

**2006/2007
Annual Report**



Western Economic
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie
de l'Ouest Canada

Canada

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CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

This year has been a busy and challenging one for Community Futures Winnipeg River. Staffing issues resulting from maternity and disability leaves, elder care responsibilities, and the resignation of two employees put considerable pressure and additional workload on the rest of the staff. As expected, they rose to the challenge, redefined the concept of "teamwork", and accomplished a great deal of work as is evidenced in this Annual Report.

We also faced the challenge that comes with the impact that a Municipal election has on the makeup of our Board of Directors. This year we saw a 65% turnover having lost 7 Board members either because they chose not to run or were not re-elected. Fortunately, half of the new Directors on our Board have previous Community Futures experience, and although the learning curve may be steep for the others, they can count on the staff and the rest of Board for assistance. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to those Directors who have left us, and I look forward to working with the new Board.

Although change has its challenges, it also brings new opportunities. Our new long-term funding contract with WD allows us to increase the amount of financial assistance we can offer entrepreneurs so that now loans of up to \$150,000 can be provided for new business start-ups or expansions. We can also now lend to social enterprises and two such loans were approved this year.

We have a new look and a new name as a result of the common branding initiative being implemented by the 90 Community Futures organizations across Western Canada. The new leaf logo and tagline "Growing Communities One Idea at a Time" will create a unified profile for all members and will build awareness about the vital community economic development work that Community Futures does in rural communities. Now people will no longer have to try to remember "Winnipeg River Brokenhead Community Futures Development Corporation"!

With the support of our Provincial Association, Community Futures Manitoba, our office is now equipped with videoconferencing technology. This equipment allows our clients and members of the business community to participate in entrepreneurial training sessions offered through the Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre right here in the region without having to travel to the City. The videoconferencing sessions have proved to be very popular with 85 people attending 20 training sessions in the first six months that it has been operating.

We have forged new partnerships this past year which is so important to furthering our community economic development efforts. We are also seeing more traffic in the office resulting from our partnership with Service Canada as one of their Outreach sites, and with MB4Youth hosting the Manitoba Youth Job Centre office. Every year we succeed in building stronger relationships within and between our communities. We are working together regionally as we never have before and we applaud the continuing support and commitment of our communities to the regional economic development strategy and to working with us to realize our vision for regional cooperation and coordination.

As Community Futures Winnipeg River enters its 20th year, it continues to amaze me how our region has evolved and the contributions this organization has made to helping entrepreneurs start new businesses and create employment, and helping communities and community groups improve

their local economies. We must continue to build capacity in our communities to deal with the challenges of community economic development, and we must continue to establish and nurture partnerships to better serve our clients and communities, and to maximize opportunities for the region.

Community Futures Winnipeg River places a great deal of importance on transparency and accountability. The Annual General Meeting and this Annual Report not only allows us to share information and acknowledge the outstanding business and community development projects within our region, but helps us be accountable to the communities we serve. We encourage you to provide us with feedback on how we are doing, and welcome any input so that the needs of your community are reflected in our planning and in the development of our programs and services.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work of our Board of Directors who volunteer their time, energy and expertise to ensure that our organization continues to be a significant contributor to community economic development in the North Eastman region. In the past year they have collectively contributed close to 1,100 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, and for the integrity and passion with which they represent Community Futures Winnipeg River.

***Teresa Gmiterek
Chairperson
Community Futures Winnipeg River***

Introduction

Community Futures Winnipeg River 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.

Community Futures Winnipeg River 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. This year a Director at Large was appointed by the Board for his expertise in the Community Futures Program. The Directors bring considerable expertise to the organization and several of them are entrepreneurs. They are very knowledgeable about the communities they represent and the challenges that their communities face. Their participation on our Board ensures that the needs of their community are reflected in our planning and development of our programs and services. This year the Board of Directors participated in two Community Futures Board Development training modules: Financial Management of a Community Futures, and Community Futures Lending.

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 this important economic development program. We are also fortunate to continue to have the support of Employment Manitoba 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, municipalities, 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.

We are a regional site for the Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre and maintain an extensive business resource library. Two community access computers provide public access to high-speed internet. This year Service Canada set up an outreach site at our office which is staffed every other Thursday. The outreach site provides a one-stop shop for people to access information and resources related to federal government programs and services. In partnership with J.U.S.T Training Corporation, we are also hosting the Manitoba Youth Job Centre in our offices this summer.

Winnipeg River continues to actively participate in the Community Futures movement. Mary Greber served on the Pan-West TEA Software Development Committee which was responsible for identifying issues and providing advice and recommendations related to the use of The Exceptional Assistant (TEA) software program for the new online Performance Measurement Tool for reporting to WD. She also continued to work as a member of the provincial Community Futures Professional Development Committee, and Marketing Committee. Jenny Petersen continues to serve on the Board for the Community Futures Investment Fund which provides for a readily-available pool of

dollars that can be accessed by Community Futures offices in Manitoba that are short of funds needed to provide business loans to their clients. Director Roland Dandeneau serves as our representative on the Board of Directors of Community Futures Manitoba and as their representative on the Pan-Canadian Community Futures Association.

This year saw the introduction of a new common brand that has been adopted by all 90 Community Futures organizations in Western Canada. The new common identifier will create a unified profile for all members and will build awareness about the vital community economic development work that Community Futures does in rural communities. The new Community Futures 'leaf' logo with the letterforms "C" and "F" signifies growth and vitality. Combined with the new tagline "Growing Communities One Idea at a Time", the new brand reinforces the value we place on locally driven solutions, the work we do to support diversified economic growth, and the creative spirit of small business entrepreneurship.

Community Futures Winnipeg River 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. Despite some staffing issues we have managed to meet or exceed all of our performance targets. We measure the success of our organization to that of our clients and our communities, and we are very proud of the achievements made this year.

This Annual Report highlights the major activities and accomplishments of Community Futures Winnipeg River over the past year.

Board of Directors and Staff

Board of Directors:

Teresa Gmiterek, Chairperson	Town of Beausejour
Doug Thomasson, vice-Chairperson	RM of Brokenhead
Chris Lund, Secretary-Treasurer	RM of Reynolds
George Harbottle	RM of Alexander
Paul Chapman	Town of Lac du Bonnet
Don Halbert	RM of Lac du Bonnet
Clay McMurren	LGD of Pinawa
Rick Rusk	Town of Powerview-Pine Falls
Bob Bodnaruk	RM of Springfield
Glenn Malkoske	RM of Whitemouth
Roland Dandeneau	Member at Large
Vacant	RM of Victoria Beach
Vacant	Community of Bissett
Vacant	Community of Manigotagan
Vacant	Community of Seymourville
Vacant	Sagkeeng First Nation
Vacant	Whiteshell Provincial Park

Staff:

Mary Greber	Executive Director
Jenny Petersen	Business Development Officer, Investment Fund Portfolio
Michelle Wazney	Business Development Officer, SE Coordinator
Janice Walker	Business Development Administration Officer
Maureen Macdonald	Community Development Administration Officer
Kandace Nagy	Office Manager
Jimm Simon	Regional Economic Development Coordinator (Term contract)

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 2006/07 Fiscal Year, they contributed almost 1,100 hours of volunteer time working to promote and advance community and business development for the betterment of the region.

We would like to acknowledge the contributions of past Board members who worked with us during the fiscal year:

- Terry Howard, RM of Lac du Bonnet
- Marcel Rivard, RM of Alexander
- Bob Osiowy, RM of Springfield
- Michelle Bruneau, Town of Powerview-Pine Falls
- Don Nichol, RM of Whitemouth
- Len Simpson, LGD of Pinawa
- Eugene Emery, RM of Reynolds

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
- Employment Manitoba
- Community Futures Manitoba
- Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre
- Aboriginal Business Service Network
- Municipalities in the North Eastman Region
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada/Rural Secretariat
- Manitoba Agriculture, Food & Rural Initiatives
- Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth
- MB4Youth
- 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
- Steinbach Credit Union
- Farm Credit Corporation
- Louis Riel Capital Corporation
- Community Economic Development Fund
- Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
- Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs
- Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism
- Manitoba Science, Technology, Energy & Mines
- Community Connections
- Manitoba Family Services and Housing
- Manitoba Labour and Immigration
- Manitoba Rural Team
- Service Canada
- Manitoba Hydro
- RBC Royal Bank, Lac du Bonnet Branch
- Canadian Cancer Society, Manitoba Division
- Manitoba Model Forest
- Winnipeg River Regional Roundtable
- Fillmore Riley
- Sunrise School Division
- AIM for Work
- Tembec Paper Group, Pine Falls Operations
- Winnipeg Folk Festival
- Community Futures Triple R
- Community Futures Kitayan
- Sagkeeng First Nation
- Eastern Manitoba Artists Co-Op
- Independent Living Resource Centre
- Society for Manitobans with Disabilities
- Network for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities
- Mrs. Lucci's Resource Centre
- Agassiz Adult Education
- 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
- Whitemouth Chamber of Commerce
- Eastman Bio-Fuels Committee
- Manitoba Science Academy
- Association for Community Living, Beausejour Branch
- Eastman Regional Assessment Committee
- Eastman Regional Development Inc.
- Manitoba Youth Job Centre
- Acsion Industries
- Network 4 Change
- Wings of Power
- Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba (CDEM)
- Solidarité Rurale du Québec

Business Development Services

Technical Assistance

Community Futures Winnipeg River 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 2006-2007 Fiscal Year, we provided 1,486 business development services to 238 clients, including general information services, technical assistance and advisory services, monitoring, and training.

With support from Community Futures Manitoba, our office is now equipped with videoconferencing technology. This equipment allows us to provide a convenient and cost-effective way for our clients and other members of the business community to participate in various entrepreneurial training seminars and workshops that are offered in Winnipeg through the Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre. Since initiating this service in October 2006, we have hosted twenty training sessions for over eight-five participants.

With support from Community Futures Manitoba through the Rural Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program, we are undertaking a project to enhance our existing website to be 'accessible' for persons with disabilities. The enhanced website will also include specific resources for service providers working with people with disabilities who are considering self employment. The website will be officially launched with an information session for our regional group of service providers and persons with disabilities in the North Eastman region.

Community Futures Winnipeg River acts as a service provider for the Provincial Youth Entrepreneurs Program, and during the fiscal year we assisted three clients in the preparation and submission of financing applications under 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, Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, Community Economic Development Fund, Employment Manitoba, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, Business Development Bank of Canada, Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre, Aboriginal Business Service Network, South Interlake Credit Union, Steinbach Credit Union and Farm Credit Corporation 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 \$293,424 in commercial financing.

One of our business clients, Tracey Abraham owner of Off the Tusk Alternative Meat Selections, was featured as a success story in WD's Performance Report to the Treasury Board. Another client, Sandra Grouette, owner of Grouette Studio, was featured in the Community Futures Manitoba Winter/Spring newsletter.

In celebration of Small Business Week, we partnered with Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives to organize and host a Wine and Cheese Networking Event that was held at the Lac du Bonnet Community Centre. Invitations were sent to clients and other members of the business community in each of our member communities to set up a display table to market their products and services. Arrangements were made to have Shannon Martin, Canadian Federation of

Independent Business, to deliver a presentation on “Winning Strategies for Your Business”, but unfortunately, due to a heavy snowstorm on the day of the event, he cancelled his appearance. Nevertheless, feedback from attendees was positive and it was a good opportunity for them to network and establish some valuable contacts.

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 2006/07 Fiscal Year, eleven loans totalling \$532,830 were approved and an additional \$249,250 was leveraged through financial institutions or owner equity. Funds borrowed from the Corporation over the past year helped to create or maintain thirty-six full-time equivalent 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 \$93,767.

Since its inception, Community Futures Winnipeg River has approved 201 loans valued at \$5,813,593 that helped to create or maintain 563.5 jobs.

REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF INVESTMENT FUNDS Inception to March 31, 2007

LOCATION	DOLLARS LENT	OTHER FUNDS LEVERAGED	JOBS CREATED/ MAINTAINED
Alexander/Powerview-Pine Falls	\$ 362,408	\$ 636,862	45.5
Beausejour/Brokenhead	\$ 903,667	\$3,093,963	86.5
Lac du Bonnet (Town & RM)	\$1,259,519	\$1,083,119	92.5
Manigotagan/Seymourville/Bissett	\$ 161,295	\$ 220,003	24.0
Pinawa	\$ 909,058	\$1,122,686	81.0
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	\$ 317,050	\$ 709,840	37.0
Whiteshell Provincial Park	\$ 512,080	\$1,515,466	50.5
Other	\$ 163,000	\$ 621,575	17.0
Total	\$5,813,593	\$10,400,414	563.5

Self Employment Program (SE)

Our Corporation, on behalf of Employment Manitoba, 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, 529 services were provided to SE clients in the areas of business planning, monitoring, and counselling. In addition, two Marketing Workshops, a Time Management Workshop, and three one-on-one bookkeeping sessions were delivered for SE clients.

This year, fifteen new clients were accepted into the program and eleven successfully completed the program. During the 2006/07 Fiscal Year, 29 jobs were created through new business enterprises. There are currently eleven active SE clients. Since we began delivering the SE Program, 407 people have participated in the program.

Community Development Services

Community Futures Winnipeg River 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, Community Futures Winnipeg River has:

- Facilitated eight strategic planning sessions with community groups
- Delivered four Board training sessions for non-profit organizations and assisted six other groups with Board governance advice, and the development of By-Laws and Policies and Procedures
- Worked on four tourism-related initiatives
- Organized eight community development workshops
- Provided assistance with preparing project plans and feasibility studies to ten groups throughout the region who are undertaking community projects
- Assisted twelve community groups with the preparation of funding applications, all of which were successful in accessing financial support for their projects
- Provided resource support, counselling and advice on community economic development to another twenty-three groups throughout the region

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 \$3.75 million 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. To date, \$3,163,234 in funding has been approved for 25 projects. The deadline for approving applications under the Whiteshell Community Adjustment Fund program is March 31, 2008.

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

In 2006/07, four projects were approved for funding:

- RM of Brokenhead – \$22,652 in additional funding to assist with implementing required upgrades in association with the recent installation of a concrete floor and artificial ice plant in the Garson Arena
- Pinawa Community Development Corporation - \$80,028 to assist with the development of a Business Incubator in the W.B. Lewis Business Center
- Pinawa Community Development Corporation - \$100,000 to assist with the preparation of a feasibility study for a Health and Radiation Physics Cooperative Education Program
- Manitoba Science Academy - \$110,500 to assist with the establishment of the new locally owned and governed Manitoba Science Academy

Preliminary applications for three other projects were deemed eligible to proceed to the next stage and assistance is being provided to the proponents with research and the development of detailed project plans. During the year, four projects were judged ineligible for support under the program.

A report was prepared for WD that outlined the economic impacts to date for each project that has been supported by the Whiteshell Community Adjustment Fund. The support provided under the program has enabled the proponents of the projects to leverage more than \$3 million from other sources. It is estimated that upon completion of the projects, about 240 direct and indirect full-time equivalent jobs will have been created and that over \$10 million in indirect economic impact will result from these projects.

Regional Economic Development Strategy

Jimm Simon, the Regional Economic Development Coordinator, is into his second year of a two-year contract that was made possible 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 continue to work in partnership with Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, and Community Development Corporation to achieve the specific objectives identified in the regional strategy.

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

- The formation of the Springfield Chamber of Commerce, and assistance with the incorporation process, membership applications, the preparation of policies, and liaison with the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce.
- Organized and hosted a full-day Community Festival Planning and Management Workshop and a follow-up backstage tour of the Winnipeg Folk Festival
- Hired and supervised a summer student who prepared two regional winter tourism packages and a golf tourism package that were included in Travel Manitoba's free-standing inserts. An inventory of regional museums was also completed.
- Meetings with major employers in the region to discuss their role in economic development in the region and their support for some specific economic development initiatives
- Preparation of a business plan and operational policies and procedures for a business incubator
- Organized and facilitated meetings of the Regional CAO's Committee, the Regional Public Works Committee, and joint meetings of the Chambers of Commerce and Community Development Corporations from throughout the region. Seminars and guest speakers were arranged as part of these meetings.
- Business planning assistance was provided to the Eastman Bio-Fuels Committee who is looking into the establishment of a small biodiesel production plant in the Beausejour-Brokenhead area
- Provided resource support to the Winnipeg River Regional Roundtable
- Assistance provided to the Grand Beach and Area Development Corporation to move forward on the preparation of a development plan for Grand Marais, and to the RM of St. Clements for a community development plan for Lockport
- Research assistance provided to the St. Georges Community Development Corporation for the development of a ski hill
- Planning and project management assistance provided to the Lac du Bonnet Chamber of Commerce for the first community sponsored Ice Fishing Derby
- Research on municipal tax regulations and incentive programs for encouraging business development
- Research and liaison with the Provincial government on the potential for community/ education partnerships on technical vocational training
- Organizing and planning for the Youth Career Symposium that took place in May 2007
- Organizing and planning for the Showcasing Eastern Manitoba event to promote Eastern Manitoba as a place to live, work, and play
- Updated the regional website www.investmanitoba.com which has had over 10,000 page views and 4,537 visitors since October 2006
- Preparation of proposals to access funding to undertake a migration/immigration project in the region in partnership with Community Futures Triple R and Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba (CDEM)
- Partnering with CDEM and Eastman Regional Development Inc. (ERDI) to access funding support from the Canada/Manitoba Infrastructure Program to fill the gaps that exist within Eastern Manitoba for the availability of wireless broadband.

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. A workshop with Municipal Officials was held in the last Quarter during which an overview of the history of the regional economic development strategy and accomplishments to date was provided, and a discussion about future priorities was facilitated. Revisions to the strategic plan resulting from discussions at the workshop will be presented at the next Regional Municipal Forum in June 2007.

EDAM Spring Forum

Community Futures Winnipeg River hosted the two-day Economic Developers of Manitoba (EDAM) Spring Forum in May 2006 at the Falcon Lake Resort. The theme of the Forum was "Engaging Our Communities" and consisted of workshops and panel discussions on encouraging and facilitating volunteerism in community economic development. A total of 37 economic development practitioners from across the province attended the Forum, and evaluations were very positive. We would like to acknowledge the following sponsors for their support:

- BDC (Business Development Bank of Canada)
- Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD)
- Manitoba Industry, Economic Development and Mines
- Manitoba Hydro
- RBC Royal Bank, Lac du Bonnet Branch
- Canadian Cancer Society, Manitoba Division

Pinawa Business Incubator

We continued to work with a local committee on the establishment of a Business Incubator at the W.B. Lewis Business Centre in Pinawa. The Pinawa 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.

The business plan that we prepared was approved by the Incubator Committee and the W.B. Lewis Business Centre Inc. A Board of Directors was established, and policies and procedures for the operation of the business incubator as well as facility and service guidelines were prepared and approved. A Memorandum of Understanding and a template for the Incubation Agreement with clients were also prepared and approved.

The Pinawa Business Incubator was successful in accessing support under the Whiteshell Community Adjustment Fund, and has its first Incubator client. A promotional brochure has been designed and is being distributed to attract additional clients. Community Futures Winnipeg River serves on the Pinawa Incubator Board, assists entrepreneurs applying to become incubator clients with business planning and the development of their Incubation Plan, and provides entrepreneurial training and counselling to incubator clients.

Eastern Manitoba Career Symposium

During the 2006/07 Fiscal Year, a significant amount of effort went into the organization of the first ever Eastern Manitoba Career Symposium. A Planning Committee was established with representation from: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth; Sunrise School Division;

Employment Manitoba; Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives; Manitoba Science Academy; J.U.S.T. Training Corporation; Steinbach Chamber of Commerce; Mrs. Lucci's Resource Center; and student representatives from Beausejour, Powerview-Pine Falls, Springfield and Lac du Bonnet. The Planning Committee met ten times over the course of the year. A detailed project management plan and budget were prepared; volunteers were recruited; logistical details concerning the facility, display contractor, floor plan, security, exhibitor's dinner and box lunches were organized; a website was developed and hosted; and promotional materials, a Teacher's Guide, and an Exhibitor's Kit were prepared and distributed. Extensive liaison was done with schools and potential exhibitors, and to secure sponsorship for the event.

The Career Symposium took place on May 7-8, 2007 at the SunGro Centre in Beausejour. Approximately 2,000 local youth attended this event, which consisted of over sixty exhibits highlighting a vast array of career opportunities, as well as several workshops. Exhibitor evaluations were very positive, valuable feedback was obtained for ways to improve the event, and there is overwhelming support to make this an annual event.

We would like to acknowledge the generous financial support of Employment Manitoba, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, MB4Youth, and South Interlake Credit Union, as well as the Beausejour and Lac du Bonnet Lion's Clubs, and students from Edward Schreyer School and Powerview-Pine Falls School for volunteering at the event. Your assistance helped to ensure the success of this event.

Showcasing Eastern Manitoba

Another major initiative that was worked on during the fiscal year was "Showcasing Eastern Manitoba" a trade show to promote the region as a place to live, work, and play. The Planning Committee met fourteen times during the year. A detailed project management plan and budget were prepared and organizing sub-committees were established. A logo was designed for use on promotional materials. An extensive database of over 650 potential exhibitors was developed and an Exhibitors Guide and Registration Package was designed and sent out to this list. Logistical arrangements were made for the facility, and a marketing partnership with *Shades of the Past* was arranged. Potential sponsors were identified and a sponsorship opportunities promotional piece was prepared and sent out.

Uptake by potential exhibitors was not as expected, and attempts were made to bolster registrations by sending out targeted letters with the Exhibitors Guide and registration form highlighting the benefits of participating and extending the early bird registration fee discount. By April 2007, we only had 10 exhibitors registered, and the Planning Committee regretfully decided to cancel the event.

If we proceed with the migration/immigration project, it is planned that a trade show promoting the region will take place at the Winnipeg Convention Centre in March 2008. The work done by the Planning Committee is transferable to this event.

2006/07 Award Recipients

Each year, Community Futures Winnipeg River honours outstanding business clients and community initiatives.

The Business of the Year Award recognizes 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 Self Employment Award is presented to Self Employment Program participants who have demonstrated above average effort and success during their year of 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.

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.

The new Volunteer of the Year Award recognizes and celebrates the outstanding volunteer contributions made by a resident of the region to the economic development efforts of their community.

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

- **Business of the Year Award:** Jeff Simpson, Aquatic Life Ltd., Pinawa
- **Self Employment Award:** Grant Henderson, Eastshore Builders, Victoria Beach
- **Self Employment Award:** Dwight Reich, Reich Insulation Services, Garson
- **Community Initiative Award:** Lakeview Consumer Cooperative Ltd., Seymourville
- **Volunteer of the Year Award:** Fred Kazina, Beausejour