



2022 Board Candidate

Tessa Sarapo



Tessa is a resident of Ypsilanti who loves our local food scene. She ran for the board to become more involved in the community. Tessa has worked in the natural food industry for over seven years, beginning her career in sales and marketing, and the last 3 years in natural foods retail. She has been on the YFC board of directors for six years and has held two positions: board secretary and vice president. Tessa loves contributing to her community through her passion for sustainable living and looks forward to continuing her journey with the Ypsilanti Food Co-op.

1. What role do you think the Ypsilanti Food Co-op will play in Ypsilanti's future?

The YFC is an Ypsilanti staple, providing access to quality food products not offered elsewhere. Their relationships to local farmers and businesses contribute to a cooperative economy, keeping our money within the community. Unlike corporate markets, the co-op offers community residents an opportunity to take ownership in a local business and have their voices be heard.

2. In what ways are you working to contribute to and improve the Ypsilanti community?

I have been on the YFC board of directors for over five years, volunteering for local events, and participating in local governance to address community issues. Ypsilanti has become my home and I am committed to contributing in a positive way.

3. If you can find healthy, organic food at another grocery store, why choose the Ypsilanti Food Co-op?

The YFC isn't just your average grocer. The environment, the staff, the meticulous product selection, and the ability to have your voice heard make the co-op experience something special and meaningful.

4. What issue within the food system is the most important to you, and how would you address it?

There are many issues in the food system that I feel are important to address, with sustainability and ethics at the core. Many products claim titles such as "natural" while containing unnatural ingredients and leave behind a large carbon footprint.

5. What is your past experience with the Ypsilanti Food Co-op and cooperatives in general (working, volunteering, shopping, etc.)? Include what you have done to improve and support the Ypsilanti Food Co-op.

I've shopped at many co-ops in different cities in Michigan and throughout the US. I have been on the YFC board for six years, I live right next door, and do the bulk of my shopping at the co-op. I've also volunteered and attended many events for the co-op throughout the years.

6. What has the Ypsilanti Food Co-op done for you?

The co-op was one of the main reasons I moved here! I live a vegan lifestyle and having close access to ethical, plant-based foods is essential. The co-op staff and board members are like a second family to me and have really made me feel at home in Ypsilanti.

7. What skills and strengths would you contribute to the Board?

I have an extensive background in the natural foods industry, understanding different facets of the business from manufacturing to

retail. I've committed my time serving on the board to further educating myself on cooperative business and how we can continue to serve our community in a positive way.