

Helen Godfrey-Smith's Candidate Statement:

I believe wholeheartedly in the business model of cooperative economics. I have dedicated my life's work to the pursuit of proving that it is the model that will ultimately revive our U.S. economy and could bring about the social justice that is so needed in our country.

I transitioned from banking to the credit union movement early in my career. I knew little about the cooperative movement as there was little taught about it in my undergraduate economics classes. I worked in a credit union for a number of years before learning through constantly reading and taking classes that credit unions were "cooperatives." I then spent the next few years trying to understand why the leaders of the credit union movement did not appear to take advantage of this wonderful reality!

I have accomplished much for people through the "cooperative," known by brand as Shreveport Federal Credit Union. I am proud to say that the credit union was chartered in 1956 to serve the municipal workers of Shreveport, Louisiana. The first 27 years of its existence were not dramatically productive. However, in December 1983, I was hired as the President/CEO of the credit union. It had approximately \$1.9 million in assets. I saw an opportunity for me to live out my life's passion of helping people to help themselves as well as building a healthy, successful financial institution. Today, Shreveport Federal Credit Union boasts assets well over \$100 million and serves over 25,000 families through a branch network of 8 full-service locations (5 locations in Louisiana and 3 in the Delta of Mississippi), a number of ATMs, an online virtual branch as well as a mobile access application.

The Shreveport Federal cooperative enterprise is not within itself the "miracle." There are many credit unions that can boast of much stronger asset growth and branch growth. The miraculous-ness of our growth is that our primary target market is the low- to moderate-income households within our market areas. These households have little excess to save, yet they have learned the value of building a sustainable financial plan for their families. They have embraced the concept of passing this legacy on to their children by opening accounts for the children early in their lives. They see the cooperative model as one that brings hope.

My passion to share the message of "The Power of the Co-op" has led me to work on many boards across the country. I served 10 years on the National Federation of Community Development Credit Union Board. I am a Founding Member of the African American Credit Union Coalition and a

board member. I serve on the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Credit Union Advisory Board. These two boards are not very demanding, yet I am able to impact the credit union movement in so many positive ways.

I would love to have an opportunity to broaden my involvement in the world of co-ops. Serving on the NCBA CLUSA Board would certainly be a great place to work as I find new ways to impact the future of the co-op movement.

I commit to the highest ethics, integrity and production. I will work within the confines of the leadership structure and those who have authority. I am an independent thinker, but a team player. My focus is on making a difference for those who have little voice and generally no place at the table. I am hopeful that you will feel my passion for what I do...and recognize my desire to learn how to bring value to the Board of NCBA CLUSA!