



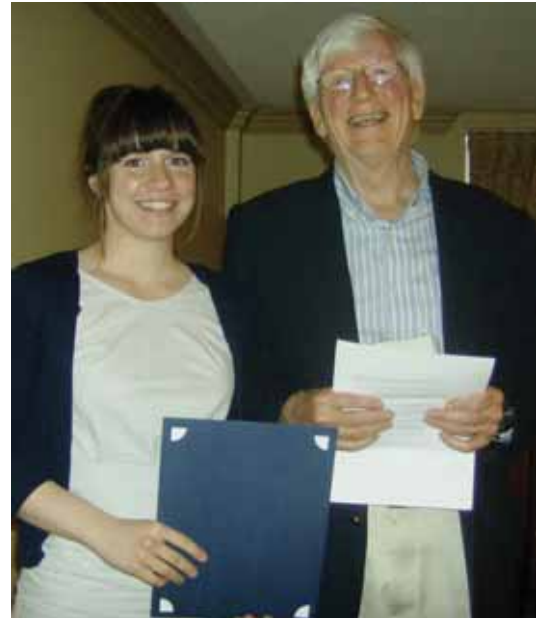
BALTA

The BC-Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance

BALTA Student Winner of ANSER Thesis Award

BALTA student researcher, **Celia Lee** is the 2011 recipient of the Outstanding Master's Thesis Award from the Association of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research (ANSER). Celia's thesis was based on research she did for BALTA on "Mapping Social Enterprise in Sunnyside-Hillhurst," a neighbourhood level investigation of social enterprise in Calgary.

ANSER gives annual awards for both Doctoral and Master's theses. The awards are given for the theses submitted that best advance theory, research and practice in any aspect of study related to the nonprofit sector or the social economy. As part of her award, Celia attended the 2011 ANSER conference in Fredericton to give a presentation on her research. ☺



Celia Lee receives her thesis award at the 2011 ANSER Conference. Photo by Laurie Mook.

BALTA's Post-Doc Heads to Regina

Sean Connelly, BALTA's first and to date only post-doctoral researcher, is headed for new challenges as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Regina.

Sean began work as BALTA's post-doc researcher in September 2009. His research and writing has focused on sustainability and local food. Sean has also coordinated the development of a BALTA book in development, ***Seeds of Transition: The convergence of the social economy and sustainable community development.***

We in BALTA wish Sean the very best in his new endeavour. ☺



BALTA Plans for 2011-12

With remaining funds from our SSHRC grant, BALTA has been able to extend for most of a sixth year, until February 2012. BALTA's research clusters (SERCs) and steering committee met in April-May to develop plans for this remaining period of activity.

While several areas of research are still wrapping up, the principal focus of activity during this period will be on dissemination and mobilization of the research. Each of the SERCs and many individual researchers have plans for publishing, conference presentations, and other initiatives to take BALTA's research results to relevant audiences and to facilitate mobilization of that research in practical ways.

... cont'd on p. 2

IN THIS ISSUE ...

BALTA's Plans & Future	1, 2
BALTA dissemination & outreach initiatives	3, 6, 7, 8
BALTA research updates	4, 5
All articles by Stuart Wulff unless otherwise indicated.	

BALTA's Plans for 2011-12

continued from p. 1

The steering committee also approved a “big ideas” strategy to focus a significant part of BALTA’s dissemination and mobilization effort. We intend to identify a small number of such “big ideas” where we think our research results can have high impact by contributing to practical solutions to major community challenges. BALTA will work with our members and partners to promote these ideas widely. A variety of strategies and resources will be developed to support this initiative.

BALTA will hold a final symposium under the current program in January 2012. This symposium will provide an opportunity to analyze and synthesize BALTA’s

research results and to evaluate our experience. The “big ideas” will form a significant component of the symposium. We will also



BALTA's new tabletop display. Photo: J. Sousa.

hold a more public event linked to the symposium to celebrate our accomplishments.

Several pieces of research will still be wrapping up this summer:

- Land trusts and housing.
- Phase 2 of research looking at the role of faith based organizations in supporting the social economy
- Co-operative survival rates and factors in Alberta. (B.C. research on this has already been completed – see page 4 for a report.)
- Phase 2 of research on procurement and social purchasing.

SERC 1's efforts are focused primarily around dissemination of research on affordable housing, including a special issue of the online e-magazine, *i4*, on this theme. Funding is also being sought for further dissemination

... cont'd on p. 7

Efforts Continue to Secure Longer Term Future for BALTA

BALTA has been exploring options to continue its research model and platform beyond the end of its current SSHRC grant in February 2012. BALTA's members endorsed such a direction at the BALTA symposium in late 2009 and encouragement has also been received from others who recognize the value of BALTA and its approach to practitioner-academic partnership in research.

Initial efforts focused on a proposal to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for a new five year partnership grant focused on

BALTA's proposal was not one of the ones selected by SSHRC for funding. There may be a basis for further work on our plans and re-submitting for a future round of funding decisions. SSHRC represents one track in our efforts to continue BALTA beyond our current SSHRC grant. Proposals to other funders, on other themes, are being considered.

Sustainability, the Social Economy and Community Transition. We recently learned that BALTA's proposal was not one of the ones selected by SSHRC for funding. However, from initial feedback on the factors shaping SSHRC's decisions, we feel that there may be a basis for further work on our plans and re-submitting for a future round of funding decisions.

SSHRC represents one track in our efforts to continue BALTA in some form beyond our current SSHRC grant. Proposals to other funders, on other themes, are being considered, with one already in development. 🌱



2011 ANSER Conference banquet
at the University of New Brunswick
in Fredericton. Photo by Laurie Mook.

BALTA at Congress 2011

The 2011 Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences took place May 28 to June 4 at the University of New Brunswick and St. Thomas University in Fredericton. BALTA was represented by several of its members and students.

Congress consists of the annual conferences of numerous associations and is billed as the largest multidisciplinary academic gathering in Canada. The main focal point for BALTA was the conference of the Association for Nonprofit and Social Economy Research (ANSER), though BALTA representatives also participated in the conferences of the Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation and the Catholic Historical Association.

Two BALTA sponsored sessions at the ANSER conference focused on BALTA's work related to sustainability. **Mike Gismondi**, **Mike Lewis** and **Stuart Wulff** presented. The two sessions were among the better attended ones at the conference and generated lively discussion.

Bob McKeon and **Deb Schrader** presented their research on the roles of Catholic religious orders and Mennonite organizations in supporting the social economy. They presented at both the ANSER and Catholic Historical Association conferences.

Other BALTA members and presentations at the ANSER conference included:

- **George Penfold** and **Jorge Sousa** were involved in a session on affordable housing research;
- **Peter Elson** presented BALTA's research surveying social enterprises in Alberta and BC;
- **Brendan Reimer** presented the results of BALTA's research in collaboration with the SK/MB/NOnt social economy research network on municipal government support for the social economy;
- **Celia Lee** presented on mapping social enterprise in the Sunnyside-Hillhurst neighbourhood of Calgary. 📍

BALTA Takes to the Air Waves

The Social Economy and Sustainability Research Network, BALTA's sister network in Atlantic Canada, sponsored three days of FM community radio paralleling the ANSER conference. Five areas of BALTA research were profiled during radio interviews conducted by BALTA's coordinator, **Stuart Wulff**. The five interviewees and topics were:

- **George Penfold** on BALTA's affordable housing research;
- **Celia Lee** on her research mapping the social economy at a neighbourhood level in Hillhurst-Sunnyside, Calgary;
- **Mike Lewis** on BALTA's "SeeChange" research looking at how communities can adapt to climate change and peak oil;
- **Peter Elson** on BALTA's social enterprise survey research;
- **Bob McKeon** on the role of faith based organizations in the social economy. 📍

Survival Rates of Co-ops in British Columbia

by Richard Stringham

Two parallel studies were undertaken in Alberta and B.C. on the survival rates of co-operatives in each province. Previous research has not addressed the questions of what the rate of co-operative survival is in either province and what factors influence the success and failure of co-operatives in their development. These two studies were designed to answer those questions. The research was undertaken as part of the SERC 1 research program.

The Alberta study is yet to be concluded. However, the B.C. study, which has concluded, yielded some interesting findings.

A 2008 study concluded that five years after incorporation Quebec co-operatives have a 64% survival rate. The B.C. research shows similar success rates to the Quebec study. During the period 2000 to 2010, 66.6 % of co-ops for which the B.C. study found data were still operational five years after incorporation. In comparison, according to 1993 results from Industry Canada, 39.5% of conventional business start-ups were still operating after five years.

The research identified the following as key factors in the development and survival of successful co-operatives:

- Acquisition of capital, strong financial planning and management.
- Member engagement, board involvement and expertise.
- Training and enlisting outside consultant expertise and support.
- Business planning and clarity of purpose.
- A major reason for conducting the research was to identify the policy directions that need to be addressed to enhance co-operative development.

The study makes the following recommendations:


- The provincial government's Registrar should ensure a more current and complete database of



The Victoria Women In Need Community Co-operative launched in 2005 to ensure the longevity of many programs and enterprises for women (like the WIN Resale Shop, above). They have. Photocredit: Victoria WIN Community Co-op.

co-operatives is available for co-operative development purposes.

- Co-ops should have more opportunities for "business planning support and other training."
- The growth of co-ops after they have been launched requires enhanced access to additional capital (the report notes that BCCA's Co-op Momentum Fund addresses that gap).
- Information should be widely disseminated which identifies and promotes BCCA as a resource for emerging co-operatives.

For more information on the study, "Co-op Survival Rates in British Columbia," contact the researcher, **Carol Murray** at: murray@bccca.coop 



Manitoba Social Enterprise Research

by Brendan Reimer and Ryan O'Connor


How many social enterprises are operating in Manitoba and what impact has this sector had on Manitoba's economy and communities? The Canadian CED Network – Manitoba has partnered with BALTA and researchers from Simon Fraser University (**Peter Hall**) and Mount Royal University (**Peter Elson**) in an effort to answer these questions.

Building on the successful BALTA research conducted in B.C. and Alberta (<http://www.mtroyal.ca/wcm/groups/public/documents/pdf/socialenterprise2.pdf>), researchers are contacting over 400 social enterprises in Manitoba to help demonstrate the significance of this often overlooked economic sector.

The partnership between CCEDNet, BALTA, SFU and MRU will ensure that the same methods and measure-


ments that were used in B.C. and Alberta are applied in Manitoba. This project will thus add another piece of the puzzle toward building a national picture of social enterprises in Canada.

Not only will this provide critical baseline data that will be useful when describing the value of this work to government, the public, and non-profits, but the engagement will also broaden and strengthen relationships within the sector.

The research should be completed by the end of summer 2011, with events planned for the fall to build on the relationships and information generated by this work. For further information, contact **Ryan O'Connor**: roconnor@ccednet-rcdec.ca 

BALTA Research Summaries

An initiative is under way to produce consistent summaries of all BALTA research projects. The summaries will include basic information about the projects – research leads and students, project title and timeframe, etc. – plus an abstract and classification key words for each project.

The initiative is being led by **Jorge Sousa**, **Stuart Wulff** and **David LePage**. A doctoral student at the University of Alberta, **Deb Schrader** (right), is working on this initiative. Deb has previous BALTA experience with the research on the role of faith-based organizations in supporting the social economy. The summaries should be available through the BALTA website before the end of the summer. 



BALTA Contributes to E-Book on Social Economy Research

An e-book is being developed to gather together a range of analysis on the experience of the Canadian Social Economy Research Partnerships, of which BALTA has been the Alberta-BC node.

Community-University Research Partnerships:

reflections on the Canadian Social Economy experience

is co-edited by BALTA member, **Peter Hall** of Simon Fraser University. **Ian MacPherson** of the National Hub is the other co-editor.

BALTA is involved in contributing two chapters to the book.

Karen Heisler, Mary Beckie, and Sean Markey have written "Pushing the Boundaries? Community-University Engagement and the British Columbia-Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance," which reflects evaluations of the first several years of development of the BALTA partnership model.

Stuart Wulff, BALTA's coordinator, has contributed to a chapter analyzing community-university research partnerships from the perspective of the partnership coordinator/manager. (Stuart Wulff photo courtesy of Jennifer Lee Jones.)



Karen Heisler



Mary Beckie



Sean Markey



Stuart Wulff

BALTA Co-Sponsors Alberta Event on "Poverty & Prosperity"

by Jorge Sousa

As part of our focus on knowledge mobilization and dissemination for this year, BALTA was a co-sponsor of an Alberta gathering on Poverty and Prosperity, which was held June 9-10 in Red Deer. With the theme of "Connecting the Dots: Social Capital, Social Innovation, Social Justice", the event was organized by the Alberta CED Network Co-operative.

I was fortunate to attend as BALTA's representative. We had a display table and hosted three roundtable discussion sessions. The event was attended by 60 participants of various stakeholder groups involved in what could be considered social economy activities, including three BALTA members.

As expected there was much interest in BALTA's research. Many of the participants were eager to make use of BALTA research in order to understand the context of the social economy in Western Canada. I left the event feeling encouraged. I went there unsure of how to connect our work to the intended audience, but they did it for me.

I continue to be quite inspired by individuals committed to this challenging work. The summit was a terrific networking opportunity and certainly demonstrated numerous research directions for both BALTA as a whole and for individual researchers.



Jorge Sousa at the Red Deer event. Photo: Jing Xiao.

BALTA's Plans

continued from p. 2

and mobilization related to research on co-operatives during 2012, the International Year of Co-operatives.

SERC 2 has been focusing recent attention on several pieces of dissemination related to its research, including journal and magazine articles, conference presentations, and writing of a book on sustainability and the social economy.

SERC 3 members are involved in several publishing initiatives, conference presentations and other dissemination/mobilization activities. A sub-group is examining how to build on earlier research related to the role of municipal governments in supporting the social economy. SERC 3 members, **Peter Elson** and **Peter Hall**,


BALTA will hold a symposium in January 2012. It will provide an opportunity to analyze and synthesize BALTA's research results and to evaluate our experience.

were also approached to replicate in Manitoba their earlier social enterprise surveys in Alberta and B.C. and that research has begun. (See "Manitoba Social Enterprise Research," p. 5).

The mapping and portraiture program has completed its survey of social economy organizations and around 30 detailed case studies. Analysis of the data is now in process.

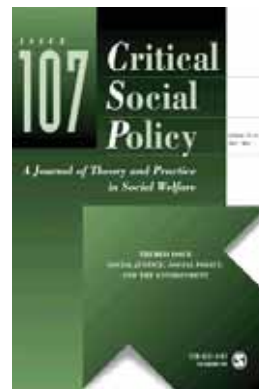
Lead investigator **Mike Lewis** continues work with **Pat Conaty** of the UK's New Economics Foundation on a book looking at community transition in the face of climate change and peak oil. The book will be published by New Society Publishers in 2012.

Work is also nearing completion on development of a university foundation course and modularized course materials on the social economy.

For further information, contact **Stuart Wulff** at: balta@explornet.com 


Critical Social Policy Features Research on Local Food by BALTA

The latest (May 2011) issue of the international journal, **Critical Social Policy**, features a paper based on BALTA research. The paper, "Bridging Sustainability and The



Social Economy: Achieving Community Transformation Through Local Food Initiatives" was written by **Sean Connelly**, **Sean Markey** and **Mark Roseland** and reflects the work that has been done by Sean Connelly in his capacity as BALTA's post-doctoral researcher. It appears in an issue of **Critical Social Policy** on the theme of Social Justice, Social Policy and the Environment.

Sean Connelly also gave a presentation based on the paper as part of a launch event for the May 2011 issue of **Critical Social Policy** at East London University.

For further information, go to: <http://csp.sagepub.com/> 


BALTA at CU-Expo

Mary Beckie (photo) and **Stuart Wulff** represented BALTA at the 2011 CU-Expo conference, which took place May 10-14 at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo. They gave a presentation on "Creating a Social



Economy Community of Practice: The BALTA Experience." The presentation was based on an evaluation of the first several years of developing the BALTA partnership model, with its emphasis on co-construction of research by both practitioners and academics.

The presentation drew extensively from a paper by **Karen Heisler**, **Mary Beckie** and **Sean Markey**, "Expectations and Realities of Engaged Scholarship: evaluating a social economy collaborative research partnership", which is being published in the **Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship**.

CU-Expo conferences showcase Canadian and international community-university partnerships. This was the fourth CU-Expo. 

FIESS 2011 registration is now open!

The **International Forum on the Social and Solidarity Economy 2011** will focus on the need for dialogue between the state and civil society to develop enabling public policy in favour of the social and solidarity economy. The event will showcase the richness of the social and solidarity economy throughout the world, the diversity of its experiences and the innovative character of its enterprises, as well as the numerous partnerships that have been built between public authorities and civil society.

To download the FIESS 2011 program or to **register**, go to: www.fiess2011.org/en/



The BC-Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance



BALTA Steering Committee Members

- Mike Lewis, Lead Investigator, Canadian Centre for Community Renewal
- Dr. Mary Beckie, Co-Investigator, University of Alberta
- Dr. Martin Garber-Conrad, Co-Investigator, Edmonton Community Foundation
- Dr. Michael Gismondi, Co-Investigator, Athabasca University
- George Penfold, Co-investigator, Rural Innovation Chair, Selkirk College
- Dr. Mark Roseland, Co-Investigator, Simon Fraser University
- Lena Soots, Students' Representative, Simon Fraser University
- Stuart Wulff, Staff, Canadian Centre for Community Renewal



Stuart Wulff, Coordinator,
PH: 250.723.2296 or Email: balta@xplornet.com
9777B Somers Road, Port Alberni BC V9Y 8N9



Lena Soots, Student Program
Coordinator, PH: 778.782.3972 or
Email: lsoots@sfu.ca

Financial support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for BALTA's research program and this newsletter is gratefully acknowledged.



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada

Canada



Don McNair, Communications
PH: 250.542.7057 or
Email: mcnair@cedworks.com