



# **CBDC Blue Water**

## **Annual Report 2012-2013**



Think Business . . . Think CBDC



# ABOUT US

## WHO WE ARE

CBDC Blue Water is one of 41 independent, non-profit Community Business Development Corporations in Atlantic Canada. In partnership with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) and other community partners, we work to support the local economy by assisting entrepreneurs as they build or expand their businesses.

## WHAT WE DO

Whether it is providing much needed financial assistance through our various loan programs, additional skills training, or offering counseling services, the CBDCs are here to ensure the continued growth of small to medium-sized businesses throughout Atlantic Canada.

## OUR STAFF

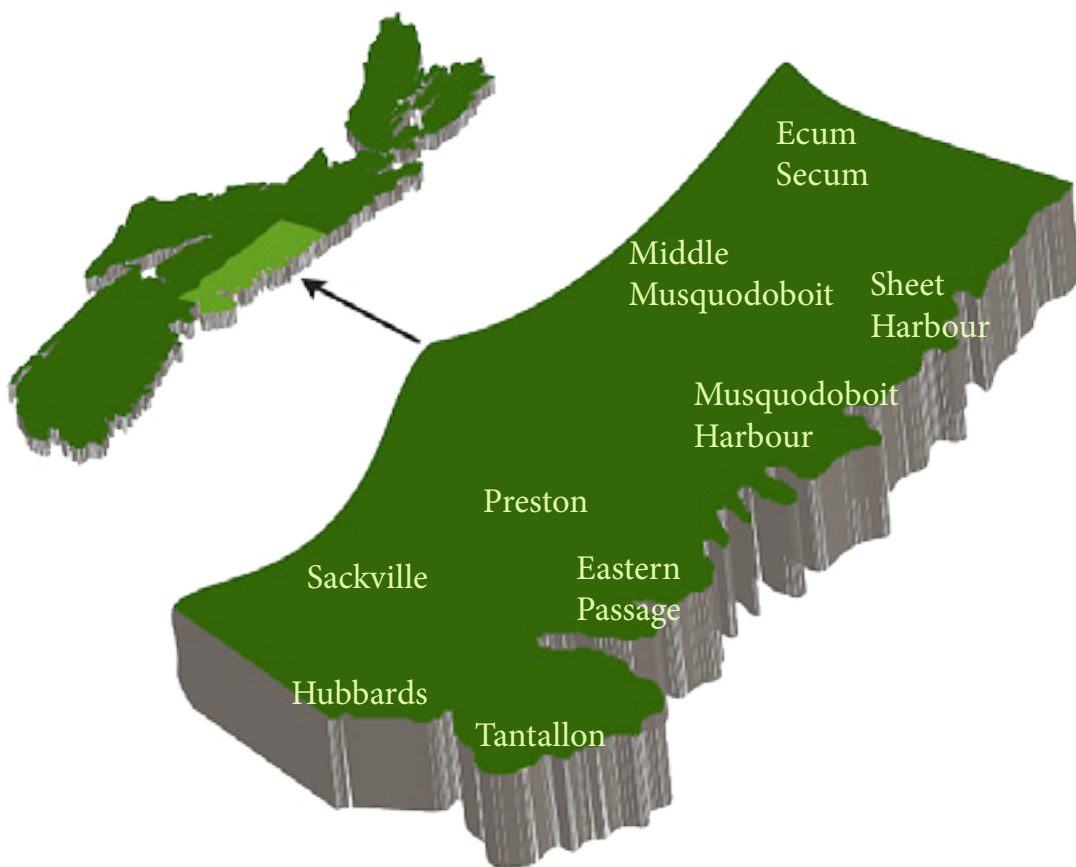
Top from left to right:  
Harith Al Bayati,  
Patrick Breton,  
Michael Redden

Bottom from left to right:  
Alayne Jean,  
Joanne Loughery,  
Sheila Spicer,  
Mary Christopher  
Absent: Jennifer O'Quinn



## WHERE WE SERVE

CBDC Blue Water services the rural Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), covering the areas between Ecum Secum and Hubbards, including communities such as Tantallon, Timberlea, Sackville, Beaverbank, Eastern Passage, Preston, Porters Lake, Sheet Harbour, and Middle Musquodoboit; but excluding the metro areas of Halifax, Bedford, and Dartmouth.



In order to reduce the paper used in this report, full financial reports are available electronically on our website at [bluewatercbdc.ca](http://bluewatercbdc.ca)

# SUCCESS DEPENDS ON

## OUR VOLUNTEER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Morton Simmonds	President & Chairperson
Janice Malay	Vice Chairperson
David Yuill	Secretary/Treasurer
Dan Dooks	Director
Scott Webster	Director
Tracy Childs	Director
Dan Nordqvist	Director
Kenny Dolomont	Director
Harold Baker	Director
Darla Johnston	Director
Evan Williams	Director
Jessie Greenough	Director

**BELIEVE  
THERE IS  
GOOD IN  
THE WORLD**



**THANK YOU**  
for your continuous  
support and  
contributions  
to CBDC Blue  
Water and our local  
Communities

## OUR NETWORK OF PARTNERS



Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency  
Bank of Montreal  
Black Business Initiative  
Business Development Bank of Canada  
Canadian Youth Business Foundation  
Centre For Entrepreneurship Education and Development  
Centre for Women in Business  
CIBC  
Credit Unions  
Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Network  
Greater Halifax Partnership  
HSBC Bank  
Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services  
Nova Scotia Business Inc.  
Royal Bank of Canada  
Scotiabank  
TD Canada Trust  
Watershed Association Development Enterprise



# OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## 2012-2013 YEAR IN SUMMARY

Invested over  
**\$2.2 Million**  
into Local Businesses

Invested over  
**\$21,174**  
into Client Training

Assisted **31**  
Students to Explore the  
World of Entrepreneurship

Invested over  
**\$125,000**  
into Students in  
Business

Supported **26**  
SEB Clients

Created **28**  
New Business Start-ups

Expanded **30**  
Existing Businesses

Created **75** New Jobs

Maintained **99**  
Existing Jobs

## THE CHAIRPERSON AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 2012-2013 we celebrated the successes of our 24th year of serving the community small businesses of rural HRM. Our office is one of 13 CBDCs in Nova Scotia, and one of 41 in Atlantic Canada. The impact of our collective work is significant in developing rural economies and creating rural employment.

Since inception we have invested over \$30 million, with 1,210 loans and leveraged close to \$27 million in additional funding, bringing our total investment to nearly \$57 million. These investments were directly responsible for the creation or maintenance of 1,863 full-time equivalent jobs. These are not government funds. These are local rural community funds; having been invested in our rural communities, repaid in our rural communities, and reinvested in our rural communities many times over Blue Water CBDC's 24 year history.

In addition to direct investment activity, the corporation provides counseling, training and planning services to businesses. We have a strong focus on developing the entrepreneur, helping them achieve success through skills development. We work continuously with our clients, helping them identify resources, opportunities and areas for improvement; to connect them to the right professional, service, or program to help them achieve their goals.

Our partnership with the Atlantic Association of CBDCs gives us access to training funds, providing many small business owners valuable training that they may otherwise go without. Our Entrepreneurial Training Fund allows entrepreneurs access to training programs in accounting, management, human resources, and marketing; developing core skills that will remain with them in all of their future endeavours.

In 2012-2013 we completed our first year as Self Employment Benefits program delivery agents in partnership

with Employment Nova Scotia. This program provides income support, one-on-one support from our staff, and structured training from experts in various aspects of business while clients move from business concept, to business plan development, to business start-up.

The successful results of this office are not due to any one person or entity. We have tremendous partnership and reciprocal referral relationships with a wide range of partners; including various government offices, banks and other service agencies in our communities. I would like to take moment to particularly thank ACOA, who provide a significant portion of our operating funds. With their support, we continue to grow our investment fund, allowing us to continue to preserve and grow the fund, ensuring its survival for future entrepreneurs.

Finally, and most especially, I would like to thank our Board of Directors. During the average year, each of our volunteer board members invests, at a minimum, an average of 72 hours of their personal time in meetings and meeting preparations. For those who participate in committees, that number is significantly higher. The individual input, diverse skills and talents brought to the organization by each of our volunteers, provides the quality of decision making and direction for our efforts.

In closing I invite you all to look with us toward the future with faith, promise, and determination.

“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.”  
– Mark Twain



Morton Simmonds, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Morton Simmonds'.

Alayne Jean, Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alayne Jean'.



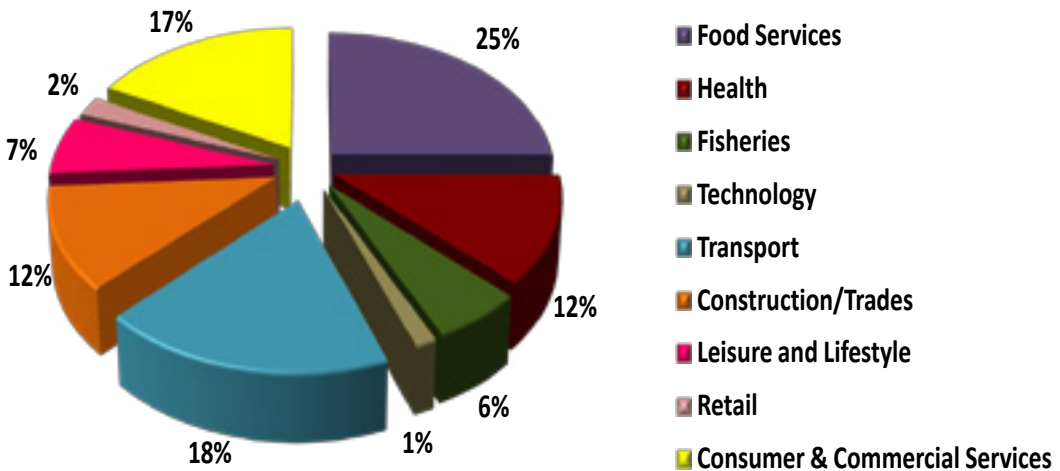


# WE GROW BUSINESSES...

## AND SUPPORT ECONOMIC DIVERSITY



2012-2013 CBDC Loans - by industry sector



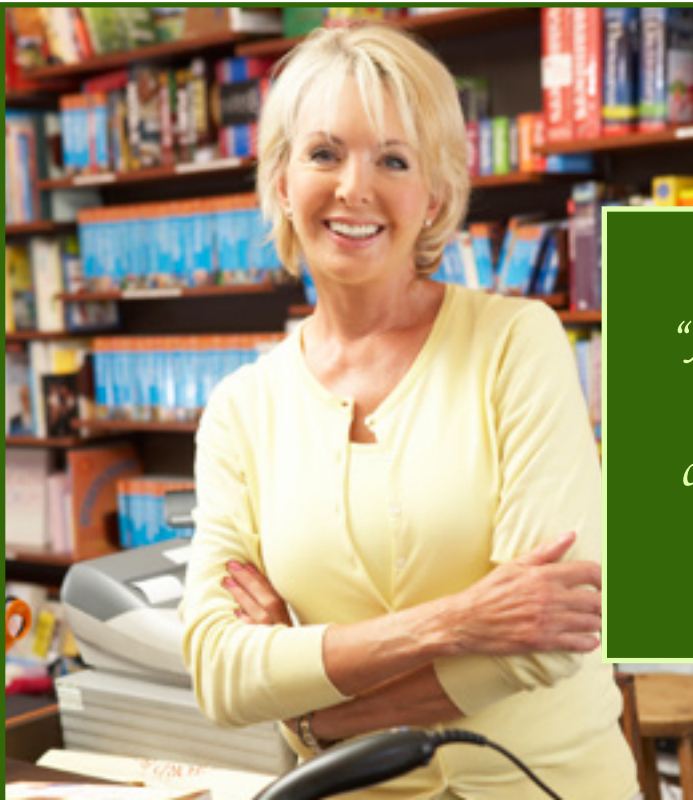
Our client portfolio includes individuals and businesses offering products and services in a wide variety of industry sectors. Our objective is to increase the range of services within the communities and limit competitive impact on existing businesses.

# WE GROW BUSINESSES...

## BY SUPPORTING BUSINESS SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Between April 2012 and March 2013, CBDC Blue Water invested over \$21,174 and assisted 18 clients, allowing them to further their business and management skills development.

We also support and finance continuous learning for our entire team of staff members, supporting our belief in continuous improvements and development.



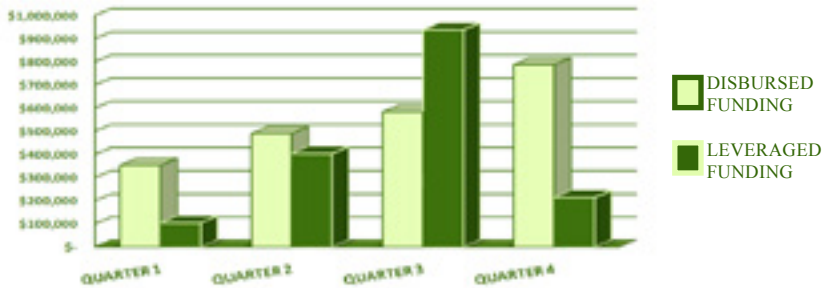
*“All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them”  
- Walt Disney*

# WE GROW BUSINESSES...

## AND OUR COMMUNITIES

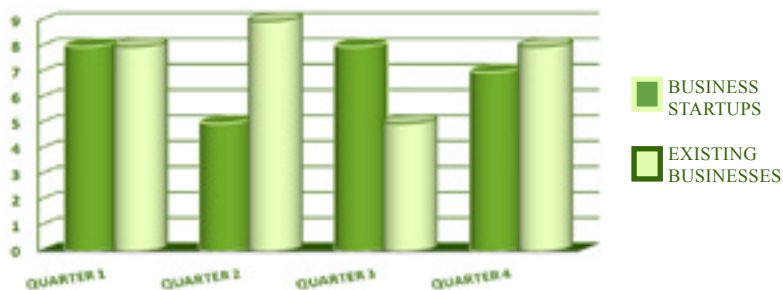
Between April 2012 and March 2013, CBDC Blue Water invested over \$2.2 million into local businesses. This funding assisted clients in securing an additional \$1.8 million in financing through our valued partners.

### 2012-2013 CBDC Loans and Leveraged Funding

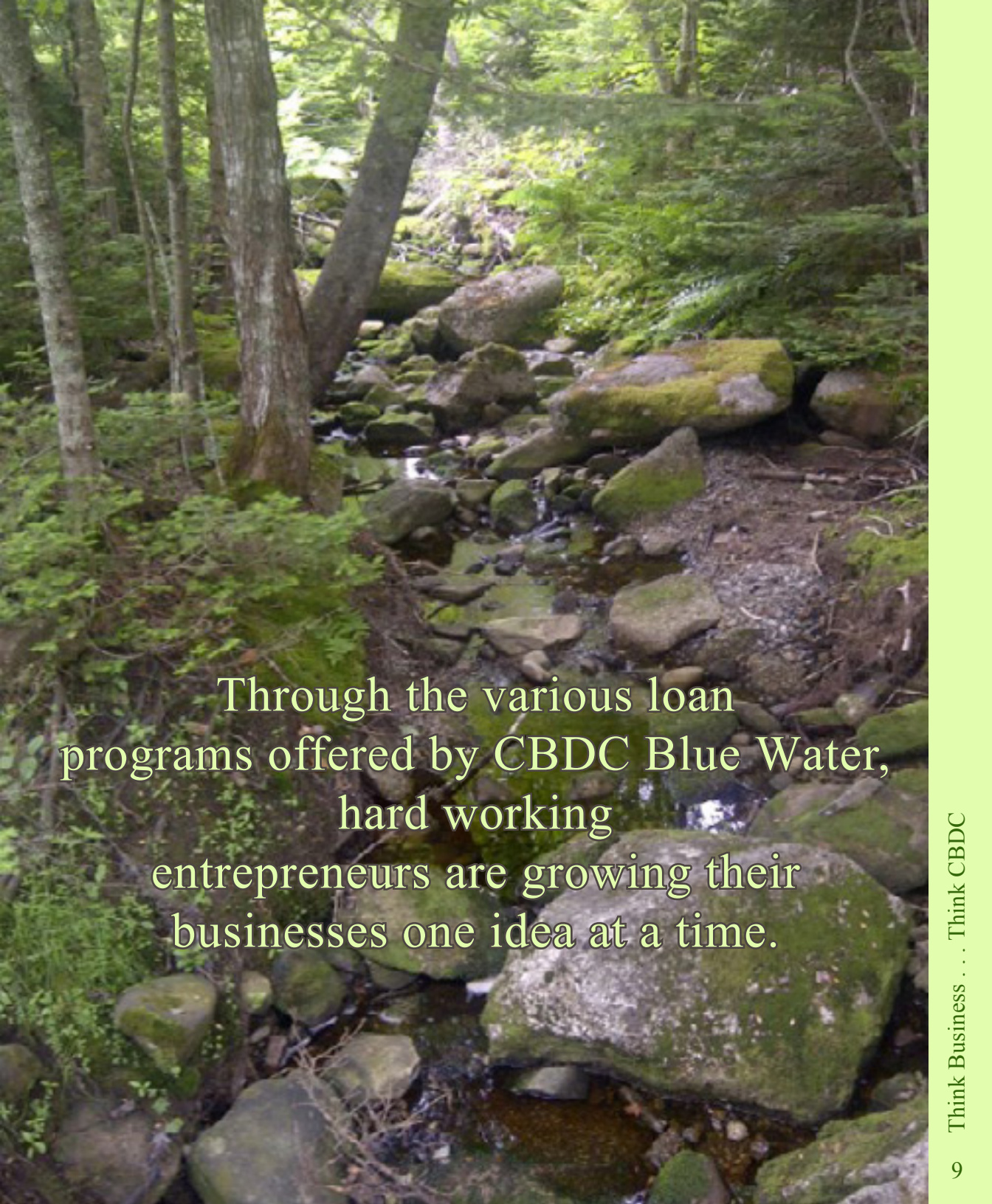


During 2012-2013, CBDC Blue Water assisted with the creation of 28 new business start-ups as well as the expansion of 30 Businesses.

### 2012-2013 CBDC Investment Activity New and Existing Businesses



Since inception in 1989, CBDC Blue Water has invested over \$30 million into our local communities.

A photograph of a forest stream flowing over mossy rocks. The water is clear and shallow, cascading over large, rounded boulders covered in vibrant green moss. The surrounding forest is lush with green foliage, including ferns and various trees, creating a serene and natural setting.

Through the various loan programs offered by CBDC Blue Water, hard working entrepreneurs are growing their businesses one idea at a time.

# WE GROW BUSINESSES...

## BY ASSISTING THOSE LOOKING TO REJOIN THE WORKFORCE

The Self Employment Benefits (SEB) program is designed to create employment opportunities for individuals who wish to start their own business by providing entrepreneurial support and financial assistance to eligible unemployed participants.

### The SEB program offers:

- 40 weeks of living assistance with progress reports after 10 and 25 weeks
  - Business management workshops
- Monthly one-on-one business counsellor meetings
  - Business plan development
- Access to a network of business professionals
- Networking opportunities with other small business owners



During the 2012-2013 fiscal year, the program assisted 26 clients, which resulted in the creation of 23 businesses.

Since CBDC Blue Water adopted the SEB program in January 2012, the program has assisted in the creation of 31 businesses and provided support to 7 additional small businesses in our community.

# WE GROW BUSINESSES...

## BY SUPPORTING YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

CBDC Blue Water invested over \$125,000 in our Students in Business Program between April 2012 and March 2013. Invested funds helped 31 students explore the world of entrepreneurship.

### Students in Business Program (SIB)

This program assists students between the ages of 15 and 34 who are attending, or plan to attend high school or a post secondary education institution who wish to explore the world of entrepreneurship. The program provides students with access to mentoring, training, and advice from experienced entrepreneurs and interest free loans up to \$5,000 per business.  
[studentsinbusiness.ca](http://studentsinbusiness.ca)



*INSPIRING THE  
YOUTH OF TODAY*

*CREATING LEADERS  
FOR TOMORROW*

### Canadian Youth Business Foundation (CYBF)

This program provides start-up mentoring, financing, and business resources for individuals between the ages of 18 and 39 who wish to start a business. It offers loans up to \$15,000 with interest rate of prime +2.00% with 3 to 5 years for repayment depending on loan circumstances.  
[www.cybf.ca](http://www.cybf.ca)



# WE GROW BUSINESSES...

## ONE LOAN AT A TIME

CBDC Blue Water offers a number of loan programs to assist small to medium-sized businesses. We can support entrepreneurs who may have difficulties accessing funding through traditional lenders, or who may not satisfy the lending criteria of the conventional lending institutions.

Who can apply for financial assistance:

- The business must be in rural Halifax Regional Municipality
- The project must create lasting employment for at least one local resident
- The business concept must be sound and viable when offered to market
- The new business must not be detrimental to existing businesses
- The business must be morally sound

Please note: The existence of the above criteria, or any part of, does not guarantee loan approval.



## Nine Loan Programs:

- Youth Loan
- First-Time Entrepreneur Loan
- General Business Loan
- Innovation Loan
- Social Enterprise Loan
- Students In Business Loan
- Line of Credit Guarantee
- Micro Business Loan
- CYBF Loan

CBDC Blue Water offers the following:

- We can be the sole lender or can work in partnership with other organizations
- The ability to pay lump-sum or in full without penalty or fees
- Loan repayment up to 15 years in certain situations
- Attractive and reasonable interest rates
- Flexible repayment options
- Financing up to \$150,000

ONE

IDEA

AT A

TIME



Here, at CBDC Blue Water, we are constantly searching for ways to improve our practices to enhance our clients' experience and services. Over the past year we implemented many changes, we strengthened our internal and external communication platforms and reformed our in-house operations, making them more efficient and environmentally friendly.

## IMPROVEMENTS MADE IN 2012 - 2013 INCLUDE:

Launched CBDC Blue Water Facebook Page

Enhancing communication with our communities

Replaced Paper with Electronic Board Packages

Decreasing our carbon foot print



## MEDIA MECHANICS

Media Mechanics today is a 16-person studio specializing in developing online interactive experiences for its clients. In short, we design and develop websites. Some of our current clients include Salesforce, Eastlink, NSCC, Nova Scotia Power and the Chronicle Herald among many others.

Media Mechanics started as a 1 person freelance company nearly 15 years ago when its principal, Craig MacMaster, began working on projects after hours from his fulltime job as an interaction designer. During those years Craig had the opportunity to gain industry-leading experience, working with some very high profile clients. As time went on, however, it was his smaller freelance clients that gradually took more of his time and interest. With a small base of clients such as DHX and Modern Media, the time felt right to launch Media Mechanics full time. The risk, of course, was what would happen if business hit a severe downturn.

“With a young family of five I needed to feel confident that we could weather the lows but as well take advantage of the highs as opportunities evolved.”

Ensuring stability is where the CBDC Blue Water really came through for us by reducing the risk and providing the guidance we needed to get started on the right track. The CBDC helped with the financing of the company, but they provided so much more. With their encouragement and assistance gathering the proper paper work (which would ultimately allow for the funding to be approved) the CBDC played an important

role in helping us to start the business. They were more than just lenders; they felt like family who truly wanted to see us be successful.

As we gained momentum, the CBDC continued to support us, by connecting us with other important partners such as David Yuill, our accountant; Bill Nearing, our Lawyer; and finally the Royal Bank who were all extremely helpful in furthering our growth. Between the CBDC and these other key relationships, we essentially had a board of directors that worked with us to help us succeed. And succeed we did.

“It’s been a learning process all the way and looking back I very much value those early days. I learned a great deal and would never have been prepared for the success of our business today if it weren’t for what I learned in the beginning.”

Years later, we now have a local and international portfolio of clients as close as next door and as far away as New York, San Francisco, and Hong Kong. We’ve come a long way from working out of the basement only 4 years ago. We must be doing something right as we’ve been approached by a number of other companies who expressed interest in purchasing Media Mechanics over the last couple of years. Although flattered, we haven’t found the right fit for us. We have something truly unique here and want to preserve that.

Today given our success and growth, we feel it’s more likely that we’ll end up buying another smaller company as opposed to being bought ourselves.



*“CBDC played an important role in helping us to start the business. They were more than just lenders - they felt like family who truly wanted to see us be successful.”*

## Lessons learned:

1

Hire better people than you can afford, do your best to keep them happy and show them that you appreciate everything they do.

2

Be good to your clients, treat them more than fairly and more like friends and continually work towards their success.

3

Do every project to the best of your ability, fix every mistake and be proud of the work you do... you will only get more work because of it. :)

4

Take risks and don't be afraid to make mistakes. Having the opportunity to learn from the mistakes you do make at a small scale teaches you how to avoid those same mistakes at a larger scale, and will prepare you for your growth ahead.

5

Lastly and most importantly, make sure you have a strong and supportive relationship with your partner or spouse. Running a business, especially a home-based one can at times be exceedingly stressful and you may need to lean on your partner too much at times to pick up a lot of the slack. Understand that they are making sacrifices too and in turn make sure you show your appreciation.

## HALIFAX MOTORSPORTS LTD.

Scott and Karlie Redden are the owners of Halifax Motorsports Ltd., located at 818 Prospect Road, Goodwood. From a young age Scott had a passion for motorsports. ATVs sparked his interest and as he grew so did his experiences. He transitioned into motorcycles as a young adult and after enjoying the sport to such an extent he began racing at the Atlantic Motorsport Park in Shubenacadie. Karlie was new to motorsports when she met Scott. He taught her how to ride and she instantly loved the sport. Now the couple spend every free moment on their motorcycles touring the Maritimes, Newfoundland and New England.

In the beginning Scott and Karlie were simply looking for a way to finance their new found hobby of riding and travelling. They began selling used motorcycles and ATVs out of their home in addition to working full time jobs. As their customer base grew, so did the demand for other items such as helmets, tires, plows, parts and accessories. Fantastic customer service and unique accessories gave Halifax Motorsports a competitive advantage over their local competition.

“Before we knew it, people were trying on apparel in our living room. That’s when we thought there could be space for us in the industry.”

It was stressful finding a balance between full time work and their growing home business. They decided in order to fully commit to their passion, and their growing customer base, they needed to make a change. It was at this point Halifax Motorsports became a full time operation.

***“If it was not for the CBDC seeing our potential, Halifax Motorsports may not exist today as a full time store which now employs five full time staff members.”***

The husband and wife team expanded out of their home into a small space next to a small cafe located at 818 Prospect Road in the Goodwood community. Not long after the move the cafe closed and the Redden’s took advantage of the vacancy and expanded their space. Growing even further they finished the basement of the building which acts as their new show room. The quick growth has transformed the business from selling used motorcycles and ATVs in their home, to a full store that carries parts, accessories and apparel for ATVs, motorcycles and snowmobiles. In addition they sell quality pre-owned boats, ATVs and motorcycles, while offering tire installation, balancing and full maintenance for all makes and models for ATVs and motorcycles.

During the expansion CBDC provided funding to purchase the required inventory. “If it was not for the CBDC seeing our potential, Halifax Motorsports may not exist today as a full time store which now employs five full time staff members.”



# SUCCESS STORY



## TOOTS TAKE OUT

The choice to live in a rural community on the Eastern Shore poses many challenges. Securing employment within those communities is one of them. For Travis Hawes and Joann Asprey, their opportunity came in the form of Toots Take Out located in Sheet Harbour.

Travis worked in the construction industry and seasonal layoffs were always impending. Joann worked part-time at a gas bar and serviced clients in their home as a hairdresser. When Travis' cousin decided to sell his mobile takeout, Travis immediately saw the opportunity for him and Joann to work side by side in their own community and earn a decent income. However, Joann would take a bit more convincing. "I did not want to spend my days cooking" she says with a laugh. Travis' persistence paid off and he won Joann over. And so began their journey into entrepreneurship.

With the assistance of Job Search Services, the two were referred to CBDC Blue Water for participation in the Self Employment Benefits Program. As each was eligible, this would form their partnership for Toots Take Out. The SEB program provided them with 40 weeks of living allowance as well as guidance and support during the initial start up phase of their business. Being of First Nations ancestry, Joann enlisted Ulnoweg Development Group Inc. to aid with the financial lending portion that was required in order to purchase the existing business and acquire inventory for the upcoming season.

Travis and Joann had their timing down perfectly. They began this process in the early spring knowing it would take some time to clean up the grounds where the take out would be located to make it visually appealing and to build a new deck. This became a family project; on a daily basis many members of their families could be seen hammering, painting, planting and providing help

wherever it was required in order to have things in place for the quickly approaching months that would see Toots Take Out in full swing.

As with any new business, the first year was a learning experience. It saw changes to the hours and menu based on customer demands. There were many trips into the city to purchase supplies that they might not have anticipated running short on.

Now entering its second season, locals have been anxiously awaiting for Toots Take Out to open, which is evident from the comments on their Facebook page.



# SUCCESS STORY



*“With the assistance of Job Search Services, The two were referred to CBDC Blue Water for participation in the Self Employment Benefits (SEB) Program. As each was eligible, this would form their partnership for Toots Take Out. The SEB provided them with 40 weeks of living allowance as well as guidance and support during the initial start up phase of their business.”*

## ACADIAN FISH & CHIPS

More than ten kilometers from the nearest ocean shoreline, visitors, tourists and locals travelling along the busy Hammonds Plains Road are surprised to find a lighthouse, a traditional Maritime symbol, located inland and part of the new Acadian Fish and Chips Take Out restaurant property. Donald and Evelyn LeBlanc are the proud owners of this family style restaurant, the most recent venture for these experienced entrepreneurs.

Donald and Evelyn have run several successful and diverse businesses over the years. In addition to providing management support to the family businesses, Evelyn maintained full time employment providing the family “anchor” income, and Donnie operated his own contracting business. The couple worked tirelessly as a team, and each venture met with success.

The couple successfully built up a multiuse business, including retail, restaurant and rental properties, then identified that it reached the maximum value and potential and made the difficult decision to sell. “You get attached to the business after investing so much into it, but you have to remember, it’s a business.” Donnie emphasizes.



After the sale of their last venture in Hubbards, the family relocated to the Hammonds Plains area for family reasons. Living in the Hammonds Plains area, they quickly realized there was a need for another restaurant venue. The couple searched available rental locations to open a restaurant, but after considering the high costs of renting, they opted to build their own place, utilizing Donnie’s capabilities and connections in the contracting field.

Drawing from Donnie’s Acadian heritage and making full use of the maritime theme, the couple designed the building, landscape and decor in traditional Acadian colours and chose to give the interior an “exterior” flavour with cedar shakes, lobster traps and maritime folk art. Donnie’s skills in trades were put to use and the couple were able to complete what is now known as Acadian Fish and Chips, 1990 Hammonds Plains Road. The couple used personal funds to construct the building and approached Blue Water a second time to provide financing for working capital and equipment. “We like what Blue Water stands for. We enjoyed working with the CBDC the first time and really appreciated that they were so supportive with the last project. When we realized we needed financing to launch Acadian Fish and Chips, we knew we wanted to work with the CBDC again.”

The family has taken another step with the new venture; Evelyn gave up her full time job after 15 years of being with the same company and now works the business full time. “Being hands on day to day makes such a difference”, she says. “I get to know a lot of the customers personally. We treat them like friends and family from the minute they walk in the door. Take the time to chat and get to know their names, from the area or just passing through.....we build relationships.” Evelyn has taken advantage of social media, including a Facebook page,

***“We like what Blue Water stands for. We enjoyed working with the CBDC the first time and really appreciated that they were so supportive with the last project. When we realized we needed financing to launch Acadian Fish and Chips, we knew we wanted to work with the CBDC again.”***



to build interest and keep patrons informed. During construction, relationship building and constant updates were provided to the members. When asked if the couple had any tips for aspiring business owners, they had several. “First of all, don’t take no for an answer. If you want something, keep looking until you find a way.”

Acadian Fish and Chips is a generous sponsor and supporter of local sport and community events. “Get involved in the community. Your community is your biggest support – to date we sponsor 2 hockey players, NS Baseball player, Acadian Fish and Chips Softball Team, Stock car, Roger Hollett – UFC Competitor. Part of being a business in the community is making the business a good community partner.” And in Donnie’s words, “Remember it is a business. All businesses have a life cycle involving either growth or loss. Acadian Fish and Chips is growing, and we are loving every growth spurt or challenge we reach, but some day down the road, we might make the difficult decision to sell.” Across the table Evelyn just smiles!





# Do YOU have an idea



## Contact us...

[cbdc.ca](http://cbdc.ca)

[bluewatercbdc.ca](http://bluewatercbdc.ca)

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