

# ICIC Sets the Stage for a Transformative Experience at the 2023 ICIC Annual Conference: Reflect, Reunite, Renew

MIAMI, FL, USA, November 17, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Initiative for a Competitive Inner City \(ICIC\)](#) is proud to announce its upcoming 2023 Annual Conference, themed "Reflect, Reunite, Renew." Scheduled for December 11-12, this year's conference, sponsored by Santander US, marks a significant moment for ICIC's national impact on accelerating small business growth in under-resourced communities.



Bringing together approximately 750 small business owners, thought leaders, and major corporate stakeholders from across the United States and Canada, the event aims to reinforce growth strategies and build strong communities, fostering connections among entrepreneurs and business leaders.

Highlights of the conference include a Homecoming Welcome Reception on December 11, featuring opening remarks from Francesca De Quesada Covey, Chief Innovation and Economic Development Officer for Miami-Dade County. The full-day conference on December 12 at the Hyatt Regency Miami will feature keynote addresses from Christina DeLay, Santander US's recently named Head of Small Business & Corporate Social Responsibility; Alberto Perlman, CEO and co-founder of Zumba Fitness, LCC; Ingrid Hoffmann, author and host of Top Chef Estrellas (Telemundo), Simply Delicioso (Cooking Channel), and Delicioso (Univision); and TJ Douglas, founder and CEO of Drink Progressively Group and founder of The Urban Grape, one of the most successful independently-owned wine stores in the country.

The day's activities include a "Shark Tank"-Style Pitch Competition with three pitches from alumni of ICIC programming; a Business Growth Marketplace with tradeshow-style booths hosted by ICIC alumni businesses, ecosystem partners, and conference sponsors; and a Closing Ceremony featuring the presentation of the Inner City 100 Awards, highlighting for the 25th year the 100 fastest-growing businesses in underserved communities.

The principal and presenting sponsor of the conference, Santander US, partners with ICIC to offer the Cultivate Small Business Program to help early-stage entrepreneurs build and sustain businesses in the food industry, with a focus on woman-, immigrant-, and BIPOC-owned enterprises. The 12-week program is completely free to entrepreneurs and provides a food-focused curriculum, mentorship, coaching, and small capital grants. ICIC serves as the national outreach and selection partner for this pioneering initiative. The program, fully funded by Santander, began in 2017 and now supports 180 entrepreneurs annually in six major markets: Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Philadelphia, Dallas, and Miami.

Additional sponsors include Chevron, FedEx, Edward Jones, Bank of America, Regions Bank, Bain Capital, Boston Consulting Group, Appleton Partners, Arctaris Impact Investors, and Salesforce.

Steve Grossman, CEO of ICIC commented: "The Annual Conference is a testament to our commitment to driving economic growth and fostering opportunities for small businesses in under-resourced communities. We are excited to bring together diverse voices and innovative ideas that will shape the future of inclusive economic prosperity."

Reflecting on the conference theme, Christina DeLay, Head of Small Business & Corporate Social Responsibility at Santander US, added, "In the spirit of renewal, the conference will offer small businesses invaluable networking opportunities, programming, and education to equip them with the tools necessary for sustained growth and success. Santander is proud to play a meaningful role in supporting these efforts."

The conference locations include Cervceria La Tropical in the Wynwood District for the Homecoming Welcome Reception and the Hyatt Regency Miami for the main conference. To learn more and register for the event, visit [icic.org/ancon2023](https://icic.org/ancon2023).

#### About ICIC

Initiative for a Competitive Inner City (ICIC) is the widely recognized authority on accelerating small business growth in under-resourced communities. ICIC drives inclusive economic prosperity through focused technical assistance and world-class research. Founded by renowned Harvard Business School professor Michael Porter in 1994 as a research and strategy organization, today ICIC drives inclusive economic prosperity in under-resourced communities through innovative research and programs to create jobs, income, and wealth for local residents.

#### About Santander Bank

Santander Bank, N.A. is one of the country's largest retail and commercial banks with \$99 billion in assets. With corporate offices in Boston, the Bank's nearly 9,000 employees and more than 2 million customers are principally located in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. The Bank is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Madrid-based Banco Santander, S.A. (NYSE: SAN) – one of the most respected banking groups in the world with 164 million customers in the U.S., Europe, and Latin America. It

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