

rise

Asset Development

Supporting business growth. Investing in people.

*Annual Report*  
2012 - 2013

"It means being productive. Participating in society. Paying taxes. I like that...I mean, you took a little for when you needed it, but you want to give back when you can."

"I want to live a healthy life. My goal is to be mentally, emotionally and spiritually healthy." "If you're sick, even for a year, your finances change drastically." "I have no clue what's gonna happen, and that's a fear and excitement at the same time." "Yes, the payments can sometimes be challenging, but that is all a part of business. I am doing my best and hope to continue to do that." "Everyone has something." "Deciding that I wanted to get back out there, I completed a business plan to become the photographer that I always wanted to be." "I felt I could fast track my business results with the funding. People believed in me and my ability to become independent of government support and run a successful business." "Rise will help us achieve a better future." "The program has helped me to envision a successful road ahead." "I feel like Rise believes in my work, that's pretty amazing, you know?" "My definition of success is anything that allows you to pay your bills." "Because I was treated so well, it motivated me to pay it back faster" "It's a different language, and I didn't know it. So I had to learn it." "I create my home in a very artistic way just to reflect the beauty of me, because it's rarely seen." "I want to live



## About Rise Asset Development

A financial initiative created jointly between the Rotman School of Management and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), Rise provides small business loans, training and mentorship to entrepreneurs living with mental illness and addictions. The Rotman School of Management and CAMH participate in key advisory roles, contributing their respective expertise in business mentorship and mental health supports to the benefit of Rise clients.

We target a population with untapped potential.

“I think I’m successful  
right now.”

- Rise entrepreneur

# From the Executive Director and Chair of the Board



At Rise, we believe in the transformative power of entrepreneurship. Since 2009, we have played a pivotal role in our entrepreneurs' paths to financial independence, community membership and career renewal.

This year has been filled with exciting changes and milestones at Rise. We have experienced solid growth through community support and continued innovation, helping us achieve our organizational goals. Between 2012-2013, we reached a greater number of entrepreneurs, mentors and organizations in more cities in Ontario than ever before.

We successfully launched our program for youth with the support of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. The RBC Foundation joined our roster of key supporters, enabling us to scale our program to communities such as Durham and Sault Ste Marie, as well as the Niagara and Muskoka regions.

We are proud to empower entrepreneurs across the province. We are committed to building stronger and healthier communities.

We invite you to join us.

Sincerely,

Brian R. Golden,  
Chair of the Board



Rise is about people. It is about every individual who has faced obstacles but chose empowerment as the response. Rise is about equity. We challenge the traditional landscape of business and power by breaking stereotypes and overcoming bias about mental illness and addictions. Each individual brings his or her unique story to our organization, and demonstrates that entrepreneurs come from all walks of life.

Our entrepreneurs have told us that Rise has had a profound and long-lasting impact on their quality of life and self-identity. Many find meaningful work to be essential to successful recovery and rehabilitation. On a more general level, society is enriched by a greater diversity of voices and higher productivity of its members.

Rise stands as testament to the idea that no single story - no single "type" of person - embodies success. We are proud to challenge the stigma surrounding mental illness and addictions through our success stories.

Today, we celebrate our past year of tremendous growth while looking optimistically to the future ahead - we see many more success stories waiting to unfold.

Sincerely,

Narinder Dhani,  
Executive Director

# Leaders in Partnership

Rise brings together the expertise of a leading business school with the support system of a world-class health provider. We are able to offer business mentorship and skills development with the appropriate mental health and addiction understanding to inform our client relationships.



The Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto

The Rotman School of Management is the University of Toronto's business school offering undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programs in business administration and finance. The Rotman School of Management's MBA program was ranked first in Canada and in the top 15 in North America by the Financial Times. It is located in the heart of Toronto, North America's third-largest financial centre and one of the world's most culturally diverse cities.



Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)

CAMH is Canada's largest addiction and mental health teaching hospital, as well as one of the world's leading research centres in the area of addiction and mental health. CAMH is a Pan American Health Organization/ World Health Organization Collaborating Centre. CAMH combines clinical care, research, education, policy and health promotion to transform the lives of people affected by mental health and addiction issues.



“Taking this chance  
has given me a good sense  
that there is something more  
to look forward to  
and there is a future ahead.”  
- Rise entrepreneur

# Sandra's Story



In 2009, philanthropist and community leader Sandra Rotman brought together the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto and the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health (CAMH) to create Rise. Through her time as an outpatient with CAMH, Sandra realized that many individuals, despite their creativity and perseverance, were held back from obtaining work due to their mental health or addictions background.

Knowing that meaningful employment is a key element in the economic, social and personal lives of most people, Sandra contributed seed funding of \$1 million to finance entrepreneurs who require assistance to realize their full potential. Those with expertise in business, small business loans and health were brought on board to develop programming, plan strategy and conduct outreach in the community.

With an accessible and flexible structure, Rise was well-positioned to meet the growing need for domestic small business loans and mentorship, particularly for those from marginalized communities. What began as a one-year pilot project at the Rotman School of Management in Toronto in 2009 has now grown into an organization with over 400 individuals supported through small business loans, mentorship and training.

“The plan was always more than about just creating jobs, it was about investing in people.”

- Sandra Rotman

# Rise Ottawa

On March 21st 2013, Rise officially launched Rise Ottawa, expanding our reach to entrepreneurs in the second largest city in Ontario and the capital of Canada.

Rise operates through Causeway Work Centre as Rise Ottawa. Causeway Work Centre is a community economic development organization that empowers and supports people in overcoming disabilities and other challenges to help them find rewarding work and live more independently.

Many community supporters, business school alumnae and local entrepreneurs attended the Spring launch event, welcoming Rise to Ottawa.

*“Rise provides small business supports and access to affordable loans that the entrepreneurs seeking Causeway’s self-employment services have been lacking. Thanks to our Rise collaboration, a strong system of self-employment services can now be added to Causeway’s other supported employment offerings.”*

- Don Palmer, Executive Director of Causeway Work Centre



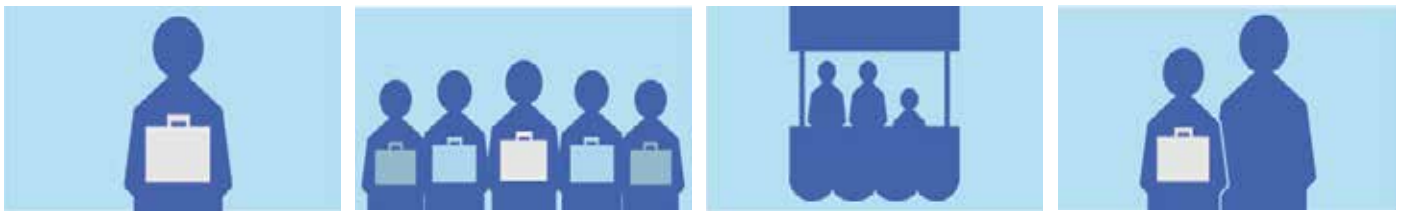
# Future Development

As public awareness of Rise grows, there have been increased calls for Rise financing and support for small businesses in other cities across Canada. Rise will continue to expand across the province through collaborations with community organizations, refining its model and expanding its knowledge as to how to grow Rise's impact.

In 2013, Rise is set to launch Rise London. Organizations from other cities have also expressed interest in bringing Rise into their local communities.



# Our Programs



Our entrepreneurs come to us with different backgrounds, goals, skills, and business ideas. However, they all have certain things in common:

- They are motivated, hardworking and creative;
- They have overcome or are in the process of overcoming a mental health or addictions challenge; and
- They are unable to access traditional bank financing for their small business.

Rise uses a character-based lending model. Particularly with a small business, we understand that the owner and the business are closely connected to health and success. Although we do consider credit history in making our decisions, we look at more than just the numbers. We see the person behind the numbers and assess the individual's commitment to improving their finances.

We offer a range of programs to suit different needs. We began with the individual entrepreneur program, but have since expanded to offer business training and financing products to youth, groups and for events.

## Individual Lending Program

Entrepreneurs can access financing to launch or grow their small business. Up to \$25,000 of financing is available to eligible entrepreneurs, with the average initial financing around \$4,000. Additionally, depending on the entrepreneur's preferences and needs, we also match them with a business mentor with the relevant expertise and background to provide guidance and feedback.

## Group Lending Program

The Group Lending program was launched in 2013 as an option for individuals seeking a team of like-minded individuals at Rise. Although each business venture is different, the entrepreneur is able to rely on a support system of around 2 to 5 other entrepreneurs who are going through a similar process. The group can share tips, resources and create a network of business opportunities for each other. The first loan amount is in the range of \$300 to \$1500. The amount will be gradually increased for subsequent loans depending on the business need, repayment history and consent of the group.

## Event Support Program

The Event Support Program provides loans up to \$1000 to specifically be used by an entrepreneur to pay admission at an event. An event is a convention or festival where businesses pay to operate booths to showcase and sell their products/services. It is expected that entrepreneurs will use the sales to repay the loan before covering other costs.

## Youth Small Business Program

The Youth Small Business Program was launched with the support of the Ministry of Youth and Child Services, and is a free program for individuals aged 16-29 with a history of mental health or addiction challenges. Students gain practical tools, business knowledge and confidence, while converting their business idea into a viable business plan.

The curriculum consists of creative and interactive learning sessions using the Rotman School of Management's Business Design™ approach taught by alumni and industry experts. Participants work together to discuss business strategies and test their business skills. Coaching is provided by the Rotman School of Management's MBA alumni and professionals from the business community.

The first two iterations of this program (Fall 2012 and Winter 2013) were offered in evening classes at the Rotman School of Management's campus. The courses spanned 3 months, with 2 classes per week, for a total of 22 classes. A total of 30 students participated in the program, one third of whom are either currently running a business or are in the start-up phase.

Interviews conducted with 11 former students demonstrated the importance of this program. The top benefits noted by the students were:

- Getting to know their customers and identifying a role that their business could play to enrich their lives
- Coaches' support and advice
- Support and encouragement of Rise staff
- Guest speakers

This year, Rise and DesignWorks were recognized by the University of Toronto with an Innovation Award for their work on the Youth Small Business Program.

# Rotman DesignWorks



Rotman DesignWorks is the centre for design-based innovation and education, focusing on Strategy and Business Design at the Rotman School of Management. Rotman DesignWorks describes Business Design as a human-centred approach to creative problem solving. It applies design methods and mindsets to business challenges. It can be used to help better understand customers, create new experiences and design innovative business strategies and models.

The three gears of Business Design are:

- Empathy and Deep Human Understanding: What is the unmet need?
- Concept Visualization: How might we better meet this need?
- Strategic Business Design: How do we design the business to win?

## Grace Park Lewis



Grace was an integral part of the success of our Youth Small Business Program in 2012, as the main instructor for our inaugural Winter session. She volunteered her time, going beyond all expectations as the main instructor, general coach and developer of each session.

In 2012, Grace became involved with Rise through her then-role as a Senior Associate of Enterprise Programs at Rotman DesignWorks. She co-curated and delivered the Rise Youth Small Business training program, creating presentations, worksheets and activities for the students using DesignThinking concepts.

Grace is dedicated to helping individuals unleash their creativity and think differently in order to tackle challenges. Her ultimate goal is to help build businesses that enable marginalized populations to rebuild their lives. She would like to create a platform that provides jobs, education, counselling, life coaching and resources to help people discover and live out their passion. Grace is currently the founder and owner of two online businesses.



“Why DesignThinking for small businesses? It gives you the tools and mindset for three things:

1. To focus on the customer, not just the business idea
2. To think holistically about your business
3. To be agile to respond quickly when your business does not go the way you planned. ”

- Grace Park

# Client Success Story



## Naomi Muse: Reinventionist

Naomi Muse is the owner of CeleeakNak, a gluten-free catering company that began out of her home. She struggled with the costs of starting up CeleeakNak and found that she was unable to increase production.

Rise provided her with a \$5,000 loan that was used to purchase professional baking equipment. With the added production capacity, Ms. Muse was able to start selling her products in four major organic retail stores in Ottawa and various coffee shops.

Naomi stated that “re-inventing myself and my career wasn’t easy. When I started my business, I believed it was the right thing to do, but there were so many doors that were closed to me. Rise helped to open all of them. Now my company grows a bit every day – I love the taste of success!”

# Client Success Story



## Allison Moyer: She's Arrived!

Allison Moyer is the owner of Tickety Boutique, a store that sells vintage and vintage-inspired clothing and accessories. When Allison approached Rise, she only sold her goods on-line, and was having trouble coming up with all the capital required to open a brick-and-mortar location.

Rise provided Allison with a \$6,000 loan. With that capital, Allison was able to purchase equipment and inventory, and opened up her store a few months later.

On realizing her life-long dream, Allison stated that "If it hadn't been for Rise, I would not have been able to engage in the business. To finally be here, it feels absolutely fantastic."

# Client Success Stories



**Kenesha Lewis: Do what you love, Love what you do.**

In January 2012, a severe anxiety attack made Kenesha realize that she needed to make a change. She knew that she didn't want to be stuck in retail jobs for the rest of her life, and she didn't have a strong interest in the career she was pursuing through her college program. However, years of creating delicious cakes and cookies at home with her younger brother had trained her to be both a phenomenal baker as well as a patient teacher. It was more than a hobby for Kenesha; "I used it as a self-care mechanism so whenever I was feeling down or blue, baking cheered me up".

Kenesha and her business, Iced Iced Baby, are now thriving. With a loan from Rise, she will open her first shop in September, and has plans to open her own kitchen in downtown Toronto.



**Tommy Ye: Hardcore, Professional**

Heavily tattooed, with a frenetic style of conversation, Tommy Ye acknowledges that when it comes to employment, he has barriers. After graduating from university, it took over a year before he was finally able to land a full time job. "I don't want to say I hated it, but I basically had an office job with the risk of being laid off all the time." Frustrated with his job, Tommy sought relief through his love of the Hard Core genre of punk music. He began hosting bands and holding music events on evenings and weekends that were becoming "semi successful".

Tommy needed more business skills if he was going to make his hobby a full time business. When he enrolled in Rise's Youth Small Business Program, he found himself getting engaged. "It was a really pleasant and refreshing experience. I love the environment, I like the professionalism of this whole institution"

With the help of Rise, Tommy has shifted his focus to running his business Toronto Skyline. He has also expanded it from a simple venue for Hard Core punk bands, to a full art community space with areas for artists, photographers, musicians and tattoo artists to exhibit and sell their work. "Being an entrepreneur gives me the ability to do what I like without being under the constraints of an employer or conforming to the needs or rules of corporate culture."

## From Rise YSBP students and Rise clients

“I love what I do now. I figured I can’t go wrong following what I am good at, my passion and strength.”

“I was happy to know that two days out of the week I had someplace to go that would inspire me – great classmates, and a reason to get up and get out.”

“Sandra Rotman. If I ever met her I would thank her, because this program is so important. I think that if I look back in my life 20 years from now, this would be the turning point. When I went after what I wanted and my dreams and as long as I’m doing that I’ll be happy.”

“When I come in here, I feel like I stand a little straighter.”

# Our Mentors

Our mentors are business leaders in their respective fields and bring valuable experience and expertise to the client-mentor relationship. The clients benefit from the mentor's knowledge and fresh perspective, while the mentor is able to contribute directly to the community and see the results firsthand.

David R. Smith, Management Consultant and Advisor:

"I was drawn to Rise because it aligned with one of my core values: helping others navigate the road ahead. Looking into the eyes of someone and knowing that your coaching and support made a difference to them is all the reward one could ask for."

Viraj Desai, Managing Director:

"Providing assistance to achieve success has been rewarding for us both - the mentee and the mentor!"

Basak Yanar, Project Consultant:

"I admire Rise's dedication to empower individuals and their ideas. Supporting Rise's courageous and creative participants in turning their dreams into reality has been an extremely rewarding experience."

Stewart Hayes, Social (Media) Strategy & Digital Communications:

"I have always believed one of the best ways to learn, and grow, is to mentor and teach. By sharing one's insights and knowledge, one can evolve and adapt to the world around them. Rise is a phenomenal opportunity to not only "give back", but also to expand one's perception of mental health, coaching and the wonderful world of entrepreneurship."

Bernard Lewis, Retired:

"I was able to help people who were struggling to find a niche in life, not just in business."



Bernard Lewis

“I believe the best way to help people is to give them the tools to help themselves, and in the process they will also help others.”

- Ron Kugan, Rise mentor  
(Norton Rose LLP associate)





# Dr. Paul Garfinkel Awards

The annual Dr. Paul Garfinkel Awards recognizes the outstanding entrepreneurial achievements of individuals who have received support and financing through Rise. Sandra Rotman created and funded these awards in honour of Dr. Garfinkel upon his retirement in 2009 as President and CEO of CAMH, based on her respect and admiration for him and his many contributions to the community.

Dr. Paul Garfinkel is currently a Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto and a Staff Psychiatrist at CAMH. From 1997 to 2009, he was appointed President and Chief Executive Officer of the Centre of Addiction and Mental Health. Dr. Garfinkel has been a strong advocate for psychiatric science, professional education, and public education, fighting the stigma of mental illness and addiction and promoting the mentoring of younger scientists in psychiatric research.

Dr. Garfinkel has received many honours for his work. In 1996, he was elected to Fellowship in the Royal Society of Canada. He received a Public Service Award from the Canadian Mental Health Association in 2009. The City of Toronto named a park, "the Paul Garfinkel Park" in recognition of his service to the City, in 2009. In the same year, he was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada.

In 2012, two outstanding students from the inaugural class of the Youth Small Business Program were awarded \$1000 to invest in their business. The first winner was Matthew Calce, 28, who runs Urban Terroir, a local, environmentally sustainable oyster mushroom business. The second winner was Kenesha Lewis, 24, who created Iced Iced Baby Bakery, specializing in milk-free, egg-free and gluten-free baked goods.

# Rise in the Media

July 2013: “Small Business Loan Giving Entrepreneurs a Boost” (Huffington Post)

April 2013: “Non-profit lender helps disadvantaged ‘rise’ to entrepreneurship challenges” (Ottawa Business Journal)

March 2013: CBC News (television)

February 2013: Business News Network (television)

December 2012: “Microfinance program combats stigma of mental illness” (Toronto Star)

November 2012: “Loans for entrepreneurs—with mental health issues” (Macleans)

November 2012: “Starting a company while coping with mental illness” (The Globe and Mail)

June 2012: “Microloans for mental-health patients rolling out across Ontario” (The Globe and Mail)

February 2012: Business News Network (television)

January 2012: Micro-lending to the more unlikely (The Economist)

January 2012: “Micro-loans unlock trap of mental illness” (Toronto Star)

“Some...people remain trapped,  
their talents underdeveloped and  
their aspirations out of reach.  
What if someone believed in them,  
invested in them and gave them  
a chance to become contributing  
members of society?”

We now know the answer, thanks  
to a groundbreaking experiment  
by the Rotman School and CAMH.”

- Carol Goar, for the *Toronto Star*

# Our Supporters

## Mentors/Youth Coaches

Adriane David  
Ahmed Nasir  
Ajay Jain  
Amy Chong  
Anthony Macri  
Anthony Mayadunne  
Azza Taha  
Basak Yanar  
Bernard Lewis  
Bike Balkanci  
Drew Marshall  
Esther Mui  
Farzana Syed  
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Rachel Gou  
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# Our Partners



# Our Donors

Sandra  
Rotman



RBC Foundation

Citi Foundation



Ontario

# Our Team

Narinder Dhani, Executive Director  
Sally Wilkie, Program Manager  
Barb Williams, Group Lending Manager

Rise Ottawa:

Don Palmer, Executive Director, Causeway Work Centre  
Douglas Pawson, Social Business & Programs Manager, Causeway Work Centre  
Andrew Riddick, Outreach & Loan Associate

# Our Board

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Rod Lohin, Treasurer  
John Trainor, Secretary  
Lorne Zon, Director  
Bob McGuire, Director

it means being productive. Participating in society. Paying taxes. I like that...I mean, you took a little for when you needed it, but you want to give back when you can.” “I want to live a healthy life. My goal is to be mentally, emotionally and spiritually healthy.” “If you’re sick, even for a year, your finances **change** drastically.” “I have no clue what’s gonna happen, and that’s a fear and excitement at the same time.” “Yes, the payments can sometimes be challenging, but that is all a part of business. I am doing my best and hope to continue to do that.” “Everyone has something.” “Deciding that I wanted to get back out there, I completed a **business** plan to become the photographer that I always wanted to be.” “I felt I could fast track my business results with the funding. People believed in me and my ability to become independent of government **support** and run a successful business.” “Rise will help us achieve a better **future**.” “The program has **helped** me to envision a successful road ahead.” “I feel like Rise believes in my work, that’s pretty amazing, you know?” “My definition of success is anything that allows you to pay your bills.” “Because I was treated so well, it **motivated** me to pay it back faster” “It’s a different language, and I didn’t know it. So I had to learn it.” “I create my home in a very artistic way just to reflect the beauty of me, because it’s rarely seen.” “I want to live