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PRESS RELEASE
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The Société d'aide au développement des collectivités de la Vallée-de-la-Gatineau (SADC) completes its year on a note of innovation and continuity

Maniwaki, May 31, 2016 - At its Annual General Meeting last May 31, SADC completed its 2015-2016 year and presented its action plan, the foundation of which will be innovation.

With assets of more than \$3.5M, SADC is able to provide financial support for Gatineau Valley businesses to assist in their development. In fact, a dozen companies received loans totalling close to \$650,000 in the past year. This cash injection generated total investments of more than \$2.3M through the companies themselves or other financial partners. Aside from this financial assistance, SADC's services also include technical support and advisory services. More than 1000 direct interventions took place with the promoters.

The year just ended also provided an opportunity to roll out the *Innovation en affaires* (Business Innovation) project, in cooperation with Emploi Québec. During the course of this project, 36 companies were visited by a mystery customer. The companies concerned were able to find out how the shopper felt during their visit and to make the changes needed to maintain a quality customer experience in their establishment.

The second component of this project saw 17 participants establish their strategy to implement an innovation project. Of this number, 14 have already completed or are on the verge of completing the project. On March 15 and 16, sixty-nine persons attended the 9 conferences offered during Rendez-vous 2.0, the theme of which was innovation through marketing and digital media. The strong turnout and the high satisfaction rate showed that companies in our area need and want to innovate to support their growth. Pierre Monette, General Manager of SADC, mentioned, in this regard, that innovation will be at the heart of the organization's intervention strategies in the coming years.

With these new results and those achieved during the past 35 years, SADC is definitely looking to the future. The new agreement completed with its business partner, Canada Economic Development, has opened new horizons with its Youth Strategy Program, where the maximum accessibility age has risen to 39, and with new programs to support businesses confronted by challenges in the area of succession, innovation, acquisition of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and sustainable development.

The second edition of the *Innovation en entreprises* program was officially launched at the AGM. As a result, companies wishing to plan an innovation project will be able to approach SADC to obtain non-repayable financial assistance in addition to receiving support from a SADC adviser

throughout their process. This particular tool is but one of several projects to be put together during the course of the year to assist businesses with their development.

Finally, André Galipeau, the President of SADC, took the opportunity afforded by his annual speech to thank entrepreneurs, collaborators, partners and SADC members for their involvement in initiatives put forward by the organization. Without the support of all of these stakeholders, the results would have been more modest and less meaningful for our community. He finished by pointing out that the Gatineau Valley SADC has a promising future and that it is here to stay in its quest to continue supporting economic development in the Gatineau Valley.

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**Source: Pierre Monette
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