

# 2025 BOARD CANDIDATES



**MICHAEL  
FINNIGAN**

Thank you for the opportunity to run for a position on the People's Food Co-op Board of Directors. For over 50 years, PFC has been a mainstay in Ann Arbor, and I am honored to submit my application. As I rejoin this dynamic community after previously living here, I believe my experience, energy, creativity, and passion provide a fresh lens and new ideas for the Co-op as it faces changes and challenges in the wider food retail space and in the Co-op itself.

I've spent my 30+ year career working as a social worker and administrator primarily in community-based programs for underserved, marginalized populations. As the Director of two community food programs (soup kitchens colloquially), I've seen firsthand the vital role of providing appealing, healthy, culturally-centered food options, along with the often unnoticed importance of a food-oriented community space: people coming together to share ideas and support and learn from each other in a warm, welcoming environment. Food draws people in; however, it is a sense of community, compassion and shared experience that keeps people coming back. Food stores have always been a natural place for people to gather, learn and connect.

This idea of community is a primary reason for my interest in serving on the PFC board. As our country and society face increasing challenges and tensions, community-based programs like the Co-op must continue to be a steadfast resource for a diverse group of people collectively working together around a shared mission. As a leader within community-based organizations and as a board member for other non-profits, I have developed a keen understanding of the central role board members play in supporting and inspiring leadership within an organization while ensuring financial sustainability and promoting the work in a larger community. I'm eager to bring my experience and passion as a board member of the Co-op.

To address change and transition, board members must ensure PFC is able to adapt and grow effectively and compassionately. My prior experiences will enable me to step into this role to support the work in three areas. First, as a community-owned entity, engaging our members will be of utmost importance to ensure future sustainability. Second, we must continue to promote a healthy and positive workplace at the Co-op; a place where people look forward to going to work in a team-oriented, positive environment. Finally, the Co-op will have to be nimble and innovative in the ever-changing retail food landscape to meet the needs of our members and customers. Examples include further increasing bulk items to reduce packaging; using technology to increase engagement, promote the Co-op, and create a positive shopping experience; and adjusting products and services based on demand. Among these inevitable changes, we must make sure the Co-op remains a just and caring place for all who are looking for healthy, local food and other products.

Thanks again for this opportunity to serve such a wonderful resource for Ann Arbor.



**JAIME  
MAGIERA**

The PFC is at a crucial stage in its history. The food and social landscape has changed dramatically since its inception. There is far more competition in terms of health food stores while at the same time the public is bombarded with advertising from large corporate chains which promotes unhealthy food and lifestyle. Additionally, volunteerism in community boards and committees is at an all time low.

To meet these challenges, the PFC board needs to be efficient and effective, using all of its resources to provide a suitable policy framework within which the General Manager can lead us to increased presence in the community and increased membership. Additionally, the PFC board needs to foster the longevity of its board members and maintain institutional knowledge. With decades of service to

a variety of community boards in the Ann Arbor area, including five years previously on the PFC board, I have the energy, institutional knowledge, and skillset to contribute to towards those goals.

The PFC, and the values it represents, is fundamental to a healthy, nurturing community – an done could say the planet as a whole. Given recent events, these values are needed now more than ever. As such, I'm asking for the co-op membership to provide me the opportunity to leverage my skills so that we can continue to make a difference here locally, and ultimately, across the planet.



**AMANDA  
McCRELESS**

I am interested in continuing my seat on the Board of Directors of People's Food Cooperative as a staff member owner to represent the staff member owners and member owner shoppers as someone that is in the store daily and understands policy governance along side store operations.

I think my experience as a staff member brings outside perspective to Board Members that may not have retail experience or policy governance experience and both are essential to having a successful Board. I joined People's Food Cooperative as a staff member in 2014 and was appointed a Board position in 2017, I ran as an elected Board Member in 2019, 2022 and now again in 2025.

I have watched PFC support this community for 10yrs and I am so proud to be a part of our local economy, provide each other with good food grown by our community and provide a safe and comfortable shopping experience through a global pandemic. We need institutions like PFC to exist for future generations as an option to support a business that isn't owned by just one entity but by each other.

My priorities lie in the very existence of PFC as a whole, continuing our commitment to our members and shoppers to provide a space that offers clean food, community engagement and a democratic business model in a time when it's so easy to ignore where our dollars go and who's pockets they line.