

Impact and highlights of SEDI's initiatives

- SEDI's early work in the 1980s in the area of self-employment was incorporated into new Employment Insurance legislation in 1992, making the **Self-Employment Benefit** available to unemployed people across Canada. From 1993 to 2005, under SEDI's management, the program generated over \$172 million in business revenues and 2,000 new jobs in Toronto alone.
- SEDI's **Youth Ink program** has provided entrepreneurship training to over 250 staff of community organizations throughout Ontario since March 2006. The trained organizations have since offered self-employment workshops to more than 2,000 at-risk youth.
- NewStart is an Ontario-wide program developed by SEDI and funded by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade that introduces financial literacy and entrepreneurship to **youth new to Canada**. By the time the program ends in March 2010, roughly 750 youth will have learned the basics of saving and budgeting, how to identify business opportunities and analyze business ideas, and about resources available to young entrepreneurs.
- In early 2009, SEDI wrapped up the *learn\$ave* program, a nine-year experiment and the world's largest research demonstration of **savings accounts for low-income people**. This pilot program offered 3,609 people a money management course, support in opening a bank account and a matched incentive for every dollar they put aside. The program helped participants save over \$3.2 million and leveraged nearly \$10 million in matched savings that the participants invested in post-secondary education, job training or a small business.
- One-hundred **shelter residents** who participated in the SEDI Independent Living Account (ILA) program, saved over \$33,000 in 16 months and used their savings to move into their own accommodation. Ninety-five per cent of the participants who moved out of shelters were still living independently and renting their own place 8 to 15 months after completing the program. The ILA, which received the 2008 Vital Ideas Award from the Toronto Community Foundation, is currently running in a number of Toronto shelters.
- The Building a Bridge to **Self-Employment for People with Disabilities** program helped organizations across Canada create a National Community Learning Network to share ideas and resources and to build their capacity to help aspiring entrepreneurs with disabilities realize their full potential.
- SEDI has co-hosted two **international conferences on financial literacy** that have been critical in moving this area forward in Canada.