

Editors' Introduction

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In this “practical” and “hands-on” section, we publish pieces from the front-line members—trained economic development officers, community corporations, and entrepreneurs, all working in the field of Aboriginal community and economic development. In past issues, the articles in this section have included community-based and leadership case studies and interviews, evaluative commentaries on popular and current approaches and tools of Aboriginal economic development, the advocacy of best-case approaches and solutions—including successful and failed efforts—and the identification of important economic development problems that are in need of solutions. A popular aspect of this section is the overview and profile of various individuals and organizations that have been recognized at previous CANDO conferences and Annual General Meetings.

To start us off, Delilah Mah points out in her article on the 2008 CANDO Economic Development winners that sustainability is at the heart of successful community economic development strategies. Louis Joe Bernard from Nova Scotia is heavily involved with local economic organizations. Strategic planning is his particular strength. Kamloops Indian Band, also a winner, emphasizes partnerships and specializes in Aboriginal leasing and taxation issues. Cree Regional Economic Enterprises Company, with a long history of many successful businesses, has a strong strategic framework that has contributed to its success. The 2008 winners answer a series of questions about their successful economic efforts and invite readers to contact them for further information and ideas.

Next, Fitzgerald's article focuses on the experience of five First Nations in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. Ten years ago the communities had 95% unemployment. Today they have full employment. Leadership insights are shared while their story of encouraging entrepreneurship is laid out. Can all types of business activity co-exist in your community? Is there support for entrepreneurs and how do they fit with community-owned businesses? Are communities able to be successful and place limitations on economic activity? These are some questions you may want to explore further with the people noted in this section.