



Josephine Proul, Chef-owner Local 111, Philmont - across the street at CUB

I moved to Philmont in 2004, when Local 111 was still a garage in the center of the village with a chain link fence around it. But this corner was a focal point, even then. Across the street was Stewart's, which is now the Philmont Cooperative with its green truck--called CUB for "Creating Unique Bonds." I'm in both places now--it takes a village to run a Co-op! I'm fully invested in this town.

The hardest struggle at the restaurant is changing the mindset within the community about what's going on there. It's actually a big hub for jobs for teenagers, and for adults, for families. Between the restaurant and the catering company, there are about 40 employees now. The impact of Local 111 has changed this community. It shows that the community is thriving.

We try to keep it real. There's always diversity and division in a community. Being aware of the community, contributing to the community, that's part of an active business model. The restaurant and the Philmont Co-op are both a part of that. The two businesses are very symbiotic. Eventually, something happens in a community, something shifts, and people start to believe that change is possible. There are some nay-sayers at first; people are like, "oh, this is never going to happen.." But it's happening!

By Josephine Proul