

CVIIC Launches Second Year of Immigrant Entrepreneurs Program for Central Valley Latino Immigrants

The second year of the CVIIC Immigrant Entrepreneurs program expands its services to better meet the demand that exists in this region of California.

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA, USA, November 29, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Small businesses are rightfully celebrated for being the engine of the American economy, the generators of millions of jobs, and a source of valuable revenue for local governments. The [Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative](#) (CVIIC) recognizes this and considers that to maximize these benefits to our national economy and local communities it is also vital to promote entrepreneurship among all social sectors, including immigrant communities. To this end, CVIIC has launched the second year of a unique [immigrant entrepreneurship](#) training program designed for Central Valley [Latino immigrant entrepreneurs](#).



There are approximately 900,000 immigrants residing in the 8 Central Valley counties served by CVIIC. A majority of these productive and hard-working members of our regional economy are of Latino origin. Thus, it is in the region's interest to regard Latino immigrant entrepreneurship as a policy priority.

Helping immigrants learn how to start or run a business has rapidly become a central area of work for CVIIC due to the success of the first year of its Immigrant Entrepreneurs program. Just as important has been the growing interest among local immigrant families in the trainings and related services being provided to participants. In response to the need and interest that has emerged, CVIIC is proceeding to transform what began as a one-time pilot project into a more

robust and permanent initiative capable of reaching two key objectives: serving many more interested participants and strengthening the collaborative relations with partner agencies that have made the program's existence and success possible.

CVIIC launched the pilot immigrant entrepreneurs project in October 2020. Over the course of the following 10 months entrepreneurial training opportunities were provided to two separate cohorts of 40 participants. The trainings were offered by three partner agencies: Immigrants Rising, Fresno Area Hispanic Foundation, and Valley Small Business Development Center.



A highlight of the pilot project was the intensive individualized assistance made available to each participant to help advance the respective entrepreneurial objective. Additionally, 29 participants were issued kick starter grants to support the purchase of equipment or supplies, or to help cover licensing and other set up expenses.

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Maria Palomares

Simultaneously, an online community of Latino immigrant entrepreneurs was also created, which now has nearly 400 members. In the first year of the program CVIIC also offered entrepreneurial technical trainings to representatives of organizations linked to its regional network of immigrant-serving organizations.

Zendi Roque, a first-year participant, owns a pressure washing business, M&Z Pressure Washer. She highlights the value of the trainings and assistance provided to her: “CVIIC helped me so much. The classes were a great help for me... I learned how to prepare for my business and manage my income, so many things.”

Maria Palomares, owner of South North Janitorial Services, which offers commercial and residential cleaning services. She has twenty years' experience in the industry but states that the training offered by CVIIC “has been of great support for my business.” She highlights the assistance to conduct administrative transactions with local governments and the training

enabling her to develop a business plan. “I am learning how to create a business plan and much more. I am very grateful to [...] all the CVIIC staff for guiding me in the growth of my business.”

Guadalupe Garduño, owner of Rodriguez Drinks Services discusses at length the benefits she has received: “The Immigrant Entrepreneurs program has helped us because my husband and I have also taken these classes. It has provided us with many tools and taught us different ways to start a business, because there are people who have not started their own business yet. From there we went on to create a logo and a commercial name to generate a brand among our clients [...] In addition, this program has helped us to know how to access loans, how to seek financial support to increase the quality of your business. And based on that, how to acquire the essentials to invest and be productive in your own business. This is a dream for many immigrants.”

Armando Zayas, a participant in the second year of the program, states that he learned of the program through his wife, who informed him that there was a group in which he could learn about entrepreneurship, given his interest in a landscaping business. “I did not believe her, but I enrolled, nonetheless. I confess that I do not regret it and thanks to this group I have learned that it is possible to get ahead in this country.”

Maria Garcia, also a participant in the second year of the program, points out that the Immigrant Entrepreneurs program has helped her overcome the fear of starting her own business. Now that she is going through the free trainings, she feels “more secure about moving forward with my MGDesigns Store.”

Like some of the program participants, Rosalia Garcia is interested in creating a food-related business. As someone new to entrepreneurship, she indicates: “I am grateful to the program for providing the tools so that [our businesses] can have the proper foundations. I am starting from zero, but this program is helping me to learn the basics.”

The second year of the program expands the services in order to better meet the demand that exists in this region of California. To make this possible, CVIIC is building on existing partnerships (including Fresno Area Hispanic Foundation, Immigrant Legal Resource Center, Valley Small Business Development Center, State Center Adult Education Consortium, Sequoias Adult Education Consortium, Education and Leadership Foundation) and formalizing new forms of collaboration with Santa Clara University’s My Own Business Institute (MOBI) as well as the Build from Within Alliance.

Thanks to the new relationship with Santa Clara University’s MOBI program, an online entrepreneurial learning platform will be made available in English and Spanish to current and future participants.

The relationship with the Build from Within Alliance will also make it possible to develop a broader expertise in neighborhood business development and in making other resources

essential to small business development available to Central Valley immigrant entrepreneurs.

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