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## **CDFC continues to help improve Jamaica Plain business climate**

*Legislators laud nearly a half million dollars invested since 2005*

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Community Development Finance Corp. continues to invest in Jamaica Plain businesses, most recently issuing two loans to two local businesses totaling \$200,000 in support of 21 jobs.

“Jamaica Plain continues to have a thriving business community and CDFC continues to find worthy recipients of credit there,” said Andres Lopez, CDFC President.

Studio G Architects, Inc., 179 Boylston Street, and Canto 6 Bakery and Café, 3346 Washington Street, both received CDFC loans of \$125,000 and \$75,000, respectively.

State Sen. Sonia Chang-Diaz, along with state Rep. Jeffrey Sanchez and state Rep. Elizabeth A. Malia praised the loans for their positive effect on the local business climate.

“These loans show the state can not only create a good business climate, but can be an active lender to help businesses grow,” said Sen. Chang-Diaz.

“CDFC’s timely assistance to these small businesses comes at a time when a tight credit market threatened our ability to protect local jobs,” said Rep. Sanchez.

“Small businesses like these are the backbone of our economy and I’m pleased that we have been able to invest in them to keep this neighborhood vital,” said Rep. Malia.

Studio G President Gail Sullivan said the financing was critical to helping keep her business afloat, as they sought new projects to replace the many that stalled out in the recession.

“CDFC recognized that our work designing affordable housing and other community projects aligned with their mission and offered us tremendous support at a critical juncture, when our private lender shut off our credit,” Sullivan said

Sullivan said 2009 was the worst possible time to have the firm’s credit compromised because the real estate and construction industries downturn hit architecture firms like hers very hard. Sullivan said her firm, which designs for non-profit and public entities as well as private clients, has now turned the corner and used the CDFC loan to develop the business and take advantage of a better economy.

Canto 6, a popular bakery and café, was in the midst of a change in ownership and the prospective new owners, Susanne Young and Jonathan Clermont, who have since purchased the business, needed credit to complete the transaction.

Young, who trained in Italy and has been baking professionally for about 14 years, had been working at the bakery for about six months when she learned it would be put up for sale and she jumped at the chance.

“I love baking and I dreamed of owning a bakery someday, but we were not able to raise all of the money we needed to buy it.” Young said.

It was the second CDFC loan to Canto 6, which specializes in breakfast pastries, artisan breads and gourmet sandwiches. The first loan CDFC made to the business was for \$92,000 and helped the previous owners buy the business.

As it has in the past, CDFC worked closely with the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation (JPNDC), which played a key role in helping both businesses prepare to obtain the financing necessary for their success.

JPNDC's Business Development Director, Alison Moronta, said CDFC has been instrumental in securing a good business climate in the neighborhood. She also cited a network of volunteers who lend their expertise to local businesses under the auspices of JPNDC. She noted that Michael J. Venier, and Ben Cohen, who are Jamaica Plain residents, were instrumental in providing marketing research and financial planning to Canto 6.

"We serve as intermediaries for small businesses, provide technical assistance and help find funding sources like CDFC, whose people understand how hard it can be to obtain timely credit," Moronta said.

CDFC loans to area businesses going back to 2005 currently total more than \$440,000 in support of more than 50 local jobs. In addition to the loans to Studio G and Canto 6, CDFC issued a \$150,000 loan to Mission Bar & Grill, a popular Huntington Ave. restaurant.

"JPNDC has been a great partner to work with for the benefit of these businesses," said Lopez.

The JPND ( [www.jpndc.org](http://www.jpndc.org) ) is a 33-year-old non-profit community development corporation with the mission of promoting equitable development and equal opportunity in Jamaica Plain and adjacent neighborhoods through affordable housing, organizing, and economic development initiatives that improve the lives of low- and moderate-income people and create a better community for all.

Created by the state Legislature in 1975, CDFC ( [www.mcdfc.com](http://www.mcdfc.com) ) is a quasi-public corporation that assists small businesses access capital in markets that may be underserved by traditional lenders. CDFC provides small businesses with lines of credit, term loans and surety bond financing support. To date, CDFC has invested more than \$83 million in the Massachusetts economy.

Most recently, a capital facilities bond bill, passed by the Legislature and signed by Governor Deval Patrick in July of 2008, included a \$10 million bond authorization to re-capitalize CDFC. The Administration has funded the entire bond to help CDFC continue to grow its lending operation, which includes \$2 million for a surety bond guarantee program to help small businesses compete for federal stimulus money construction projects.

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