

OREGON INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT INITIATIVE

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Individual Development Account Evaluation Team

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INTRODUCTION

When we started the Individual Development Account Initiative a decade ago, we envisioned creating a pathway of opportunity. We sought a means to effectively support low-wealth, hard-working families and individuals to break cycles of unemployment, intergenerational poverty and financial hardship.

Through the program, participants learn new financial skills, but more importantly, act on that learning by setting and meeting savings goals. Once savings goals are met, savings are matched and participants purchase an asset – to buy or expand a business, purchase a home, or invest in an education to increase employability. We know that this increased stability for individuals and families builds stable communities, which in turn builds a stronger Oregon.

We are pleased to present this evaluation report on the Initiative, conducted by the Regional Research Institute of Portland State University. Their independent findings demonstrate, first and foremost, that the **program provides opportunities for families challenged by poverty to build assets and establish a stronger, more stable financial footing**. Even in this time of prolonged economic hardship for many Oregonians, the majority of the participants have been able to achieve their savings goals and purchase assets that move them up the ladder of prosperity.

The PSU study of the impact of Oregon's IDA Initiative shows that graduates maintain their assets over time and that the program helps participants develop sound financial habits such as using a budget, saving regularly, building emergency funds, and setting new financial goals. The promise of a 3-to-1 match is a powerful incentive to save, but even participants who are not able to complete the program report positive changes in their financial behaviors and financial wellbeing.

We invite you to review the full report and the data about program effectiveness and the critical behavior changes that lead participants to succeed. The data is augmented by story after story of families and individuals using the quality financial education and coaching they receive in the IDA program to achieve their dreams.

The evaluators strongly recommend continued investment in the program because of the impressive results and track record of excellence.

“Oregon’s IDA initiative is recognized as one of the strongest in the nation, reflecting the state’s commitment to increasing financial resilience among low-income residents.”

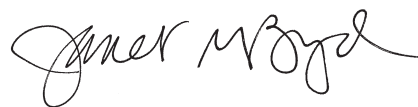
“Oregon’s continued investment in the IDA initiative will be rewarded by substantial returns for individual participants, their families and their communities.”

*Oregon Individual Development Account Initiative
Program Evaluation by Diane K. Yatchmenoff, Ph.D.
Portland State University Regional Research Institute*

The Individual Development Account Initiative is a productive partnership between capable Oregon non-profits, generous contributors, participants in the program, the State of Oregon, Oregon Housing and Community Services and Neighborhood Partnerships. We want to recognize our shared success in the results to date and thank the many partners who make this program and its contributions to Oregon's vitality possible.



Victor Merced, Director
Oregon Housing and Community Services



Janet Byrd, Executive Director
Neighborhood Partnerships

BUILDING ASSETS AND INCREASING FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

The Oregon Individual Development Account Initiative

Overview

Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) represent an innovative anti-poverty strategy to increase financial resilience by helping participants acquire and retain assets. IDAs are matched savings accounts combined with comprehensive financial education and counseling. In Oregon, IDA programs help low-income/low-wealth individuals and families save to purchase a home, further their education, start or expand a small business, or purchase certain types of equipment.

Neighborhood Partnerships, the coordinating entity for Oregon's IDA program, engaged the Regional Research Institute at Portland State University (PSU) to evaluate the initiative, beginning in 2008. The launch of the evaluation coincided with a ramping up of the program beyond its early pilot stages.

Between January 2008 and June 2010, more than 2,000 Oregon residents opened Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), setting aside savings of over \$2 million during that time. Many of

The Oregon IDA Initiative

IDAs are available to eligible Oregonians all over the state. Seven non-profit organizations currently serve 29 urban, rural and frontier counties. Some provide IDA services directly to residents, others through local partners, and still others by a combination of both.

- CASA of Oregon through 81 partners (46 non-profits and 35 schools) in 27 counties.
- Umpqua CDC directly and through 15 partners serving 12 counties in central and southern Oregon.
- Mercy Corps Northwest through offering small business IDAs in Multnomah County and the surrounding areas.
- Portland Housing Center for first-time home buyers in Portland.
- NAYA Family Center for children and families in Portland.
- eDev through offering small business IDAs in Lane County and the surrounding areas.
- NeighborImpact in Deschutes, Crook and Jefferson counties in Central Oregon.
- The Warm Springs Community Action Team for residents of Warm Springs and the surrounding areas.

Eligibility for an Oregon IDA is limited to low income/low wealth individuals based on income level and limited net worth at the time of enrollment (see Appendix B for details). Other requirements are a willingness to save, a desire to purchase one of the asset types supported by the program, and a commitment to participate in the educational aspects of the program.

All IDA participants receive financial education, one-on-one counseling, asset-specific training, and personal support to meet their goals. Programs provide these services within a variety of structures and formats to meet the needs of their specific populations. Participants agree to make monthly deposits to their IDA account for up to three years, based on their Individual Development Plan.

The initiative is funded by contributions to a designated non-profit partner that are eligible for a 75% state tax credit. All funds contributed are dedicated to reaching program goals, leveraging the state commitment. The dollars saved by IDA graduates are matched three-to-one (in some cases four-to-one or five to-one) by IDA Initiative funds when the participant's savings goal has been reached, with payments going directly towards purchasing their asset. Participants who are not able to complete their savings plan may withdraw their own deposits but do not receive matching funds.

them have exciting stories of success.

Angela became a first time homebuyer, finding the house of her dreams in the neighborhood she selected at a price she could afford. She had enough left over to purchase a washer and dryer.

Conner and Sara used their funds from the IDA program at Mercy Corps Northwest to purchase irrigation equipment, coolers, weeding equipment, and tools for their 'Diggin Roots' all-organic farm. The IDA course and the capital investment in their farm were highly valuable, and the Browns have recommended the program to other local farmers.

Marilyn completed an education degree and is now a teacher, fulfilling a life-long dream she thought was years away.

Felicia was the first person in her family to graduate from high school. Though the youth IDA program at College Dreams in Southern Oregon, Felicia went on to earn an Associate of Applied Science and a Certificate as a pastry chef from the Oregon Coast Culinary Institute.

The PSU study of the impact of Oregon's IDA initiative showed that graduates maintained their assets over time and that the program helped participants develop sound financial habits such as using a budget, saving regularly, building emergency funds, and setting new financial goals. The promise of a 3:1 match was a powerful incentive to save, but even participants who were not able to complete the program reported positive changes in their financial behaviors and financial wellbeing.

"[The IDA program] has been a positive motivation for me. I would like to get back in the program... My savings were used for an unemployed period [that I wasn't expecting], but my thoughts about money are different now. Thank you."



Home Ownership

“I am buying a home in Cottage Grove. I am so excited. It is beautiful. I feel as if my life is changing for the better. I have struggled for years as a single mother of three and was never able to get ahead... Now I am able to buy my new home and I feel as if this horrible struggle of poverty is behind me. I am looking forward to the future and I now have hope of a new positive future.”



Nearly half (44%) of IDA graduates bought a home, using their savings plus IDA matching funds and often using those funds to leverage other resources. On average, IDA home buyers saved \$1,500 in about 14 months and earned \$4,300 in matching funds to purchase homes all over the state. Sales prices ranged widely, with an average of \$171,000.

In this recent financial period when homeownership stability has been particularly challenged by poor lending practices, loss of employment, and many foreclosures, the Portland Housing Center (PHC) has emphasized highly trained staff

and skilled financial counseling to help prospective home buyers make wise choices. Now that lower prices are creating possible opportunities for first-time buyers, PHC is working in tandem with other community partners on creative outreach strategies to encourage new potential IDA participants.

Angela said the IDA specialist at the Portland Housing Center sat down with her at their first meeting and calculated exactly what she could afford, based on her entire financial picture. From there they made a plan. Once she reached her savings goal, Angela sped up her search last summer so that she could take advantage of the first-time home owner tax credit in 2009. She said she learned so much from the home buying class at the Portland Housing Center that she was able to take charge of the buying process, selecting the right neighborhood and waiting for the right house to come on the market. Her purchase was complicated, but the PHC counselor helped her every step of the way.

National research supports the benefits of the extensive financial education and counseling that are core components of IDA programs in helping participants weather the challenges of homeownership. A recent study conducted by the Corporation for Enterprise Development and the Urban Institute tracked 831 homebuyers in 17 states who purchased

‘I think the IDA program really helped boost up my confidence, that even though I was a single parent, that possibilities are there for my family and I to own our own home, make new goals and live a better life. I feel thankful for this program and probably wouldn’t have the confidence to follow through with buying a home without it. I am very happy with the outcome. Who wouldn’t be?!’ — IDA Participant

homes using IDAs between 1999 and 2007.¹ Compared to other low-income homebuyers who purchased homes in the same communities and over the same time period, IDA homebuyers:

- Obtained significantly preferable mortgage loan terms, with only 1.5 percent having high-interest mortgage rates, compared to 20 percent of the broader sample.
- Were two to three times less likely to lose their homes to foreclosure.

This study provides the first evidence available on loan terms and foreclosure outcomes of IDA homebuyers. The findings suggest that participation in an IDA program with its related services and restrictions can improve homeownership outcomes for low-income households.

Small Business IDAs

Nearly 40% of IDA graduates purchased new assets for a small business - anything from construction tools, to computer hardware, to a massage table, to jewelry making equipment. Most small business IDA participants completed the program in about a year, saving on average \$1,300. With the 3:1 match, those savings—combined with the financial planning, business education and support that are part of the program—made a big difference.

“The business plan requirement allowed us to finish a plan to build a solid foundation. Our business has already saved and grown with the extra planning.”

“It has helped me become more organized with my business in-flows and out-flows and be able to look more at the bigger picture. It also spurred budgeting for family expenses.”

Small business IDAs are available through seven non-profit organizations and their partners around the state. Many participants live in rural or frontier communities where their personal success can have an impact on the entire community. The Northeast Oregon Economic Development District (NEOEDD), for example, offers IDAs to eligible residents of Wallowa, Union, and Baker Counties, focusing on assisting small business owners with needed capital. Since starting the program late in 2007, NEOEDD has enrolled 53 participants with aspirations in a wide range of areas: catering, farming, photography, a machine shop, computer services, personal care, a bakery, acupuncture treatment, decorative arts, and many others. IDA account holders speak

NEOEDD, A CASA of Oregon Partner

A penny saved is not always a penny earned. For Colleen Whelan, owner of Body Balance Massage Therapy in Joseph and John Fleming, owner of Local Insurance in La Grande, a dollar saved turned out to be four dollars earned! Whelan and Fleming recently were the first two graduates of the Northeast Oregon Economic Development District’s (NEOEDD) IDA program. Whelan and Fleming have each completed 20 hours of business classes, written and received feedback on a detailed business and marketing plan, and reached their self-designated savings goals through monthly payments. While working as a birthing assistant, Whelan decided to go back to school to expand her skill base. After completing a year of intensive training, she obtained her massage therapy license and opened Body Balance Massage Therapy in the Beecrowbee day spa in Joseph. Whelan used the money from her IDA for start-up expenses for her business, including specialized equipment to accommodate pregnant women.

1 Weathering the Storm: Have IDAs Helped Low-Income Homebuyers Avoid Foreclosure, at http://cfed.org/knowledge_center/research/weathering_the_storm_have_idas_helped_low-income_homeowners_avoid_foreclosure/.

highly of the business planning classes, which are available to anybody in the community, and offered free to low-income individuals. Participants not only learn core skills they need, but also form new relationships and a network of business friends.

“It’s wonderful to see the major changes in the way they value themselves and what they do with money...I spend a lot of time helping them see that their time is valuable and they are valuable.” – IDA specialist

In Portland, the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA) serves self-identified Native American youth and their families throughout the metropolitan area. Consistent with NAYA’s mission, the focus of the small business IDA program is on building the strength and resilience of the community. Community members come to the financial wellness or small business classes at NAYA, which are offered frequently, where they learn about the potential for savings to be matched 3:1. Class members see it as an ‘amazing’ program and a ‘really good deal.’ But whether or not class participants open an account, everyone comes away with a business plan for their project, which requires them to carefully think through and plan out every detail. Respect for family and community, personal values, personal mission, and tradition are integral to goals set by participants.

Mercy Corps Northwest also supports microenterprise in the Portland area through business education, one on one counseling, IDA matched savings accounts and business loans.

Alberto was able to start an upholstery business, using knowledge he learned from his father at home in Colombia.

Dana purchased a massage chair and other equipment for her healing arts practice.

Kari expanded her furniture design business.

Liliya was able to open a licensed child care operation.

Adelante Mujeres, A CASA of Oregon Partner

The IDA program at Adelante Mujeres (a CASA of Oregon partner serving western Washington county) offers matched savings accounts for small business and, more recently, for education.

Idolina, Gabriela, and Margarita started Cleaning Wizards in 2007 after going through the Adelante Mujeres adult education program. Cleaning Wizards offers environmentally friendly house cleaning using all non-toxic and organic products. In 2008, the owners opened an IDA account to save for a vehicle for the business. In six months, they had reached their goal and purchased a car, allowing them to travel to jobs more efficiently, strengthen their sense of teamwork, and reduce business expenses by \$300 per month.

Yesinia will graduate from her IDA program at Adelante Mujeres this fall. She owns the Kenya Salon in Hillsboro and is using her IDA to add a product sales component. Yesinia has been saving for a year.

The IDA initiative at Adelante Mujeres led to the development of the Adelante Empresas program, which provides longer-term support for the small business owners in the area with ongoing counseling, coaching by peers and professionals in the community, additional training and networking opportunities, and collaborative marketing.

This year, IDAs will be offered to more young Latinas who participate in Adelante Chicas, an after-school program focusing on empowerment and leadership. Many of these girls hope to go to college, and matched savings can make it possible for them to succeed.

The savings and matched funds were great, but all of the participants emphasized how much they learned from the business classes at Mercy Corps Northwest.

“I became more strategic, thought more long-range—six months down the road and longer.”

Mercy Corps Northwest has also been key to the success of the fast-growing food cart industry in Portland, providing business education, microenterprise loans and IDAs to some of the estimated 400 food carts in the area that are virtually all financed by personal savings or family resources.

IDAs for Education

Ann is 18 years old and a foster care youth. She plans to apply for the IDA once she graduates from high school. She needs help and support from positive role models who display healthy Native behaviors.

Lynn is struggling with the balance of being a parent and a student. She asked for lots of help accessing scholarships and looking at ways she could improve her life and take control.

Bea made many mistakes along the way and wrong lifestyle choices. She wanted to get an education but didn't know how. Bea is now working on repairing her credit and becoming a teacher so she can have a positive impact on our Native youth.



As students like Ann and Lynn and Bea work with the Achievement Coach at NAYA, the IDA program makes it possible for them to reach for their goals with less debt from student loans, to be able to buy books and supplies they need to be successful, and to learn how to repair their credit and make successful spending plans.

The Matched Education Savings Account (MESA) College Initiative, a CASA program, has recently been recognized by the national Corporation for Enterprise Development as an innovative approach to financing higher education and college access for low-income and underrepresented students. The MESA program uses colleges and universities themselves as the students' portal to matched savings accounts. The accounts leverage student savings by a rate of five to one and provide withdrawals timed to tuition payment dates. Through this program, CASA is able to manage larger numbers of accounts and more funds while the schools and local partners interface with student savers. CFED cited MESA as an innovation with the potential to change the financial aid landscape by enlisting colleges and universities to consider matched savings accounts as a financial asset to help college-bound students of all ages pay for post-secondary education expenses.

Financial Wellness: Changing Habits and Building Financial Resilience

The evaluation of Oregon's IDA initiative identified important changes in the financial behaviors of participants and pointed to a lasting impact of the program.

Only 20% of participants said they regularly put money into a savings account before they enrolled in the program, but 49% were setting aside savings after they left the program. Even 12 months later, 37% of participants were making regular deposits to savings.

"It was very well planned out for my saving goals to start and now that I'm done I plan not to stop saving ever!"

"I learned to treat a savings account like a bill."

Before they enrolled, using a budget to monitor

College Dreaming in Southern Oregon

College Dreams, a partner of Umpqua CDC, offers IDAs for college-bound youth through the Dream\$avers program, serving Josephine, Jackson and Douglas counties in southern Oregon. Dream\$avers is one of the largest youth IDA programs in the state, having served 130 students in the first three years and now gearing up to expand in 2010–11.

Students from low-income families who demonstrate academic potential in the early grades but have three or more risk factors for poor academic, employment, social and other outcomes are offered the opportunity for support, enrichment, mentoring, skill-building, scholarships, and matched savings accounts that can pay for tuition, books, and other costs of post-secondary education. Students and their families commit to maintaining good school attendance, good grades, healthy behaviors, and community service.

Laura faced hardship, tragedy and loss in her family, but was determined to succeed. Through College Dreams, Laura was able to pursue her dream of playing college basketball and now plans to become a high school PE and health teacher. She says "This program is making my dreams become a reality. "Participating youth work with College Dreams prevention specialists who provide case management, advocacy, skill building, and personal support. Outcomes have demonstrated success: in comparison to a matched group of students, Dreamers had dramatically higher high school completion rates, and were more than twice as likely to be members of the National Honor Society and to meet admissions criteria for the Oregon University System.

spending was rare. Less than a third of participants said they used a budget before attending the financial education classes that are part of the IDA program. By the time they left the program, 71% regularly budgeted, and more than half were still using a budget 12 months later. Even among IDA account holders who were not able to reach their savings goal and left the program without receiving matching funds, the majority said that learning to use a budget was ‘very helpful.’

“I am more careful about thoughtless spending. I more carefully analyze needs versus wants and I always pay my bills before they are due.”

More from IDA participants:

About budgeting...

“Having to report my budget to someone periodically helped keep me on track – almost like a support group...”

“I really liked the budgeting section of the class and also being ‘forced’ to deposit each month. I hope I can continue to do that on my own.”

About saving for longer term goals...

“I have learned how to do without what I want today in order to have what I need in the future.”

“[The IDA program] forced me to identify financial goals and habits and to work with these to achieve goals. I am able to make saving money a habit. I am learning discipline...”

“[The best part of the program was] the help in planning and working on my financial goals. It was helpful to write them down and have someone checking in on me to make sure I was on track.”

“...the financial literacy classes were life changing for me. They really helped to change my spending habits and my relationship to my money.”

About increased confidence...

“It gave me the confidence I needed to know I can save and work hard for the things I want.”

“... the knowledge that I can make things happen to improve my life and the life of my son.”

“I have learned how to be frugal with my spending but still am able to live comfortably and have a healthy lifestyle.”

IDA participants were also taking better care of themselves financially. Two-thirds of participants had started an emergency fund savings account by the time they left the program, and 12 months later, over half said they had an emergency fund.

“I have started making deposits into an emergency account, which helped because the brakes in my car just went, and it paid for the work and the parts.”

Moreover, 99% of participants had at least one savings goal: some were saving for holiday gifts, others for a vacation, and still others had started an IRA or other long term savings plan.

“I love saving even a little bit each month. It is very motivating to watch money add up over time!”

“Saying ‘no’ to little expenses so we can say ‘yes’ to big ones!”

Changes in behavior contributed to improved financial circumstances and confidence for participants. Only 46% said they were ‘satisfied’ with their financial status when they first enrolled in the program, but 82% said they were ‘satisfied’ about their financial status by the time they left the program. Improving financial

circumstances and confidence was tied to specific changes.

- Almost half (48%) had reduced their debt. Less than 20% reported increased debt, and this was usually linked with the purchase of their asset (a home, for example).
- Participants who said they could 'always' pay their bills on time increased from 59% at enrollment to 77% at exit.
- Only 25% of participants said they knew their credit score when they entered the program, but 68% had that information by the time they left the program.
- Twelve months after exit, 86% of participants said they can 'always' pay their rent or mortgage on time.

Moreover, among respondents to the 12-month follow-up survey, 92% of program graduates had kept or even enhanced their asset.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings from the evaluation highlighted strengths of the program and positive outcomes for individuals who have participated, allowing them to achieve outcomes for themselves and their families that many could not envision on their own.

Moreover, participants reported sustained longer-term impact. The majority held onto the asset they acquired through their IDA and were excited about their continued ability to plan for the future, use a budget and set aside savings to meet new goals and safeguard their future financial wellbeing.

These findings are particularly encouraging in light of the extremely challenging economic climate in Oregon and elsewhere during the time period in which IDA participants in the study were enrolling in the program, setting goals for themselves and making the effort to deposit savings to their accounts every month. Although not all participants reached their financial goals and received matching funds, even those who had to withdraw appreciated the opportunity, the personal support, and the skills they gained from their IDA program.

Who are the IDA participants?

In the evaluation study...

More than two-thirds (69%) of participants were women.

IDA account holders were as young as 12 but the average age was 33. About 12% were under 18 when they enrolled.

More than half (56%) were single: 26% were single mothers, 30% were single adults without children, 30% were in two-parent households, 10% were in a two-person household without children, 2% were single fathers.

IDA participants were racially and ethnically diverse: 21% were Hispanic/Latino, 7% were African American, 5% were Native American/Alaskan Native, 4% were Asian, Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and 6% listed themselves as 'multi-racial or other'.

Two-thirds had at least some college in their educational backgrounds; 21% had a four-year degree.

All had limited income and assets.

More than 60% graduated from the program and received matching funds. Participants who entered with more education, higher credit scores, and more assets were more likely to graduate than those with less education and fewer resources at the time of enrollment.

Oregon's IDA initiative is recognized as one of the strongest in the nation, reflecting the state's commitment to increasing financial resilience among low-income residents. With this foundation, Oregon is well positioned to expand the IDA program and to develop and test new strategies that increase participation and success across the diverse population of individuals and families living in poverty and experiencing the precarious circumstances that poverty entails.

Oregon's continued investment in the IDA initiative will be rewarded by substantial returns for individual participants, their families and their communities.

How does Oregon stack up?

Many Oregon residents are struggling. More than 25% are 'asset poor' based on the national Assets and Opportunity Scorecard produced by the Corporation for Economic Development. Individuals and families that are 'asset poor' do not have enough net worth to survive for three months without income. In the 2009-10 Scorecard, Oregon ranked 43rd in the nation on asset poverty and 42nd on 'extreme' asset poverty.

Overall, Oregon received a grade of C for Financial Stability, which ranks states on 58 performance measures in Financial Assets & Income, Businesses & Jobs, Housing & Home Ownership, and Health Care & Education. To improve the financial wellbeing of residents, Oregon was urged to expand the refundable Earned Income Tax Credit, remove remaining asset limits for public benefits, and promote and preserve homeownership.

Oregon's IDA Initiative gets high marks!

Oregon was one of only six states to meet three out of four criteria for a strong IDA policy (no state met all four criteria). Oregon's strengths were noted as: strong stewardship of the IDA program, stable state funding over time, and the decision to allow at least 15% of state funding to be used for program administration, program services, operating costs, and/or technical assistance to providers.

Although Oregon did not meet the fourth criteria—that the state's annual commitment to IDAs should be no less than \$200 per low-income resident, Oregon had the highest investment per low-income resident of any of the 50 states.

APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

This report was based on an evaluation of Oregon's IDA initiative conducted by the Regional Research Institute at Portland State University. The evaluation was designed to assess overall program performance as well as the short- and longer-term impact of IDA programs on the lives of participants.

Data on program performance were drawn from Outcome Tracker, a web-based management information system to which Oregon IDA Fiduciary Organizations submit information on all account holders, transactions, and payments. Outcome Tracker data allowed the evaluation to examine statewide results, including the distribution of IDA participants across the state and among residents from different ethnic and racial groups, and the characteristics of participants with respect to age, income, education, employment, marital status, and membership in sub-groups such as Veterans or Farm Workers (these data are presented in Appendix B). Outcome Tracker also allows compilation and analysis of data on graduation rates, savings accrued, matching funds utilized, change in net worth, and predictors of success in the population served.

Findings regarding the impact of IDA programs on participants' financial behaviors and financial wellbeing were largely taken from surveys administered by the IDA programs and their partner organizations and sent to PSU for data entry, compilation, and analysis. Program graduates are asked to complete an exit survey at the time they leave the program. By August 2010, 607 of these exit surveys had been submitted (a 77% response rate) from participants who left the program after May 1, 2008 when the surveys were initiated. Beginning in January 2009, similar surveys were also mailed to participants who had exited the program without receiving matching funds. Participants were offered a \$15 gift card as an incentive to complete and return their surveys. As of August 2010, 150 of these surveys had been returned (46% response rate). Finally, also starting in January 2009, 12-month follow-up surveys went out each month to participants who had exited the program one year prior. As of August 2010, 182 surveys had been returned (a 20% response rate).

Stories and quotes in this report come from responses to open-ended questions on the surveys and from interviews with participants and program staff conducted by the PSU evaluation team.

APPENDIX B: IDA PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

- 100% of IDA participants are low income/low wealth. All IDA participants have income at the time of enrollment of no more than 80% of the median family income in their county of residence or 200% of the federal poverty level (whichever is higher). For example, in Douglas County, a single adult would need to earn less than \$28,350 to be eligible, and a family of three would need to have income of less than \$36,620 annually. Eligibility requirements also stipulate that IDA participants have limited wealth, with no more than \$20,000 in net worth at the time of enrollment (excluding one home and one vehicle).
- 100% are Oregon residents. In this study:
 - Participants came from across the state: 29 of the 36 counties in Oregon were represented (counties not represented were Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Wheeler).
 - Participants reflected the diversity of Oregon's low income population.
 - 79% were White
 - 21% were Latino
 - 7% were African American
 - 6% were Multiple Race or 'other'
 - 4% were Native American/Alaskan Native
 - 4% were Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 - 16% had not graduated from high school; 18% had a high school diploma or GED; 30% had some college; and 37% had a college degree and/or graduate level education.
 - 69% were women; nearly 60% had children.
 - 58% relied on one or more of these Supportive Services at the point of enrollment:
 - 34% Food Stamps
 - 25% Oregon Health Plan
 - 13% Federal Housing Assistance
 - 9% Low Income Energy Assistance
 - 7% Emergency Food Assistance
 - 3% Vocational Rehabilitation Benefits
 - Among participants with children:
 - 41% Free or Reduced Price School Lunches
 - 16% Working Family Child Care Tax
 - 14% WIC
 - 6% Employment Related Day Care
 - 6% Head Start
 - 5% TANF

APPENDIX C: SUMMARY RESULTS FOR IDA PROGRAMS

Since January 2008:

- 2,115 Oregon residents opened IDAs around the state and have saved \$2,166,228 to date (as of August 1, 2010).
- 420 participants graduated, spending an average of 385 days in the program, and saving an average of \$1,525 to receive three-to-five times that amount in match, depending on the program.
- Those saving for small business or a home purchase were more likely to reach their savings goals, graduate and receive matching funds than were those saving for education.
- Graduates had higher average education, net worth, and credit scores at enrollment than did participants who did not graduate.
- IDAs had an impact on individual/business finances:
 - 77% of graduates saw an increase in assets.
 - 70% of graduates saw an increase in full net worth.
 - 24% of graduates saw a decrease in debts (many participants increased their debt through their IDA by taking on a mortgage or education loan).
- Less than one in five participants (17%) owned their own home when they enrolled in the program (82% were renting). By exit, 68% owned their own home.
- The percentage of participants with retirement plans increased from 18% to 25%.
- The percentage of participants who used Federal Housing Assistance dropped from 8% to 4%.
- 69% of participants who entered the program with bad debt (auto loans, debt to family, credit cards, medical bills, unpaid child support, unpaid property tax, store credit or personal line of credit) reduced their bad debt. 70% of these participants reduced it by over \$1,000, 50% by over \$2,000 and 20% by over \$7,000.