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WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITIES RESOURCE CENTER ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FUND

Founded in 1993, Women's Opportunities Resource Center (WORC) was the first provider of microenterprise development services in Philadelphia. WORC's mission is to help low-income individuals—primarily women—and their families increase their social and economic self-sufficiency through self-employment training, support services, savings programs, and access to financial resources. More than 800 local businesses—which have generated \$8 million in annual revenue and created hundreds of jobs—have gotten their start through WORC's Self-Employment Training Program. The organization received the 2001 Presidential Award for Excellence in Microenterprise Development and the Poverty Alleviation and the Association for Enterprise Opportunity 2005 Technology Innovation Award for its web-based financial education program. Its products and services include small business loans, financial management education programs, and a Family Savings Account Program.

Financial and Social Impact

- Direct loans made: 548, totaling more than \$2.1 million
- Loans made through loan guarantee program: 80, totaling \$351,730
- SBA women's pre-qualification loans made: 45, totaling more than \$4.4 million
- Jobs created or retained: 1500
- Businesses started through training programs: More than 800
- Amount saved by families participating in IDA programs: More than \$2.6 million, by 1,294 families for a total economic impact of over \$44.36 million
- Loan loss rate (3 year net average): 8.9%

Success Story: Beautiful Beginnings Childcare Center, Philadelphia, PA

Financing and business training from WORC enabled Lalita Paris, a certified childcare instructor, to realize her dream of operating her own childcare center. Since its inception in 2004, Beautiful Beginnings has expanded to accommodate 14 employees and over 50 children in its day care program. Lalita is already making plans to open a second center. "Without the guidance and access to capital I received at WORC, Beautiful Beginnings wouldn't be an essential part of its neighborhood," Lalita said.

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