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**What would you bring/offer to the Oshkosh Food Co-op Board?**

My goal is to put my strengths to use as a member of the Oshkosh Food Co-op Board of Directors.

- Futuristic – One of the most exciting parts of this work is envisioning what the Oshkosh Food Co-op will be and its impact on the community. Applying this strength as a member of the Board means envisioning how the co-op can have the greatest impact.
- Strategic – As we enter a new phase in co-op planning, the ability to define the next steps and see how the pieces fit together becomes even more important. Applying this strength means helping the Oshkosh Food Co-op Board and co-op members plan the work that must take place between now and our Grand Opening.
- Includer – Throughout the planning process, we have worked hard to listen to co-op members, prospective members, producers and the community to determine how to make this project a win-win for all involved. This is one example of how I plan to apply my Includer strength as a member of the Board of Directors.
- Responsibility – Taking ownership for the work and delivering on our word is crucial for a start-up project. This is a strength that I am eager to share with the Oshkosh Food Co-op Board of Directors and members.
- Ideation – The ability to problem-solve is something all start-ups require – as every project encounters unexpected twists and turns. In my role on the Oshkosh Food Co-op Board of Directors, I look forward to putting my problem-solving skills to work in brainstorming creative solutions to any barriers we may encounter.

(The strengths above are based on the Gallup StrengthsFinder methodology.)

**What is your dream for the Oshkosh Food Co-op for the coming years?**

The dream I visualize follows the Oshkosh Food Co-op Grand Opening celebration. Among the vivid pictures and emotions:

- Images of fresh produce and comfort in knowing that a wider range of healthy food choices are available in our community
- Pictures of familiar faces and a sense of community created when walking through the doors and seeing other member-owners
- Illustrations of successful producers and feelings of excitement for the burgeoning local food economy – strengthened through a year-round market through which local producers can sell their goods
- Depictions of a thriving community and a sense of enthusiasm about the impact a community-owned grocery store will have in the heart of Oshkosh

**Why do you think the Oshkosh Food Co-op is important to the greater Oshkosh community?**

Four reasons stand out:

- **Healthy food options** – In a community survey, residents told us that their health and the health of a loved one is a top priority. The presence of a food co-op in our community will help expand options for healthy food choices, thereby influencing the overall health of the community.
- **Resurgence of local producers** – We are fortunate to live within a 90-mile radius of hundreds of producers and growers. From multi-generation farm families to start-up enterprises, the creation of a co-op provides a market for producers close to home. This strengthens the local economy. In its first 10 years, the Oshkosh Food Co-op is projected to sell \$7 million in local products. This represents a substantial economic impact.
- **Community** – Social isolation is a growing problem threatening individuals and their health. Food can be an antidote – a way to bring people together. By building and opening a community-owned grocery store, we give members the opportunity to come together for good.
- **Central city** – To recruit and retain talent in our community, we need a thriving central city. Adding a community-owned grocery store to the revitalization already taking place in Oshkosh helps do just that.

### **Why cooperatives?**

My support for co-ops is in my DNA. Both of my grandfathers served on the Boards of Directors for agricultural co-operatives. My mom and I have both served on the Boards of credit unions – another type of co-operative. (Over the last 15 years, I've been an active member of the Verve, A Credit Union Board of Directors, serving most recently as Board Chair.) Co-operatives play a key role in making possible projects that might not otherwise be. Whereas traditional investors may have expectations of a strict financial return, investors (owners) of a co-operative may measure success differently. Financial success is certainly a part of that measure – but the impact on members and the community is often another. That is why co-operatives are an important mix in our economy. I am proud that Wisconsin is home to so many co-operatives.

### **Please offer any additional thoughts you would like Oshkosh Food Co-op member-owners to know about you.**

The Oshkosh Food Co-op is a project by and for its members. If you have an idea, an interest, a membership referral or a willingness to help bring this dream to reality, I'd love to hear about it. Please feel free to reach out at any time!