

CVIIC Immigrant Entrepreneurship Project: Success Leads to Training for Second Cohort

The Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative (CVIIC) announces the start of a second cohort of its successful Immigrant Entrepreneurship project

CLOVIS, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, April 8, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative](#) (CVIIC) is launching a new phase of its [Immigrant Entrepreneurship project](#) with the recruitment of a second cohort of participants who will begin receiving training in mid-April 2021. Forty Latino immigrants residing in California's Central Valley will participate in this unique project that builds their individual entrepreneurial capacity and enables them to be better positioned to contribute to the national economic recovery.



Jesus Martinez, Executive Director of CVIIC, underscores the importance and popularity of the project: “Although we only did minimal promotion to announce the launching of the second cohort, the application process was closed after a few days due to the great demand that emerged. This interest reveals the need to create and expand entrepreneurial opportunities for Latino immigrants in the Central Valley. Many immigrants wish to establish a business or learn to develop the skills to better manage an existing enterprise.”

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Clarissa Vivian Petrucci

The Immigrant Entrepreneurship project was initially launched in October 2020 and was designed by CVIIC and a group of local partner agencies that

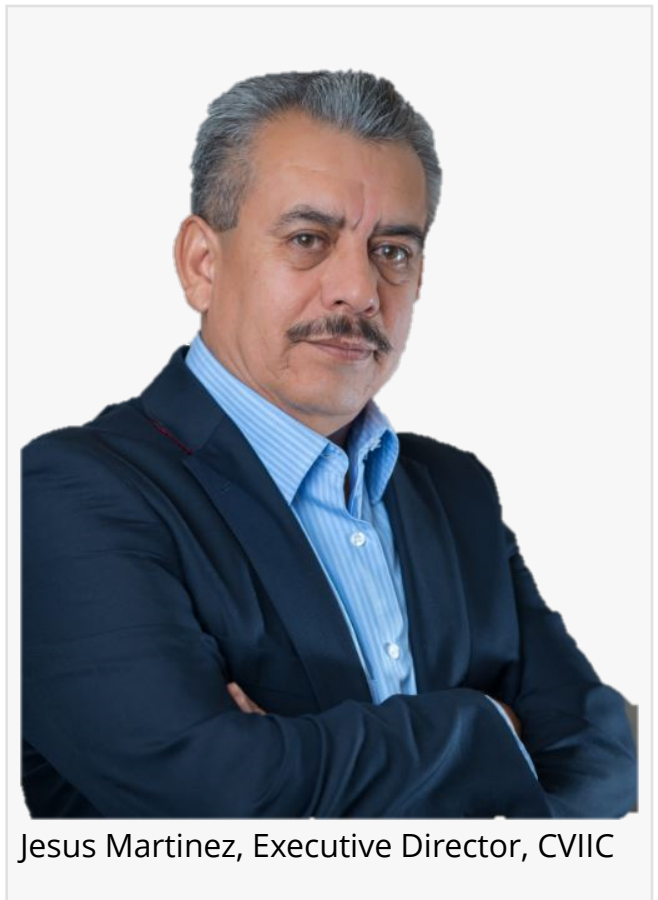
includes adult education institutions and immigrant serving agencies. It has successfully provided training to an initial group of participants during the October 2020-March 2021 period. The training was offered by [Immigrants Rising](#), a nationally recognized agency specializing in promoting entrepreneurship among immigrant communities. A highlight of the project was the issuing of 19 kickstarter grants by CVIIC, which are being awarded to some of the project participants in order to further support their entrepreneurial activities.

Iliana Perez, Director of Research and Entrepreneurship at Immigrants Rising, states: "This program provides training and support to help participants facilitate the application of their current skills, knowledge and experience into the formation of a business. While we're fighting and waiting for piecemeal legislation at the federal level, we also need to ensure that immigrant communities are thriving, not just surviving, by providing resources for them to help themselves."

The success of the first cohort helped spread the interest in the application process for the second cohort, which will receive intensive training opportunities during the April-July period. Entrepreneurial instruction will be provided to the second cohort by the Fresno Area Hispanic Foundation and the Valley Community Small Business Development Center.

Clarissa Vivian Petrucci, CVIIC Special Projects Coordinator, highlights a distinctive feature of the project and also points out that interest extends to other agencies that are interested in supporting project activities. "We have been fortunate to find that many local organizations and even state agencies are eager to share the resources and services with project participants. In practice, this actually means that we have been able to implement a project that provides a holistic approach to entrepreneurship. Participants learn how to establish and manage a business, but they also have received support to address other barriers they face, including health care access, immigration services, access to an English as a Second Language platform to improve their English-language skills, among others."

Applicants admitted to the second cohort express a desire to establish or strengthen different types of local businesses, ranging from bakeries and other food-related establishments to home and commercial cleaning, construction, painting, pet stores, clothing stores, event planning, beauty salons, and others.



Jesus Martinez, Executive Director, CVIIC

Project participants reside in rural and urban communities in the Central Valley. This includes residents from Fresno, Kern, Tulare, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus and San Joaquin counties.

The success of the Immigrant Entrepreneurship project is influencing CVIIC's medium- and longer-term strategic plans. This includes the desire to continue offering entrepreneurial training opportunities to new cohorts of immigrant participants, extending the services to an online community via a Facebook group, and developing new partnerships with local, state and federal entities interested in the economic wellbeing of Central Valley immigrant families, including entrepreneurship.

Jesus Martinez adds: "We are pleased with the success of the project so far and hope that it will be possible to help many more Central Valley immigrants achieve the American Dream. Our national economic recovery will benefit greatly from their efforts, creativity and initiative."

Jesus Martinez

Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative (CVIIC)

+1 559-560-5090

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