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SEED puts down deep roots Organization shares business expertise

Sat May 13 2006

By Jason Bell



PHIL HOSSACK / WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

SEED CEO Cindy Coker with a symbolic tree planted yesterday by the organization, which helps start businesses.

on staff.

SEED Winnipeg, a non-profit organization that helps individuals and businesses hone their skills, has a new place to grow.

The organization, which stands for Supporting Employment and Economic Development, unveiled its new 6,600-square-foot home at 80 Salter St. yesterday morning.

And the staff is eager to continue making projects bloom for years to come.

"We're very excited," said Cindy Coker, executive director of the agency. "This building allows us to have all our programs in one location. It gives us the space we need to provide all our programs and training."

SEED Winnipeg first opened its doors in 1993 with two employees but now has 21

Throughout the years, the organization has helped hundreds of people establish businesses and social projects through a variety of programs.

It has also helped low-income Winnipeggers to improve their money management skills and save toward home ownership, renovations, education, business startup or expansion.

SEED Winnipeg receives a portion of its funding from the United Way.

Yesterday, staff and clients joined to plant a symbolic tree, marking the next stage of the organization's growth as it



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establishes even deeper roots within the community.

"I'm very proud of what we do," said Coker, who has been with the agency for about four years. "It's an incredibly committed, innovative staff ...very dedicated to high-quality work and continually trying to do things better."

Jason Loughead and Jamie Campbell, a pair of young entrepreneurs benefitting from the organization, joined the celebration yesterday.

Their information technology firm, ParIT, kicked off this spring with the aid of SEED Winnipeg business expertise.

"The really huge thing they are doing for us is networking and with the process ...the two things we didn't have any experience in," Campbell said.

"We have a solid base for technical skills, programming, but not for the foundations of business planning, marketing and that side of things." jason.bell@freepress.mb.ca

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