

## April 2010 Newsletter

### New Session of IDA's for 2010

SCC is proud to announce the creation of 10 new Individual Development Account slots in 2010. SCC's Individual Development Accounts are matched savings accounts that help an individual or family save for higher education or post-secondary training. Using federal and private funds, we will match each dollar saved 2:1; participants will save \$1,000 over the course of 24 months, and they will receive \$2,000 more, for a total of \$3,000. The money can be used to cover educational expenses at the post-secondary level, and participants will receive financial education and asset-specific training to help them achieve their educational goals.

Eligibility requirements:

- a) Income-eligible Somerville resident (please call for details)
- b) Must have earned income, even if it is informal
- c) Able to save about \$42 per month for 24 months

For more information, please call Thais DeMarco at (617) 776-5931 x233

### SCC Staff and Members meet with Legislators



On Friday March 5, approximately 20 SCC staff and members met with Senator Pat Jehlen, and Representatives Denise Provost and Tim Toomey in the SCC office. The legislators heard statements from SCC constituents who have been assisted with financial education and housing services, as well as short presentations on a wide range of SCC's work.

As part of the Mass. Association of CDCs annual State House Day, SCC members and staff again met with our legislative delegation (including Rep. Carl Sciortino, who had a conflicting obligation in March) on Tuesday April 6th, this time in the State House. The SCC delegation again discussed a range of issues SCC is engaged in with the delegation, and also joined CDC delegations from around the state, with over 250 people joining together at the State House.

### SCC receives Lenny Zakim funding



Last month, SCC was awarded a \$7500 challenge grant from the Lenny Zakim Fund for our "Moving from Crisis to Leadership" program of working with residents who originally come to SCC with financial difficulties to help them stabilize their financial circumstances and move toward increased involvement in SCC and in the community. The challenge is for SCC to raise a matching \$7500 so that SCC will have \$15,000 in new funds to support our financial education and leadership development work. Graduates of SCC's financial education and leadership development programs – Colin Barr, Karsten Hatch, and Mulugeta Zegeye, along with Housing Assistance Program Director Stacey Pires, attended the Lenny Zakim Fund Awards Ceremony on March 9<sup>th</sup> at the Radisson Hotel in Boston to receive SCC's grant award.

## **April is Fair Housing Month**

April starts with April fool's day but it was no joke when one of SCC's members was recently denied an apartment because he had a Section 8 voucher. Fortunately SCC was able to partner with the Boston Fair Housing Commission and local authorities to make sure justice was served. This was appropriate timing because April is Fair Housing Month and according to the Fair Housing Act of 1968 it is illegal to discriminate in the sale, rental or financing of housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, family status or participation in any Federal or State funded assistance program such as Section 8. In order to promote an understanding of fair housing in our community, children from two local Somerville schools participated in the annual Fair Housing Poster Contest. The students competed against each other by creating posters that best illustrated housing discrimination and fair housing. Winners will be selected based on 1st, 2nd and 3rd place and receive prizes. This is a nice way of educating children and getting them involved in educating others and helping in the efforts to address and eliminate discrimination. The winners will have their pictures taken with Mayor Curtatone and they will be featured in future articles in Somerville's local newspapers. Winning entries will also be showcased in City Hall during April, Fair Housing Month.