executive Officer, Kindred Union, and Madison Hopper – Member Service Representative, Alterna Savings, as the two recipients of the 2018 Gary Gillam Awards.

Jointly sponsored by Alterna Savings and Central 1, the Gary Gillam Award for corporate social responsibility is presented annually to two individuals who promote credit unions as socially responsible alternatives to banks. Up to two awards may be presented each year, one to a credit union employee and/or to a credit union volunteer.

Brent, the recipient of the credit union employee award, is recognized for being an exemplary leader at Kindred, pushing the organization to continue to embed and live out its values. Under his leadership, Kindred has been transformed into a national and international leader in CSR and sustainability. Notably, his commitment to social justice has played a key role in the establishment and growth of the Living Wage movement, both regionally and provincially.

As CEO, Brent has supported and spearheaded a variety of initiatives, including partnerships between Kindred and local community organizations focused on refugee settlement and restorative justice projects, established the Kindred Credit Union Centre for Peace Advancement at the University of Waterloo and invested in micro financing and cooperatives. Brent has also served on several boards and volunteered as part of his efforts to encourage the social responsibility of cooperative financial institutions.

Madison, the recipient of the volunteer award, has helped to develop an extensive network at York University of like-minded activists to embed the credit union model into curriculum and has started a group on campus called Students for Co-operation. In her work at York, she strives to build bridges between organizations with similar values to the broader co-operative sector, working together to positively impact their respective communities. Madison has also organized a variety of campus events, conferences and breakout sessions to increase awareness around the work of credit unions among staff and students.

Outside of campus, Madison has collaborated with WEOIKE Credit Union from Oklahoma City on a competition that aimed to inspire young students to learn about business through the lens of a co-operative model. She presented on behalf of Alterna highlighting how co-operatives can be used to promote community economic development and build sustainable supply chains. Madison was also featured in the Some Choices Matter video where she vocalized the social benefits of banking with a credit union and wrote an article about the credit union difference that went viral.

Alterna Savings and Central 1 will contribute a total of \$5,000 to be donated on behalf of Brent and Madison to a charity, organization or project of their choice. Brent has asked that his award go to the Shalom Counselling Services, and Madison has asked that her award be donated to the Canadian Fair Trade Network.

The award ceremony was held on **Thursday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 1:30 p.m.** at the Sheraton Centre Downtown Toronto.

### **About Gary Gillam**

The Gary Gillam Award was established to honour the memory and work of Gary H. Gillam. Gary was the Director, Legal, Governmental Affairs and Administration, at Credit Union Central of Ontario (now Central 1) from 1982 to 1988.

In 1988, Gary became CEO of Unicoll Credit Union (now Alterna Savings), where he worked until illness forced his resignation in 1993.

Gary Gillam was one of the leading advocates for social responsibility in the credit union system, long before it became popular within organizations. He vigorously promoted the concept of social investment, calling on credit unions and their centrals to use social as well as financial criteria for their investment portfolios. He supported the development of community loan funds to provide assistance to socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. At CUCO and his own credit union, he initiated social audits to measure the social performance of the organization, as a complementary process to the financial audit.

The Gary Gillam Award was established in 1996 and is awarded annually.

### **About Central 1**

Central 1 is a preferred partner for financial, digital banking and payment products and services – fueling the success of businesses across Canada. With over \$18 billion in assets, we leverage our scale, strength and expertise to power progress for more than 300 credit unions and other financial institutions, enhancing the financial well-being of more than 3.4 million customers from coast to coast. For more information, visit [www.central1.com](http://www.central1.com).

### **About Alterna Savings**

For 110 years, Alterna Savings and Credit Union Limited, has been charting new directions to help Ontarians achieve their financial dreams and build strong, vibrant communities. The first full-service, member-owned co-operative financial institution outside Quebec – Alterna Savings shares our expertise with more than 143,000 members. Holding over \$5.2 billion in assets under administration, we offer a full suite of financial services online, by phone, mobile and through a network of 34 branches across Ontario. This includes our federated partners, Peterborough Community Savings and Nexus Community Savings (both divisions of Alterna Savings and Credit Union Limited). Alterna Bank is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Alterna Savings. Alterna Bank offers innovative, online financial services to all Canadians.

Alterna Savings members also have access to the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest surcharge free ATM network in Canada with THE EXCHANGE® Network. For more information please visit [www.alterna.ca](http://www.alterna.ca).

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