

THANKS TO NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES ADVANCING ECONOMIC MOBILITY GRANT



Following a 2023 assessment, the Food Business Workgroup identified key ecosystem gaps experienced by rural and minority entrepreneurs, including access to capital and guidance to resources. The Advancing Economic Mobility Grant facilitated opportunities for economic growth and financial empowerment by providing seed funds, bilingual navigation and mentorship to startup businesses. We are proud of the positive impacts achieved through our partnership with the City of Durango and the National League of Cities.

Bilingual Business Navigation

As the founder 3 startups, and an immigrant entrepreneur herself, Priscila Newbold has established herself as La Plata County's first and only bilingual food business navigator.

In 2024 alone, she helped 28 new food entrepreneurs connect with 23 different services including help with marketing, taxes & licensing to advance their business journey.



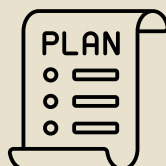
"It was really hard for me at the beginning, I didn't have the tools I needed when I opened my businesses... I'm here to help people make their dreams come true, and help them not go through all my same hiccups and mistakes."

Advancing Economic Mobility grant expanded the bilingual business navigator's initial capacity by 25%, to 391 hours of business support in 2024.

"I feel very grateful to this program because it has made my dreams of entrepreneurship come true and educated me about it. I have received advice in a friendly and understanding way!"
-Navigation Participant



"She has helped me with everything I've come to her with. I genuinely do not know where my business would be without her!"
-Navigation Participant



We surveyed entrepreneurs about working with Priscila as business navigator:

- 100% have had a positive experience
- 100% would recommend her navigation services to other entrepreneurs
- 100% reported they were assisted by:
 - Understanding where to go and who to talk to to advance their business
 - Getting personal introductions at the appropriate agencies & services
 - Having someone to relate to who understands what it's like to run a business
 - Having someone to help talk through their unique challenges
- 100% reported an increase in marketing & business visibility as a result of Priscila's help
- 86% increased personal contacts among the business network



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Seed Funds & Mentorship

3 income-eligible entrepreneurs received mentorship & 3,000 each in seed funds to advance their business. The businesses included 1 pupusería, 1 granola company, and 1 childcare center.

All 3 entrepreneurs + 2 mentors who participated were surveyed, and reported:

- 100% had a positive experience
- 100% say that the intended impact of increasing economic mobility was achieved
- 100% said the program increased the business:
 - Profitability
 - Marketing and visibility
 - Long-term business viability

“My product is now in 3 more markets from when this program started, ...Priscila helped with manufacturing licensing so that I can now operate in during off season (from farmers market)”

-Seed Funds Recipient

“I was in a rough spot at the beginning of this program. I'm still new to this and don't know how to do marketing. In a matter of weeks of working with Tiffany I came back to capacity with childcare spots.... With the funds I was able to catch up on bills, get insurance for the center, and hire new staff.”

-Seed Funds Recipient

- 3 out of 3 entrepreneurs reported increases in:

- Career advancement
- Access to a livable wage
- Ability to cover housing costs
- Ability to add to their savings
- Professional development & education
- Business skills & training

- 3 out of 3 entrepreneurs reported greatest benefits of the program were:

- Flexible seed funds to spend on necessary expenses
- Mentorship & guidance from a trusted advisor
- Developing a workplan to develop the business in phases
- Confidence & motivation to keep building the business

“The money from the seed funds was really helpful for short term needs, but the mentorship is what will carry me through because I was in this process alone...Priscila has first hand experience and understands what it's like... she not only gave me information, she made personal calls on my behalf”

-Seed Funds Recipient



The LPFEC's Food Business Workgroup is made up of organizations promoting economic opportunity and financial security in La Plata County by developing an inclusive, equitable food business network. Learn more at goodfoodcollective.org/food-business