

***Winnipeg River Brokenhead
Community Futures Development Corporation***

***2005/2006
Annual Report***



Western Economic
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie
de l'Ouest Canada

Canada

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CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

It has been my pleasure to serve as Chairperson for Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC, an organization dedicated to community economic development and building capacity at the local and regional levels to strengthen the communities we live in. Our services have helped entrepreneurs start new businesses and create employment, and have helped communities and community groups improve their local economies.

Our business development staff have extensive background and experience in business development, the business planning process, financial forecasting and analysis, and counselling. This expertise allows our staff to work one-on-one with clients so that their specific needs are met. They put particular emphasis on monitoring and aftercare to ensure success of new business ventures.

On the community development side our staff are skilled workshop and strategic planning facilitators, project planning and management experts, and board development trainers. They work with municipalities and community groups to build stronger organizations and to ensure that community projects are realistic and sustainable.

The geographic area we serve is more than 13,000 square kilometres and has a population of almost 35,000. It includes eleven municipalities, three Northern Affairs communities, and one First Nation reserve. Services are also provided to residents and businesses in Whiteshell Provincial Park and Nopiming Provincial Park. It is both a challenge and an opportunity to work within such a large and diverse region.

Regional cooperation and development has been the motivation for much of the work our Corporation has been involved in over the last several years. We were successful in accessing funding from the Whiteshell Community Adjustment Fund and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, which along with the contributions from municipalities, allowed us to hire a Regional Economic Development Officer in August to help us implement the regional economic development strategy. We are very pleased with the achievements to date which are highlighted in this annual report.

There was considerable scepticism at the beginning of this process, with a number of people in the region, including existing and former municipal officials and economic development officers, claiming that while it was an admirable thing to try to do, getting the communities to work together would never happen in North Eastman. It has been very rewarding to prove them wrong. All the communities in the region are to be congratulated and we are grateful for their continuing support and their commitment to working with us to realize our vision for regional cooperation and coordination. We are getting much closer to our goals of building capacity in our communities, identifying and acting on opportunities that build on the strengths of the region, and developing solutions to address specific economic development challenges that the region is facing.

We are very proud to have received the 2005 Minister's Award for Excellence and Innovation for our work with Mrs. Lucci's Resource Centre. The award was presented to us at the 2005 CFDC Provincial Conference held in Portage la Prairie. We are also very proud of our staff who received CFDC certification this year. Kandace Nagy and Janice Walker both received Administrative Officer certification, Jenny Petersen received Business Development certification, and Mary Greber received Community Development certification. I understand that Mary's application for certification

in the Manager's position is pending. The Community Futures Professional Development Certification Program acknowledges that staff meet stringent competency areas for work in the Community Futures Program across Western Canada.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work of our Board of Directors who volunteer their time, energy and expertise to ensure that our organization meets the needs of our local communities. In the past year they have collectively contributed over 1,500 hours of volunteer time to the work of our Corporation. In addition, many of them have spent countless hours in their community promoting economic development and assisting local committees with their individual programs.

We value our partnership with WD and thank them for their continued support and commitment to the program. And finally, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank the staff for their hard work and dedication to the Corporation.

***Teresa Gmiterek
Chairperson
Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC***

Introduction

Winnipeg River Brokenhead Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC) is a community-based regional economic development organization serving the needs of the North Eastman region of Manitoba. Our mandate is to:

- Act as a catalyst for community economic development in the region by assisting our stakeholders with project coordination, advocacy, and strategic planning initiatives;
- Promote and support diverse, sustainable community economic development in the region; and
- Create and maintain private sector employment through advisory and investment services to small business.

Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC serves a large geographic region roughly north of the Trans-Canada Highway to Bissett and Seymourville, and from the Ontario border to the outskirts of Winnipeg. The Corporation has been in operation since 1988 and is managed by a volunteer Board of Directors who are appointed to represent our member Municipal and Community Councils, Sagkeeng First Nation, and Whiteshell Provincial Park. The hard work and dedication of these volunteers ensures that the work of our staff meets the needs of the communities in the region.

We would like to acknowledge and thank Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) for their continued commitment to the Community Futures Program. Without their support, we would not be able to operate, and we are very pleased to announce that we have in place a new long-term funding agreement with WD through to 2010. We are also fortunate to continue to have the support of Manitoba Advanced Education and Training for the delivery of the Self Employment Program. The valuable partnerships and strategic alliances we have formed with other provincial and federal government departments, the Western Canada Business Service Network, and community and regional organizations have also contributed significantly to the work we do as a Corporation to promote and advance community economic development for our region.

Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC continues to actively participate in the Community Futures movement. As part of the long-term funding renewal process, Mary Greber served on the CFDC Funding Allocation Committee which was responsible for providing recommendations to the Board of our provincial association, Community Futures Partners of Manitoba (CFPM) on how funding for the new contract with WD should be distributed among Manitoba CFDC's. She also continued to work as a member of the provincial CFDC Professional Development Committee, and on the CFPM Marketing Committee. Director Paul Chapman continued to serve as our representative on the CFPM Board of Directors.

We are very proud of the achievements made this year. Despite some challenges with respect to staffing, we have managed to meet or exceed all of our performance targets. We are delighted to have been the recipient of the Ministers Award for Excellence and Innovation for our involvement with Mrs. Lucci's Resource Centre. We would also like to congratulate Mary Greber, Jenny Petersen, Janice Walker, and Kandace Nagy for achieving certification under the Pan-Western Community Futures Professional Development Certification Program for their respective positions. Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC has a cohesive and dedicated team of staff and Directors who continue to proudly serve the business development and community development needs of the region.

Board of Directors and Staff

Board of Directors:

Teresa Gmiterek, Chairperson	Town of Beausejour
Terry Howard, Vice-Chairperson	RM of Lac du Bonnet
Doug Thomasson, Secretary-Treasurer	RM of Brokenhead
Paul Chapman	Town of Lac du Bonnet
Michelle Bruneau	Town of Powerview-Pine Falls
Marcel Rivard	RM of Alexander
Doug Thomasson	RM of Brokenhead
Eugene Emery	RM of Reynolds
Bob Osiowy	RM of Springfield
Vacant	RM of Victoria Beach
Don Nichol	RM of Whitemouth
Len Simpson	LGD of Pinawa
Vacant	Sagkeeng First Nation
Vacant	Community of Bissett
Vacant	Community of Manigotagan
Vacant	Community of Seymourville
Vacant	Whiteshell Provincial Park
Chris Lund	Chairperson, Investment Review Committee

Staff:

Mary Greber	Executive Director
Jenny Petersen	Business Development Officer, Loans Portfolio
Michelle Wazney	Business Development Officer, SE Coordinator (Maternity Leave)
Janice Walker	Business Development Officer
Kelly Hawes	Community Development Officer (Maternity Leave)
Lynn Patterson	Community Development Officer (Part-time)
Kandace Nagy	Office Manager
Maureen Macdonald	Business Development Administration Office (Term)

Our Board members, whose direction and leadership have been instrumental to the success of the Community Futures Program in the North Eastman region, are to be commended for their dedication to the Corporation. During the 2005/06 Fiscal Year, they contributed over 1,500 hours of volunteer time working to promote and advance community and business development for the betterment of the region.

This past fiscal year entailed many exciting new initiatives and challenges, and our team of Board and staff are to be congratulated for their efforts and for their service to the organization.

Partnerships

Partnerships are vital in advancing community economic development within the region and much of what we have achieved over the past year has been made possible by the support and involvement of many partners, including:

- Western Economic Diversification Canada
- Manitoba Advanced Education and Training
- Community Futures Partners of Manitoba
- Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre
- Municipalities in the North Eastman Region
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada/ Rural Secretariat
- J.U.S.T. Training Corporation
- Women's Enterprise Centre
- Aboriginal Business Canada
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
- Tribal Wi-Chi-Way-Win Capital Corp.
- Business Development Bank of Canada
- South Interlake Credit Union
- Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce
- Steinbach Credit Union
- Louis Riel Capital Corporation
- Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
- Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs
- Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
- Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism
- Manitoba Energy, Science & Technology/ Community Connections
- Manitoba Industry, Economic Development and Mines
- Manitoba Hydro
- Manitoba Model Forest
- Winnipeg River Regional Roundtable
- Fillmore Riley
- Sunrise School Division
- School District of Whiteshell
- AIM for Work
- Tembec Paper Group, Pine Falls Operations
- Black River First Nation
- Hollow Water First Nation
- Eastern Manitoba Artists Co-Op
- Independent Living Resource Centre
- Society for Manitobans with Disabilities
- Eastman Regional Development Inc.
- Mrs. Lucci's Resource Centre
- Manitoba Education, Citizenship & Youth
- MB4Youth
- Service Canada
- Agassiz Adult Education
- Junior Achievement of Manitoba
- Triple R CFDC
- North Red CFDC
- La Vérendrye Trail Tourism Association
- Eastern Manitoba Tourism Association
- Beausejour Brokenhead Development Corporation
- Pinawa Community Development Corporation
- St. Georges Community Economic Development Corporation
- Grand Beach and Area Development Corporation
- Seymourville Community Development Corporation
- Whitemouth Community Development Corporation
- Beausejour and District Chamber of Commerce
- Lac du Bonnet and District Chamber of Commerce
- Falcon and West Hawk Lakes Chamber of Commerce
- Pinawa Chamber of Commerce
- Blue Water Chamber of Commerce
- Springfield Chamber of Commerce
- Deep River Science Academy, Whiteshell Campus
- Pinawa Economic Development Office
- Association for Community Living, Beausejour Branch
- Eastman Regional Assessment Committee
- Canadian Cancer Society, Manitoba Div.
- RBC Financial Group

Business Development Services

Technical Assistance

Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC provides technical assistance to entrepreneurs interested in starting or expanding a business. Our staff have expertise in market research, business planning, and financial forecasting and analysis. We also provide counselling and training in a number of business-related areas. During the 2005-2006 Fiscal Year, we provided 1,580 business development services to 209 clients, including general information services, technical assistance and advisory services, monitoring, and training.

In partnership with Beausejour Brokenhead Development Corporation and the Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre a series of ten entrepreneurial training workshops were delivered for the business community in the region.

Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC acts as a service provider for the Provincial Youth Entrepreneurs Program, and during the fiscal year we assisted in the preparation and submission of two financing applications for the program.

Staff continue to serve as an information and pathfinding resource for clients, and were successful in partnering with Aboriginal Business Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Tribal Wi-Chi-Way-Win Capital Corporation, MB Advanced Education and Training, MB Education, Citizenship and Youth, Business Development Bank of Canada, Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, Independent Living Resource Centre, Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre, Aboriginal Business Service Network, South Interlake Credit Union, Steinbach Credit Union and Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce to provide information and access services and/or funding for a number of clients. During this fiscal year, our business services helped clients successfully leverage \$403,000 in commercial financing.

Three of our business clients were featured in entrepreneurial publications. Bob and Gene Hutlet, owners of the Burger Boat, were featured in the Access West magazine, a quarterly publication by Western Economic Diversification Canada that highlights entrepreneurial success stories. Bob and Gene's story was also featured in the Pan-Canadian Community Futures Annual Report – Building Strong and Vibrant Communities, and in the Community Futures Partners of Manitoba (CFPM) newsletter. Greg and Kim Ftoma, owners of the Brereton Lake Resort, were featured in the Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre newsletter. Donna Warenko, owner of Granite Internet Services Inc. was featured in the Community Futures Partners of Manitoba newsletter for winning the 2005 Manitoba Woman Entrepreneur Award for Excellence in Service.

Investment Funds

The Corporation also acts as an alternative lender and manages investment funds that are used to provide business loans to help finance business start-ups or expansion. During the 2005/06 Fiscal Year, five loans totalling \$50,500 were approved and an additional \$7,000 was leveraged through financial institutions or owner equity. Funds borrowed from the Corporation over the past year helped to create or maintain seven full-time jobs in the region.

Our Loans program is operated as a revolving fund, with repayments on loans being reinvested to provide the availability of funds for other entrepreneurs to start or expand their business. The total principal and interest reinvested in the fiscal year was \$230,938.

Since its inception, Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC has approved 190 loans valued at \$5,280,763 that helped to create or maintain 527 jobs.

**REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF INVESTMENT FUNDS
Inception to March 31, 2006**

LOCATION	DOLLARS LENT	OTHER FUNDS LEVERAGED	JOB CREATED
Alexander/Pine Falls/Powerview	\$ 362,408	\$ 636,862	45.5
Beausejour/Brokenhead	\$ 903,667	\$3,093,963	86.5
Lac du Bonnet (Town & RM)	\$1,029,181	\$1,013,119	84.0
Manigotagan/Seymourville/Bissett	\$ 131,295	\$ 160,003	21.0
Pinawa	\$ 712,198	\$1,015,436	66.5
Reynolds	\$ 471,578	\$ 553,500	52.0
Sagkeeng First Nation	\$ 26,000	\$ 10,900	4.0
Springfield	\$ 553,563	\$ 647,500	49.0
Victoria Beach	\$ 174,375	\$ 185,000	24.5
Whitemouth	\$ 256,418	\$ 699,840	34.5
Whiteshell Provincial Park	\$ 497,080	\$1,500,466	42.5
Other	\$ 163,000	\$ 621,575	17.0
Total	\$5,280,763	\$10,138,164	527.0

Self Employment Program (SE)

Our Corporation, on behalf of Manitoba Advanced Education and Training, administers the Self Employment Program (SE) for the North Eastman region. The program provides an opportunity for unemployed individuals who are EI-eligible to start their own business while still being able to collect their employment insurance benefits. SE clients work with our Business Development Officer who assists them with business plan development, marketing, and financial analysis, and provides counselling and monitoring for the full term they are on the program.

Over the past year, 597 services were provided to SE clients in the areas of business planning, monitoring, and counselling. In addition, a full day Marketing Workshop and a Time Management Workshop were delivered for SE clients during the fiscal year.

Information sessions on the Self Employment Program (SE) were held in ten communities throughout the region including: Lac du Bonnet, Powerview-Pine Falls, Pinawa, Whitemouth, Seymourville, Fort Alexander, Anola, Hadashville, Oakbank, and Beausejour.

Nineteen new clients were accepted into the program since the beginning of the fiscal year, and 16 successfully completed the program. In total, during the 2005/06 Fiscal Year, there were 37

participants on the SE Program with 46 jobs being created through new business enterprises. There are currently 12 active SE clients. Since we began delivering the SE Program, 392 people have participated in the program. One of our SE clients, Wayne Fontaine who owns and operates Bubbles Laundromat, was featured in the trade magazine "Fabricare Canada".

Community Development Services

Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC provides assistance to Municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Community Development Corporations, and other community groups and organizations with project coordination, strategic planning, and facilitation services. We also act as a liaison between the community and various levels of government in the assessment of community challenges and the design of potential solutions. Our office also has current information available on various government programs that may be of benefit to community groups working on specific projects.

Over the past year, Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC has:

- Facilitated three strategic planning sessions with community groups
- Delivered five Board training sessions for non-profit organizations and assisted two other groups with the development of By-Laws
- Worked on two tourism-related initiatives
- Organized eight community development workshops
- Provided assistance with preparing project plans, feasibility studies, funding applications, and other resource support to 33 groups throughout the region who are undertaking community projects

The following describes some of the major community development projects and initiatives that we have been involved with over the past year.

Whiteshell Community Adjustment Fund

We administer the Whiteshell Community Adjustment Fund on behalf of Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD). A total of \$3.75M is being provided by the federal government to assist the economic diversification efforts of communities affected by the downsizing and closure of AECL's operations at Whiteshell Laboratories.

A Steering Committee, composed of representatives of the Corporation and impacted communities, reviews proposals and makes recommendations for funding approval. The Steering Committee met three times during the past fiscal year. Staff responded to nine inquiries regarding the criteria and process for applying for assistance under the program, and provided technical assistance to three proponents with market research, project plan development, and reviews of preliminary applications and detailed project plans.

In 2005/06, two projects were approved for funding:

- RM of Brokenhead – \$100,000 to assist with the installation of a concrete floor and an artificial ice plant in the Garson Arena
- Eastman Regional Development Inc. – \$158,000 to assist with the expansion of broadband (high-speed) internet service in the North Eastman region

Regional Economic Development Strategy

Thanks to funding support from eleven Municipal Councils, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Rural Secretariat) under the Networking Initiative Program, and the Whiteshell Community Adjustment Fund, we were able to hire Jimm Simon as the Regional Economic Development Coordinator on a two-year term contract. We continue to work in partnership with Eastman Regional Development Inc., and Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives.

Over the past fiscal year, the following work was undertaken on the regional economic development strategy:

- Organized three meetings of the Regional CAO's Committee, and researched models for cost/revenue sharing formulas and regional cooperation agreements
- Established the Regional Public Works Committee, organizing five meetings of the committee, compiled a regional equipment inventory, and researched models for equipment sharing agreements
- Organized and facilitated three joint meetings of the Chambers of Commerce and Community Development Corporations from throughout the region
- Assisted with the establishment of a Chamber of Commerce in the RM of Springfield
- Assisted with a feasibility study for a regional trades training initiative
- Provided resource support to the Winnipeg River Regional Roundtable
- Held meetings with major employers in the region to discuss their role in economic development in the region and plans for hosting opportunity identification workshops related to their economic sectors
- Organized and hosted a full-day Community Festival Planning and Management Workshop
- Organized and hosted two information sessions – one on the potential for biodiesel production in the region and one on the potential for wind power development. We are now working with the Eastman Bio-Fuels Committee that is looking into the feasibility of establishing a small biodiesel production plant.
- Established an ad-hoc Regional Marketing Committee and held two meetings with the committee
- Followed-up with municipalities for community profile updates for the regional website www.investmanitoba.com
- Held meetings with Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, MB4Youth, Sunrise School Division and the Rural Team Youth Committee to discuss youth leadership and youth retention issues and models
- Established a Planning Committee which is organizing a two-day Youth Forum and Career Fair that will take place in May 2007
- Provided research and planning assistance for projects being undertaken by the Lac du Bonnet Airport Authority, the St. Georges Community Development Corporation, and the Lac du Bonnet and District Chamber of Commerce
- Worked with a committee and prepared a business plan for the establishment of a business incubator in Pinawa
- Prepared a regional profile highlighting labour supply, education, wage rates, and local broadband connectivity for a U.S. company looking to establish inbound customer service operations in rural Manitoba
- Assumed responsibility for a Planning Committee which is organizing "Showcasing Eastern Manitoba", a major trade show to promote the region

- Prepared and submitted an application under the Summer Career Placement Program to hire a summer student to work on tourism initiatives, conducted interviews and hired a student.

The monitoring report on the progress on the implementation of the regional economic development strategy is updated on a quarterly basis and presented to Councils at each of the quarterly meetings of the Eastern Regional Municipal Forum, to the Regional CAO's Committee, and at the joint meetings of Chambers of Commerce and Community Development Corporations. Copies of the report are available to anyone who is interested in receiving it. The regional strategy is reviewed with Councils on an annual basis, and revised as required and appropriate. Revisions to the strategic plan were approved by municipal officials at the September 2005 Regional Municipal Forum.

Pinawa Business Incubator

We have been working with a committee composed of business people, town officials, and the local Community Development Corporation on the establishment of a business incubator at the W.B. Lewis Business Centre in Pinawa. Research on business incubator models was undertaken and we prepared a business plan for the committee. The business incubator will provide opportunities for growth for newly-established businesses or home-based businesses that are ready to move into commercial space, hands-on training and mentoring, shared administrative services, flexible leasing arrangements, and graduated subsidized rental rates. Letters were sent to home-based businesses in Pinawa describing the purpose and benefits of the incubator, as well as the application and incubation process, and inviting expressions of interest. It is expected that the business incubator will be operational within the next couple of months.

Showcasing Eastern Manitoba

A major trade show called "Showcasing Eastern Manitoba" is being organized that will be held August 24-25, 2007 at the SunGro Centre in Beausejour. The event will be organized around a number of themes to promote the region as a place to live, work, and play. In addition to exhibits and displays, there will be a section devoted to the "Tastes of Eastern Manitoba", and an Artisans Showcase, as well as entertainment and children's activities. The target audience for the event is Winnipeg, Northwestern Ontario, and the rest of Manitoba.

A Planning Committee has been established with representation from Beausejour Brokenhead Development Corporation, Pinawa Community Development Corporation, Eastman Regional Development Inc., Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, and Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC. The Planning Committee met five times during the year. A project management plan and budget have been prepared, and an exhaustive list of potential exhibitors has been identified.

Youth Forum and Career Fair

Another major initiative that we are working on is the organization of a two-day Youth Forum and Career Fair that will take place in May 2007. The event will consist of a career fair with exhibits by area employers to highlight career opportunities as well as workshops on employment, entrepreneurship, and youth leadership. Considerable support exists for this initiative and we have a number of partners in place that are serving on the Planning Committee including: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth; Sunrise School Division; Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives; Eastman Regional Development; J.U.S.T Training Corporation; and Mrs. Lucci's

Resource Centre. There will also be opportunities for extensive youth involvement and leadership development in the planning and carrying out of the event.

Marketing and Visibility

Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC places importance on activities that help to increase awareness of our Corporation and our success stories, and recognition of the support we receive from our partners, particularly Western Economic Diversification Canada. The marketing and visibility activities not only allow us to share information and acknowledge the outstanding business and community development projects within our region, but help us be accountable to the communities we serve.

The following are the marketing and visibility activities undertaken during the 2005/06 Fiscal Year.

Activity Reports

The *Monthly Highlights* report, that summarizes the main business and community development activities that have been achieved, is sent electronically via e-mail as well as through regular mail to an extensive distribution list consisting of Councils, Chambers of Commerce, community and regional development corporations, regional MP's and MLA's, stakeholders, partners, and regional media. Although we endeavour to complete and send the report on a monthly basis, it is not always possible, and this year's staff shortages meant we were only able to prepare and distribute five.

Media Exposure

Five press releases were issued during the fiscal year covering such things as funding for projects under the Whiteshell Community Adjustment Program, the regional economic development strategy, and the Eastern Manitoba Artist's Co-Op. The press releases resulted in positive coverage in all five of the regional newspapers for not only our CFDC, but also for support received from Western Economic Diversification Canada. The regional newspapers have a combined circulation of over 200,000.

A number of positive articles on initiatives undertaken by the Corporation, or events we organized or participated in, appeared in local newspapers. Some of the newspapers in the region print excerpts from the *Monthly Highlights* report providing ongoing exposure of our CFDC and the Community Futures program. Following a presentation at Rural Forum, the Executive Director was interviewed by a Dauphin radio station, and a local Brandon TV station. As a follow-up, she was interviewed by the Co-operators Magazine regarding the impact of technology for rural development. WD issued a press release announcing that we had won the Minister's Award for Excellence and Innovation for our work with Mrs. Lucci's Resource Centre which was picked up by our local papers.

The Access West publication featured our Regional Small Business Trade Show that was held the previous year as well as the Minister's Award for Excellence in CFDC Volunteerism awarded to Paul Chapman. The award for Mr. Chapman was also highlighted in the Pan-West Community Futures Annual Report and in the Community Futures Partners of Manitoba (CFPM) newsletter. The CFPM newsletter also featured our work with the Eastern Manitoba Artist's Co-Op. The Pan-

Canadian Community Futures Newsletter “Flash” featured a story on our regional economic development strategy.

Advertising

Monthly ads promoting the Self Employment Program appear in five community newspapers in the region. During Small Business Week, we ran a full-page ad publicizing the business and community development services we offer, and it featured two of our business clients.

Special ads were also placed throughout the year announcing special events such as the Annual General Meeting and Awards Banquet, the Small Business Week event, and the Self Employment information sessions. In addition, an ad on our services was placed in both the Experience Lac du Bonnet magazine and the RM of Whitemouth magazine.

Presentations

Presentations on the Community Futures program and the services provided by our Corporation were made to three Municipal Councils, and two community groups. Presentations on the progress of the regional strategy were made at the quarterly meetings of the Eastern Region Municipal Forum, and at the Regional CAO’s Committee meetings and the joint meetings of Chambers of Commerce and Community Development Corporations.

The Executive Director made a presentation describing some of the community initiatives we have been involved with at Rural Forum 2005 as part of a panel discussion on Manitoba Communities Seizing Opportunities.

Events and Trade Shows

In celebration of Small Business Week, we hosted the “Strategies for Success” workshop in Lac du Bonnet for entrepreneurs and those looking to strengthen their business community. Forty-eight people attended the workshop where they heard from five guest speakers about real-life situations in which businesses have employed specific strategies that have allowed them and their business community to grow and prosper.

We participated in the Manitoba Model Forest Funders Forum in April 2005. An Open House was held at Fort Alexander in September to increase awareness in the community about Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC, the Community Futures Program, and the SE Program. Partners from the Aboriginal Business Service Network and Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre participated as well. Information sessions focused on the SE Program were held in 10 communities between February and March 2006.

Other Marketing and Visibility Activities

Five informational display racks that hold poster boards, brochures, publications, and newsletters of the Corporation are maintained in public locations throughout the region.

Updates to our website www.wrbcfdc.mb.ca were made throughout the year.

We were the proud recipients of the Ministers Award for Excellence and Innovation for our work with Mrs. Lucci’s Resource Centre. The award was presented at the 2005 CFDC Provincial Conference held in Portage la Prairie.

2005/06 Award Recipients

Each year, Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC honours outstanding business clients and community initiatives.

The Business of the Year Award and the Youth Entrepreneur of the Year Award recognize outstanding efforts by our business clients who have demonstrated success in the development of their businesses, have clear objectives for growth, and who relay an attitude of commitment and cooperation to the community and other businesses.

The Community Initiative Award is presented to a community organization that has utilized our services, in recognition of their efforts to advance a project intended to contribute to community economic development in the region.

We also present awards to Self Employment Program participants who have demonstrated above average effort and success during their year on the program, and who have achieved set goals, and used innovation, judgement and skill to deal with obstacles they faced in their first year of business.

Winnipeg River Brokenhead CFDC is very pleased to acknowledge the winners of this year's awards:

- **Business of the Year Award:** Greg and Kim Ftoma, Brereton Lake Resort, Rennie
- **Youth Entrepreneur of the Year Award:** Lloyd Holm, Holm Convenience, Tyndall
- **Community Initiative Award:** Eastern Manitoba Artist's Co-Op

- **Self Employment Program Awards:**
 - Sandra Grouette, Grouette Designs, Lac du Bonnet
 - Connie Sorenson, Rennie General Store, Rennie