



1977 Board of Trustees  
From left: Richard Knudsen (legal counsel), Jack D. Campbell, E.N. "Jack" Thompson, R.E. Campbell, Burnham Yates, T.A. "Ted" Sick, Robert Dobson, W.W. Nuernberger

## Jack Campbell, Chair Emeritus



Jack D. Campbell has served as a Trustee of the Cooper Foundation for more than 44 years, since May of 1974, and as Chair of the board for 16 years from 2002 to 2018. In December 2018, the Board of Trustees named him Chair Emeritus in recognition of his long-standing service and leadership.

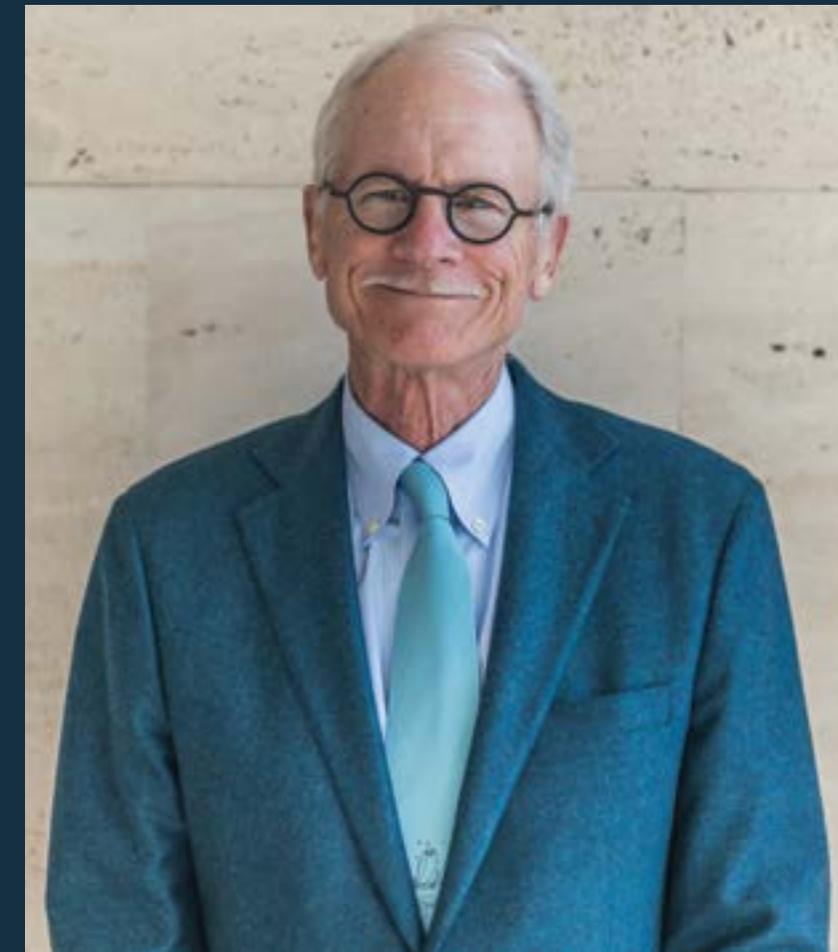
"The Cooper Foundation originally had a two-fold function, which was to own and operate a theater business in a five state area while using profits to make grants to fund charitable needs. The board was primarily comprised of business leaders.

Two transitions followed. When the theater chain was sold, it provided substantial added potential for grantmaking. The Cooper Foundation became solely a charitable foundation. At the same time the community and area was growing. Diverse and growing needs suggested a second transition – to build a more diverse board to better understand and respond to the needs of the time. It has been personally an honor to witness and be part of these transition times; to better understand the changing societal needs of our great and growing community; to meet with and learn from community leaders; to be a more involved participant in the life around us." – *Jack Campbell*



2018 Board of Trustees and Staff  
Back Row: Kim Robak, Brad Korell, Pam Snow, Rick Vierk, Kimberle Hall, Victoria Grasso;  
Front Row: Jack Campbell, Robert Nefsky, Jane Renner Hood, Art Thompson, Linda Crump (retired Trustee); Seated: T.J. McDowell, Connie Duncan

## Art Thompson, Chair



Art Thompson joined the Board of Trustees in 1984. He was appointed President in 1990 and served in that role through 2018. He was elected Chair in December 2018. Under his leadership, the Foundation's endowment grew 180% while granting \$18 million, and the Foundation broadened its grantmaking priorities and community outreach.

"The Foundation's most memorable achievements over the past 30 years are board diversification in terms of gender, race, age, and experience; adopting a total return investment policy and building a global portfolio; adding the environment as a grant priority; evolving our grant process to be more helpful to applicants and strengthening relationships with nonprofits. It has been wonderful to have a job you love, that allows you to meet great people who enrich the community, and your life. My hope for the future is continued board diversity, keeping a steady hand on investments while exploring new grant strategies, and maintaining a strong staff committed to our values and to honoring our history." – *Art Thompson*



2019 Staff  
From left: Tram Kieu, Victoria Grasso, Kimberle Hall

Victoria Grasso was appointed President by the Trustees of the Cooper Foundation on January 1, 2019. Victoria joined the Foundation in 1994 as Secretary/Receptionist and was promoted to various grants management positions throughout her career. As Senior Program Officer she led all aspects of the Foundation's grantmaking and much of the day-to-day management.

"Working for the Foundation has been a gift in my life, where I have been valued and supported in my learning and development. A culture of stewardship, the expectation of excellence, and the commitment to community service is our legacy and is personally very meaningful to me. What I love about this work is getting to know remarkable people who dedicate themselves to making a better world in so many different ways. I want to continue to grow and deepen those relationships. Making grants is simply a tool for getting to the real purpose, which is to help build a community where everyone can thrive. The magic is not in the money, it is in the people. It is only together that we can take on the most urgent needs and find the greatest opportunities." – *Victoria Grasso*

## Victoria Grasso, President





## Kimberle Hall Operations Manager & Corporate Secretary

Kim Hall joined the Foundation in 2016, bringing a strong background in project/program management, grants management, marketing and communications.

“In looking to the future, I see the Cooper Foundation taking greater advantage of our unique role to experiment and innovate as well as to collaborate and convene; seeking to listen and learn from those we support to achieve greater community impact.” – *Kimberle Hall*



## Tram Kieu Grants Management Assistant

Tram Kieu started with the Cooper Foundation in March 2019. Tram’s education and experience with nonprofits, including roles with the Foundation’s grant partners, make her a great addition to the team

“It has been an awe-inspiring experience to learn about the Cooper Foundation’s past while simultaneously and proactively creating a vision for the future. I envision making more room at the table to welcome leaders and organizations that promote open conversations, cooperative impact, and the thriving diversity of our communities.” – *Tram Kieu*

## Joseph W. Cooper



After emigrating from Russia, a young Joseph Cooper worked in a variety of capacities in New York City’s movie theatres in the early days of cinema. He went on to develop the Cooper Theatres in Nebraska, Oklahoma and Colorado. After purchasing theaters in Lincoln, Nebraska, he made this city the center of his theater activities.

From the day he created the Cooper Foundation in 1934 until his death in 1946, Joe Cooper donated proceeds from his movie theater interests to fund the gifts of the Foundation. Upon his death, he left the Cooper Theatres to the Foundation. The Trustees managed and grew the business for over 30 years for the sole purpose of building the Foundation’s assets. The business was sold in 1979. Since the Foundation was formed it has given over \$24 million to support organizations, programs and projects in Nebraska in the arts, the humanities, education, human services, and the environment.

[cooperfoundation.org](http://cooperfoundation.org)

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### Grant Cycle Deadlines

January 15	July 1
April 1	October 1



85 Years  
1934 – 2019

