

# EnterPRISEr of the Year Award Winner

2018 Dr. Paul E. Garfinkel Awards for Entrepreneurial Achievement



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**Jennifer Beckford** is the owner of **Imajen Design and Décor** and has been operating in the Greater Toronto Area for over 5 years. Imajen Design and Décor is a home staging design business whose services include décor, design, consulting, painting, furniture and accessory rental, cleaning, and decluttering. Jennifer has partnered with Realtors all across the GTA.

**Background, Skills and Experience:** Jennifer studied Interior Decorating at Humber college in 2004 and Interior design in 2001 at International Academy of Design. She graduated from the Ontario Self Employment Benefit program in 2015. Her previous work experiences includes colour consulting, furniture styling for showrooms, interior decorating and home staging, as well as an apprenticeship with BNC Designs Staging Company.

**What are you most proud of about your business?** “I have been able to grow and consistently increase our profits every year organically with minimal marketing; meaning I have built the business on integrity, a desire to help and always creating a win-win situation, for our clients and team. When I receive feedback, or get referrals, I see that by being authentic and fair in our business practices, we have grown effortlessly. I started out with nothing in OSEB in 2015 and now I have a moving truck, a warehouse with enough inventory to stage 20 houses, and two full-time staff. It has certainly had its challenges but perseverance wins.”

**Doing Business With Rise:** In 2015, Jennifer received a low-interest loan from Rise for a truck, vehicle wrap and marketing material to transport furniture for staging and grow her business.

**How Has Rise Helped You?** “Someone suggested applying to Rise for a business loan as traditional funding wasn’t an option. I was treated with so much respect and zero judgement. I was given a chance to show the Rise team, my children and most importantly myself that given the opportunity I could create a better life for my family. I truly believe when given a little support, a purpose and enough belief in yourself anything is possible. After all I am proof.”

**What’s Next?** “We are in year four of the business plan and accomplished all but one goal, wrapping our truck. The goal for next year is to get another truck. I would love to create a social development enterprise where we could train and employ single mothers.”

Rise Asset Development is a registered **charity** that provides low interest small business loans, training and mentorship to men and women with a history of mental health and addiction challenges.

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