

United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Community Navigator Pilot Program Project Report



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Results and Impact







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Participating Organizations El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Hello Alice Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Latino Business Action Network

Compliance & Impact Measurement

Allen Gutiérrez, The MCA Group

Business Counselors Wilma Milián, MBA Vichet Inhar (Chet), MBA Zoila Sanguinetti Veronica Sauto, MBA

Impact Through Our Spokes

Program Events

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Strategic Communications & Outreach CF Creative

Strategic Project Planning & Management: Reporting, **Analytics & Digital Tools** Smart Edge Technologies

OUR COMMUNITY

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Chief Operations Officer Felipe Ugalde

Senior Manager of Finance and Administration Erica Salinas

Project Manager María Fernanda Sierra



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) is the representative voice for the nation's 5 million Hispanic-owned businesses, which collectively contribute more than \$800 billion to the American economy annually.

In 2021, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) awarded the USHCC a \$5 million Community Navigator Pilot Program grant to implement a technical assistance program that would empower small, Hispanic, and minority-owned businesses as they navigated the post-pandemic economy. This award was groundbreaking: Out of 50 grantees selected by the SBA to participate in the program, the USHCC was the only Hispanic hub in the SBA Community Navigator Pilot Program network.

By collaborating with local economic development groups and engaging community resource partners, the USHCC Community Navigator Pilot Program successfully assisted small business owners in starting, growing, and scaling their businesses. The program ended in late 2023, but was granted an extension and officially closed in May 2024.

How It Worked

Following a "Hub and Spoke" model, the USHCC (the "Hub") partnered with four organizations (the "Spokes") that had established trusted relationships with their local communities: the El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Hello Alice, the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Stanford University's Latino Business Action Network.

Utilizing a multifaceted outreach approach (grassroot efforts, social media, and resource sharing with local partners) our team successfully reached previously underserved business owners. Through the combined efforts of our partners and bilingual business counselors, we connected small, Hispanic, and minority-owned businesses with critical resources and provided expert advice and training on relevant business topics such as starting a business, funding and access to capital, contracting and procurement, minority certifications, marketing, and business operations. We offered dedicated bilingual counseling, as well as readiness and training through our partners' digital platforms, webinars, and live events.

Thanks to the USHCC-CNPP, $67^{\circ}/_{\circ}$ of the businesses we served were connected to SBA resources for the first time.



One-on-one counseling services were tailored to the individual business owner's needs, making the USHCC Community Navigator Pilot Program's assistance targeted and highly relevant. Importantly, all counseling services and support were provided in English and Spanish by culturally acquainted individuals, which enhanced the program's effectiveness and reach. This approach ensured that small business owners received the support they needed in a manner that was both accessible and diverse.

A key component of the success of the USHCC Community Navigator Pilot Program was the use of technology tools for data collection, which enabled us to track program outcomes, identify community needs, and assess the effectiveness of various initiatives. Utilizing data analysis, we continuously refined and enhanced our strategies, ensuring that resources were allocated efficiently and that support services were tailored to meet the specific needs of small business owners. Technology not only facilitated the program's immediate success but also laid the groundwork for improvements in future programs to support small businesses in historically underserved communities.

The USHCC Community Navigator Pilot Program was critical to small, Hispanic, and minority businesses: It provided essential resources and expert guidance that empowered business owners to overcome signifcant challenges, and achieve growth.



PROGRAMA PILOTO DE NAVEGADORES COMUNITARIOS USHCC-SBA

Guía para lanzar tu negocio

Esta guía proporciona información de la Guía de negocios de la Administración de la Pequeña Empresa (Small Business Administration o SBA,

10 pasos para comenzar tu negocio.

¿Listo para lanzar tu negocio? Sigue estos pasos de la SBA.

Realiza una investigación de mercado. Le airvestigación de mercado te dirá si hay una oportunidad La investigación de mercado te dirá si hay una oportunidad para convertir tu idea en un negocio exitoso. Es una forma de recopilar información sobre clinetes potenciales y empresas que ya operan en tu área. Utiliza esa información para encontrar una ventaja competitiva.

Redacta tu plan de negocios. Tu plan de negocios es la base de tu negocio. Es una hoja de ruta sobre cómo estructurar, administrar y hacerlo orecer: lo usarás para convencer a la gente de que trabajar contigo, o invertir en tu empresa, es una opción inteligente. Luego, debes averiguar cuánto costará tu negocio. Además, necesitas para evaluar si prefleres comprar un negocio existente o uno franquicia, porque puede simplificar el proceso.

Establece tu crédito comercial. El buen crédito afecta las as de seguro y su atractivo para posibles socios, proveedores y vendedores

Financia tu negocio. Tu plan de negocios te ayudará a calcular cuánto dinero necesitarás para comenzar. Si no tiere esa cantida da mano, deberás recaudar o pedir prestado el capital. Afortunadamente, hay más formas que nunca de encontrar el capital que necesitas.



unitarios United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) oyo incluye la consejería de negocios bilingüe gratis, enfocada hacia temas

 Hacer crecer tu equipo
 Contratos con el gobierno, compras federales
y corporativas, y cadena de suministro
 Certificación de minoría una empresa presariales venciones y capital creación de la marca sa y productos

e código para hacer una cita n asesor comercial, hov:

HCC





Aprende más acerca del Programa



s free dedicated bilingual business advice on critical topics a Business Government Contracting, Public a pusiness ances Access to Capita nd Branding

1	and Corporate Supply Chains and Procurement • Minority Certification
today.	Learn more about the Brogram:



in appointment advisor, for free

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Key Findings and Insights

The USHCC-CNPP achieved significant milestones and generated important results for the many small, Hispanic, and minority business owners we supported. This section provides a high-level overview of these accomplishments.

We provided one-to-one counseling to 4,900 customers over 24,000 counseling hours and trained more than 147,000 small business owners through digital platforms, webinars, and live events. This reach created an indelible positive impact on the small, Hispanic, and minority business community in the United States.

- Access to capital was the primary assistance that small business owners requested, with more than half of our customers indicating they need access to sources of capital, including loans and grants.
- More than 80% of our customers were startups. Our business counselors helped these entrepreneurs build strong financial and operational structures, and access information about funding and minority certifications to strengthen their roles as future governments and corporate contractors.
- We dedicated more than 3,000 hours to providing small business owners with the tools and resources they need to be competitive in local, national, and global markets. The top three training topics were: business financing and capital sources, business operations, and business plans.

We assisted customers in securing more than \$80 million in loans and grants. The entrepreneurs were largely from groups traditionally underrepresented in business funding.

- The main purpose of the program was to support small businesses navigating the post-pandemic economy, and more than 90% of the loans secured by our customers were COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL).
- More than 350 small business owners secured loans and grants. The majority of loans were approved by financial institutions and organizations who usually serve small businesses.
- The ratio of loans approved to loans submitted by the small businesses we served was 41%. This shows there are still financial gaps to be filled at different levels of the lending process.
- We not only increased the number of minority businesses that became grant-, loan-, and procurement-ready through our free dedicated business guidance, but we also raised small business owners' awareness of grants, loans, educational opportunities, and business prospects through our allies and collaborators.



We reached a national audience, supporting customers in 42 states.

- Our teams conducted grassroots outreach to meet business owners where they are: visiting rural communities, knocking on doors, and spreading the word through radio, TV, and digital media.
- Thanks to the USHCC-CNPP, 67% of the businesses we served were connected to SBA resources for the first time.
- We offered services in both English and Spanish. This ensured that a sizable population one that might not have been able to had we offered services in English only could take advantage of our free counseling and training. 20% of businesses requested counseling in Spanish, and our top states served have some of the largest Spanish-speaking populations in the United States.
- The relationships we built with key constituents invested in small and minority business growth including capital providers, procurement officers, government agencies, and corporations will be key allies as we continue our mission of supporting the United States' 5 million Hispanic-owned businesses through USHCC programs. These allies contribute value-add products and services that are critical to small business owners.





RESULTS AND IMPACT

Over the past two and a half years, the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Community Navigator Pilot Program achieved significant milestones and generated positive outcomes. This section provides a highlevel summary of these accomplishments, highlighting the impact of the USHCC Community Navigator in our small, Hispanic and minority business community.



Industries Served

1. Primary Industries

- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Fishing
- Mining

2. Utilities & Infrastructure

- Utilities
- Construction
- Transportation & Warehousing

3. Production & Manufacturing

- Manufacturing
- Wholesale Trade

4. Financial & Real Estate Services

- Real Estate & Leasing
- Finance & Insurance
- Management of Companies & Enterprises

5. Professional & Technical Services

- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services
- Information

6. Support Services

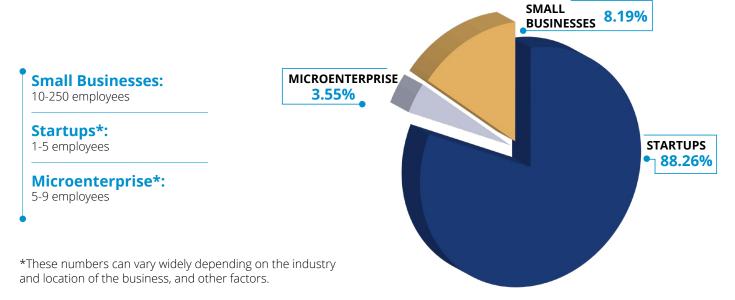
- Administrative & Support
- Waste Management & Remediation Services
- Retail Trade

7. Hospitality & Personal Services

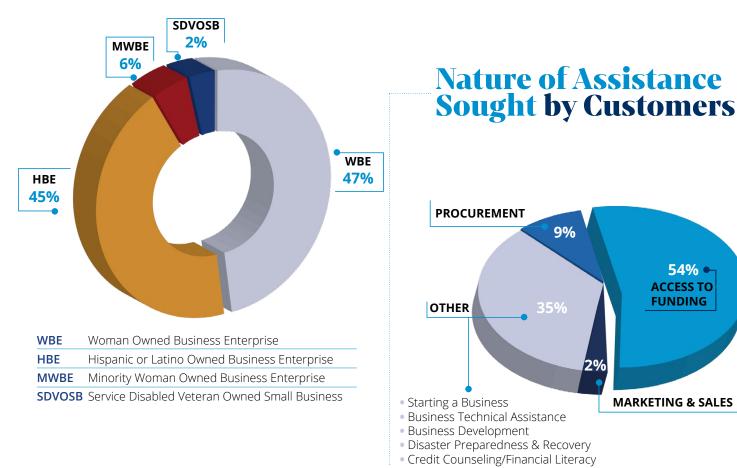
- Educational Services
- Healthcare & Social Assistance
- Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation
- Accommodation & Food Services
- Other Services (except Public Administration)
- Public Administration



Size of Businesses Served

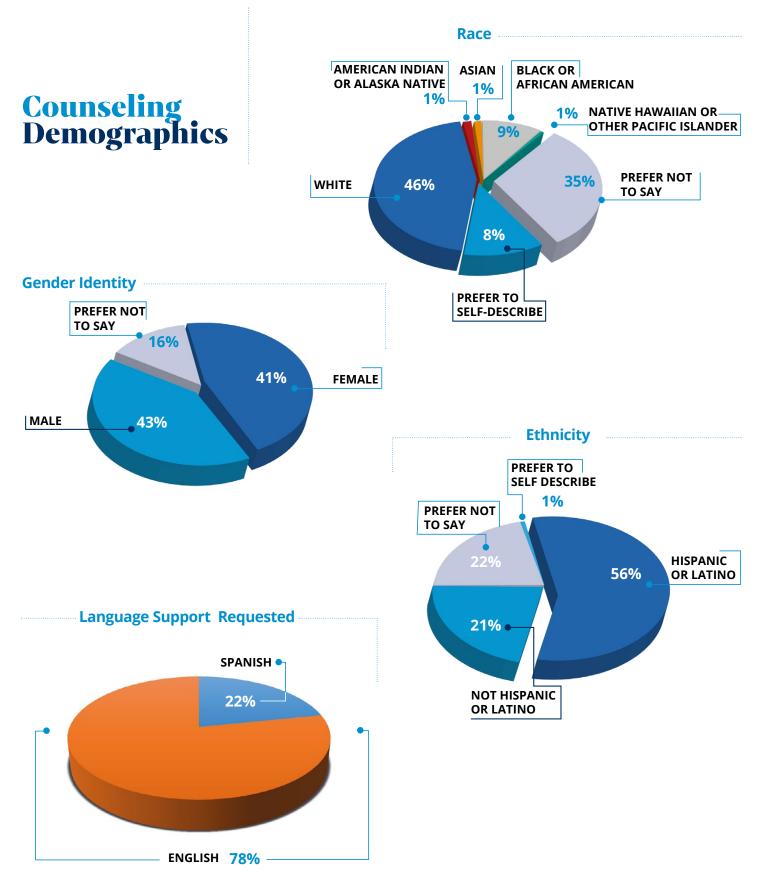


Certified Minority Owned Businesses



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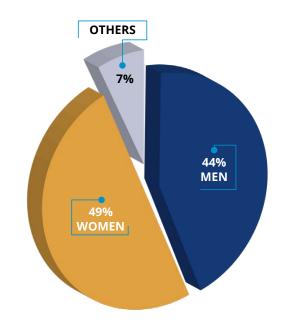




Training

Demographics Veterans 15,831 Hispanic or Latino 38,581 Not Hispanic or Latino 62,363 Black or African American 54,572 White 9,204 Women 71,882 Asian American 1,553 LGBTQIA+ 10,487 American Indians or Alaska Natives 617 Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders 204

Gender Identity of Clients Trained



146,796

The USHCC Community Navigator Pilot Program partnered with Hello Alice to provide a comprehensive library of selfpaced online business courses for small business owners. The courses took entrepreneurs from launching their businesses to making their first hire. Courses were available in English and Spanish to reach more of the smallest businesses in our program.



Establishing Business / Finances / Funding / Branding / Digital Marketing / Growing a Team

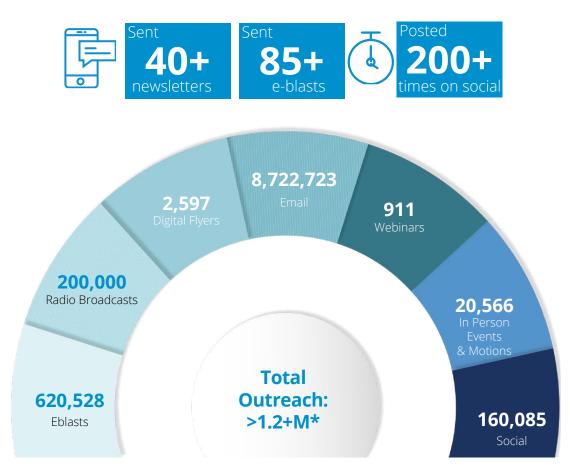


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REACH

Marketing Outreach: Recruiting Customers

The USHCC Community Navigator Pilot Program leveraged social media campaigns, email blasts, newsletters, boots-on-the ground approaches, and print and digital flyers to reach out to clients directly or through the program's spokes and allies.



Throughout the run of the USHCC Community Navigator Pilot Program, the Hub, Spokes, and counselors created imaginative, appealing pieces of outreach to communicate program activities and events with a broad audience. Our partners and Hub shared email blasts, social media content, flyers, postcards, newsletters, and videos with small businesses to announce and promote program services. Our partners also referred audiences to program services through their websites, in targeted communications, and during live events. To build on this training and resources awareness work, during the program's extension in November 2023 to May 2024, we launched The Business Navigator, a monthly newsletter for small, Hispanic, and minority business owners. We released 4 issues of The Business Navigator, reaching over 7,200 readers and with an open rate of over 52%. Newsletter topics included marketing tips, introductions to the USHCC Community Navigator Program counselors and team members, information on making appointments for free counseling sessions, links to Hello Alice business trainings, Hello Alice grant opportunities, and events for small business owners hosted by chambers in our network of 260+ Hispanic Chambers of Commerce.

*Although the program sent over 8 million emails, our our total reach (the number of individuals touched) was >1.2 million.

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The USHCC Community Navigator Program utilized the SBA's "Hub and Spoke" model, strategically partnering with four influential organizations: the El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (EPHCC), Hello Alice, the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (IHCC), and Stanford University's Latino Business Action Network (LBAN). These partners were selected for their significant impact on small, Hispanic and minority businesses, either through regional focus or by reaching large audiences. Our collaboration not only enhanced our technological tools but also maximized each partner's unique strengths, yielding impressive results. For example, Hello Alice's extensive mailing list was pivotal for targeted outreach, EPHCC provided valuable insights on best practices for direct counseling, LBAN illustrated effective business scaling for sustainable growth, and IHCC highlighted the importance of boots-on-the-ground engagement. This dynamic synergy significantly improved our collective capabilities and offerings.

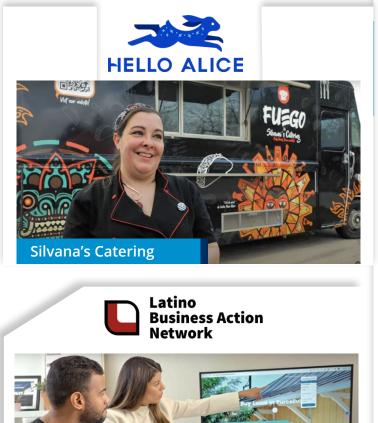
We wanted to document our partners' legacy of selfless hard work and commitment to the small, Hispanic and minority business community. We feel the best way to show the positive impact of the program in this important business segment is to hear from small business owners themselves. The USHCC Community Navigator Program produced 10 videos where business owners talk about their work with our Spokes and counselors, and how that transformed their business efforts. We invite you to watch them and be inspired by their stories.



















American Auto Repair 1 Corp



Asadoras Argentinas Burgers







PROGRAM EVENTS











IN GRATITUDE



Dear Friends,

Three years ago, the United States Small Business Administration entrusted the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce with a powerful and urgent mission: to provide technical assistance and guidance to thousands of Hispanic, small, and minority businesses navigating the post-pandemic economy. Today, we celebrate the success of the USHCC Community Navigator Pilot Program, which has positively impacted thousands of entrepreneurs in the United States.

We are truly grateful to our partners: the El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Hello Alice, the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Stanford University's Latino Business Action Network (LBAN). We are deeply thankful to our Board of Directors, allies, providers, and team members for their steadfast commitment to this program.

Together, we have provided meaningful support to small, Hispanic, and minority entrepreneurs as they start up and scale their businesses to become the new majority drivers of the United States economy.

In gratitude,

Ramiro Cavazos President & CEO

Maria Fernanda Sierra

María Fernanda Sierra Project Manager





















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