

Emprendedor@s Program, an Entrepreneurship 101 Class in Spanish, Held Graduation at Chapman University

ORANGE, CA, UNITED STATES, August 30, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Asociación de Emprendedor@s](#) (AdE), the [Chapman University Leatherby Center for Entrepreneurship and Business Ethics](#), and U.S. Bank recognized 23 Orange County entrepreneurs who graduated from the second cohort of the Emprendedor@s Program on July 29.

At the beginning of the ceremony, Dr. Cynthia West, Ph.D., Assistant Dean, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Programs at Leatherby Center for Entrepreneurship and Business Ethics, welcomed the graduates. In a speech delivered in Spanish that was met with applause from the audience, Dr. West said:

“Emprendedor@s, su presencia aquí, hoy, es un testimonio de su dedicación, trabajo arduo y el espíritu de innovación que los ha llevado hasta este punto.” (Emprendedor@s, your presence

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Cynthia West, Director of The Leatherby Center

here today is a testament to your dedication, hard work, and the spirit of innovation that has brought you to this point.)

Next, Dr. Tara Lynn Gray, Director of the California Office of the Small Business Advocate (CalOSBA) expressed with heartfelt enthusiasm what a pleasure it's been to watch Monica Robles grow this program, and emphasized that California has 4.3 million small businesses—the most in any state of the country. “Everyone deserves a fair chance to build their dreams”, said Dr. Gray.



Second cohort of the Emprendedor@s Program in Chapman University. Photo Credit: Herest Studios Photo & Video

After these words of encouragement, Robles, AdE Founder and President, introduced several elected officials, representatives and other stakeholders who congratulated the graduates. Among the guests were Mariana Flores, representative of Congressman Lou Correa, District 46; Senator Tom Umberg, District 34; Tony Flores, representative of Assemblymember Avelino Valencia, District 68; Orange County Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento, District 2; City of Orange Mayor Daniel R. Slater; Cesar Hernandez, Vice President of U.S. Bank; and Jonathan Escobar, Community Manager at JPMorgan Chase and AdE Board Director.

Robles congratulated the graduates, highlighting how they had applied their four Ds throughout the program: decision, determination, dedication and discipline. She then introduced a fifth D in Spanish: no Desistas ("do not give up"), and illustrated its importance with a heartfelt recitation of Rudyard Kipling's poem "Don't Quit".

The new Emprendedor@s had the opportunity to share their elevator pitches and listen to the class speaker, Nettie Martinez, before starting the graduation procession. They received certificates from the offices of Congressman Lou Correa, Assemblymember Avelino Valencia, Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento, Mayor Dan Slater, Senator Tom Umberg, Chapman University and from AdE, as well as a three-month free membership for this organization.

The graduates showcased their businesses, products and services at the Business Expo, which took place during the second half of the event. These included mental health services, a photo booth, catering, Colombian pastries, car detailing, car wash and ceramic coating, life and health insurance, retirement plans and debt elimination programs, fitness and wellness services, road assistance, flower designs for events, daycare, decorations and party supplies, cleaning services, handmade jewelry and funeral plans, among others.



Group Trade Show Floor



Dr. Tara Lynn Gray, Director of the California Office of the Small Business Advocate (CalOSBA). Photo Credit: Herest Studios Photo & Video

A native from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Leila De Oliveira Endersby is a lifelong health and fitness enthusiast whose passion began in childhood, playing every sport imaginable. Over the years, her love for physical activity evolved into a dynamic career—ranging from launching sports brands in Brazil, to coaching the USA Junior Surf Team, to specializing in functional training for older adults. After moving to this country and starting a family, her daughter inspired her to get certified as a Fitness Specialist/Personal Trainer.

Leila joined the Emprendedor@s Program in Chapman University during a period of personal reinvention, encouraged by a close friend who had graduated from it. She had tried to enroll in the program in other cities before but was unable to, as you needed to be a resident where it was offered. Everything finally aligned when she met Monica Robles at a credit workshop in Santa Ana. “I felt like God sent me there. Monica is an inspiration—she has a gift for making people’s lives better. The program was starting in Orange County the following week.” Through the business training, Leila not only formalized her business—choosing a name, registering it, getting an Employer Identification Number and securing liability insurance—but also reconnected with her entrepreneurial drive. The program, she says, was “one of the best I’ve taken because it was short but taught all the key basics needed to succeed”.

Monica’s impact on Leila was transformative. “If you’re not serious when you start the program, you will be when you meet Monica,” Leila explains. “She wakes you up.” With renewed purpose and the practical tools to build her brand, Leila’s goal after graduation is to open her own studio, build a website with access to recorded online classes, and continue serving the older adult community she knows so well. “Programs like this need to be promoted because small



Graduate Teresa Labrada, owner of JULIETA Diseño e Innovación Floral. Photo Credit: Herest Studios Photo & Video



Graduate Mirna Nath, owner of Mujer Con Mayúscula. Photo Credit: Herest Studios Photo & Video.

businesses are the foundation of a community”, said an excited Leila, founder of Embrace Health – Embrace Yourself.

The program consisted of eight consecutive weekly modules, led by Robles, who is an internationally certified JMT Coach (John Maxwell Team).

Asociación de Emprendedor@s (AdE), headquartered in Anaheim, CA, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to educate, motivate, empower, and develop the leadership skills and business acumen of the monolingual Hispanic Community in Southern California, integrating them in the economic development of their cities, counties, and state. Since 2016 the Emprendedor@s Program has brought hope and support to over 1,600 Hispanic Emprendedor@s, giving them a way to reinvigorate their dreams of having their own business in the United States.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the Leatherby Center for Entrepreneurship.

To learn when the Emprendedor@s Program and other free trainings will be offered in your city, follow Asociación de Emprendedor@s on social media or visit

<https://www.asociaciondeemprendedores.org/>

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