



BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2022-MARCH 2023





BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Semiannual Performance Progress Report

Grantee: University of Puerto Rico – Mayaguez Campus

Project Title: A US Caribbean Regional Proposal for Innovation & Business Development within Puerto Rico & U.S. Virgin Island

Project Number: ED21PHI3030013

Period covered by the report: 09/01/2022 - 03/31/2023

Reporting period end date: March 31, 2023 (Semi annual Report)

Report Prepared by: Dr. Moraima De Hoyos - Ruperto (PI)

Narrative

The **Business & Economic Development Center (BEDC)**, a University Center (UC) at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez campus (UPRM), as part of the Caribbean Regional UC completed all the tasks in our scope of work: **job creation (38), job retention (51), and its investment (\$255,925)** and the **UVI-CELL at University of Virgin Island (UVI)** with **job retention (25)**, and its investment **(\$21,000)**. The Caribbean Regional UC proposes to provide specific activities through the BEDC at UPRM, and UVI-CELL, which includes, providing technical assistance, conducting applied research and dissemination as part of the economic development activities. Three mayor categories of innovation activities proposed are: 1) technical assistance to innovators and existing businesses; 2) applied research through allied centers and courses, and 3) dissemination of all activities that impact economic development in the region. Regarding the direct service to client the BEDC during this period received **76 new service solicitations**. We provided more than 45 **hours of one-on-one assistance**. A group of **37 intern students**, with **13 graduate students** among them, offered technical assistance in their different areas of specialization to businesses, under the supervision of our mentor's professors and business specialists. The BEDC continue as the hub of the **UPRM E-Ship Network**. As ecosystem builder we support all the efforts to expand the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region. Our more closed partners are the NSF I-Corps Site UPRM, Echar Pa'Lante of Banco Popular, RISE Program of the Bravo Family Foundation (an accelerator), Perspectivas Globales (an incubator), Parallel 18, and Colmena 66 of the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust (PRTRUST). Additionally, we are working with several NGO and private organizations to advance the economic development in the region through the NPO SIED program. Moreover, to advance our goals we continue with the Incubator and Accelerator (Área-E) program with funds of CDBG-DR for Hurricane Irma and Maria. Now the formal educational program and mentoring process of Área-E is already for his 3rd cohort, as a complementary program of the UPRM-UC. Also, we are working with the P.R. Department of Economic Development and Commerce through it program "PR INNOVA 2" providing Business Plan capacitation, mentoring and technical assistant, this program culminates in June 2023 where we will be able to provide the impact produced by it.

Beyond these completed tasks and assignments, the BEDC would like to highlight the following:

- In September Puerto Rico was hit by Hurricane Fiona. Most of the entrepreneurs were weeks closed for the lack of electricity and /or waters. Those who were able to operate through power generators had a cost increase by the diesel. Thus, we contact BPPR, one our allied and they donated us \$50,000 to offer a \$500 cash grant to our microbusinesses. Starting Point a NGO allied received the money and made the disbursement to accelerate the process.
- Dr. Leila Marcano, a collaborator professor submitted a proposal for a second year to Banco Popular, an allied, and was approved for \$200,000. This proposal provide seeded fund to 20 of our existing companies with 3.5 years or more in operation. To receive the money the companies need to submit a short proposal detailing the purpose of the money and the impact of it in their businesses.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

- A group of students led by the Industrial Engineering Dr. Lourdes Medina constitute our **BEDC Improvement Team**. The group developed a series of workshops and activities to promote a culture of continuing improvement between all the staff including professors, undergraduate and graduate students. During this period four (4) **trainings** were provided and one (1) **Kaizen Event** were done. Trainings includes the use of Basecamp as a Project Management tool, effective communication written and speaking, 5'S for Google Drive and the reorganization of it.
- The magazine developed by a group of students called the **UPRM E-ship Network La Revista**, is currently in its twelfth volume. Under the statement of "From the table to a Company" as a motivational message for the students and potential entrepreneurs.
- We provided more than sixteen (16) **hours of training** throughout different events to more of five hundred sixty four (564) **participants**.

The EDA University Center at the University of the Virgin Islands was established in 2021 in the Center for Excellence in Leadership (UVI CELL). For over 20 years, UVI CELL has met the workforce and professional development training needs critical to the economic prosperity of the Virgin Islands and surrounding Caribbean islands. UVI CELL focus on providing quality training opportunities and resources designed to contribute to organizational and individual achievement. We partner with the Small Business Development Center, which is also hosted by UVI, the UVI School of Business Entrepreneurship Program, SCORE Business Mentoring and GCSEN Caribe (Global Center for Social Entrepreneurship Network). A cohort of twenty five (25) entrepreneurs and small businesses received mentorship, formal education, one on one coaching and access to online webinars.

- **As part of the US Caribbean Regional Proposal for Innovation & Business Development the UVI CELL reported:**
- **Twenty five** (25) small USVI businesses and four (4) students from the USVI Bureau of Corrections, successfully went through 5 months of entrepreneur classes and mentorship/coaching services by the UVI CELL EDA University Center and their partners, GCSEN (Global Center for Social Entrepreneur Network). They also received access to unlimited SCORE webinars and each participant received an interactive workbook about entrepreneurship.
- Successfully graduated 10 students from the GCSEN Social Entrepreneurship 101 course and enrolled them into GCSEN Social Entrepreneurship 102.
- Held graduation ceremonies on each island where all students received certificates of completion and graduates received framed certificates.
- Launched GCSEN Social Entrepreneurship 102. Students were given access to private coaching sessions, books/materials, and templates for pitch decks along with one on one coaching assistance to complete them.
- Established a website with the UVI CELL EDA University Center mission, an online sign up form for the course along with a page promoting all the business partners we help.
- Issued a press release announcing the culmination of the program and the graduation along with information on the next set of courses.
- Established a partnership, utilizing UVI Veteran's funding, with the Office of Veterans Affairs to fund 10 Veterans to go through the GCSEN 101 Social Entrepreneur program.
- Attended several community events promoting the program.
- Networking events attended include – SBDC Business after Hours (November 2022, Miracle on Main Street (December 2022) along with other community engagement events to meet possible partners.
- Promoted a variety of education and training opportunities, including monthly SCORE and regular SBDC webinars.


All activities conducted to date by the BEDC at UPRM and UVI-Cell have benefited our distressed and underserved community. All participating businesses are low income and minority-owned who have been traditionally underserved.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER


Activity Summary

Activity	Task	Benefits/Outcome/Impact	Annual Report
<p>Technical Assistance and Innovator Existing Businesses</p> 	<p>Assistance includes workshops, seminars, one-on-one and group meetings, as well as other activities to support entrepreneurs with professionals and help them expand their networks.</p>	<p>BEDC-UPRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twenty eight (28) startups and twenty nine (29) potential entrepreneurs (in the developing idea stage) received support services, including subjects of marketing, funding requests, programs applications, as well technical assistance. • Four (4) students participated in a EnterPRize 2022 Business Competition. • Startups, existing businesses and potential entrepreneurs (in the developing idea stage) are the major groups who request our services. Between them we provided services to fifteen (15) Innovator teams. Four (4) of them participated on the UPRM NSF I-Corp Site. • The startups and existing businesses received investments of \$217,000 (cash), and \$38,925 (in-kind), for a total of \$255,925. Those startups retained fifty one (51) employees, created thirth eight (38) new jobs. <div>    </div> <p>UVI-CELL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ten (10) startups and fifteen (15) existing business received services with a UVI CELL consultant and the GCSEN Entrepreneur coaches to include aspects of marketing, funding requests, programs applications, as well as technical assistance. UVI CELL EDA University Center provided all participants with access to the GCSEN 101 course, books, materials, mentorship, coaching and certificates of completion. 3 startups and 5 existing business graduated to participate in GCSEN 102 where they received more direct coaching on business specifics including how to create a pitch deck. • All participants continued to be included in monthly webinars from SCORE as well as an informal networking online session with all the participants and coaches. • Twenty five (25) businesses received contact from EDA University Center a total of 10 times in an emails, text messages and personal calls with webinar information, reminders and general support material regarding the program and other support services. • GCSEN (the Global Center for Social Entrepreneurship Network) was engaged to provide training to all participants, including 3 incarcerated individuals at the VI Bureau of Corrections. • Unlimited access to SCORE and SBDC webinars. Connected several participating businesses to other community businesses with additional resources for collaborations. 	




BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER


Activity	Task	Benefits/Outcome/Impact	During this Period
<p>Applied research through allied centers and courses</p> 	<p>Identifying a specific challenge or problem to be addressed by the entrepreneur; determine courses, centers, programs that may assist the client and are available in the entrepreneurial network; facilitate the process to connect the entrepreneur with a resource.</p>	<p>BEDC-UPRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than thirty one (31) students from the course of Business plan (ADMI 3150) worked with fourteen (14) of our start-up: B Restaurant Solutions, Bryan Stephen Studio, ConMundi, Fersan LLC, Finca Los Nazarios, Karina Galettes, Kiddie Kuts, Nacho Tv Studios, RCR Creative, RCR Creative, Reco LLC, Sangria Artesanal 2.8, Tostin HD Entereainment, Yess and Yo ayudo PR. The BEDC's personnel provided support to students in their research and analytical processes. Therefore, we estimate a contribution of \$28,925 in kind through their services provided to our clients. These companies retained forty (40) employees. • Professor Glennys Rivera and Dr. David Santiago were Instructors on the professional development program called CRECEN as part of the College of Business Administration, teaching two (2) courses and impacting nineteen (19) potential entrepreneurs. • Thirty seven (37) innovation interns, at undergraduate twenty four (24) and thirteen (13) graduate level, provide service to clients and work in the development of entrepreneurship ecosystem activities, as part of the different BEDC programs. Students worked on the idea generation process, business consulting, marketing, information systems, accounting, and other business areas such as business agriculture, web developing, industrial engineering, while strengthening the ecosystem. • Fifteen (15) professors, thirty-seven (37) students graduates and sub graduates and administrative staff compose the BEDC team to supervise and manage all the programs (UC, Área-E, Innova 2, Capital Semilla and NPO-SEID). • Thirty six (36) entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs are registered in the I&E Virtual Education Program. The I&E VMP provide an asynchronous educational program through modules of entrepreneurial education for those who are starting to interesting on the entrepreneurial subjects. • In September Puerto Rico was hitted by Hurricane Fiona. Most of the entrepreneurs were weeks closed for the lack of electricity and /or waters. Those who were able to operate through power generators had a cost increase by the diesel. Thus, we contact BPPR, one our allied and they donated us \$50,000 to offer a \$500 cash grant to our microbusinesses. Starting Point a NGO allied received the money and made the disbursement to accelerate the process. 	

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Activity	Task	Benefits/Outcome/Impact	During this Period
<p>Applied research through allied centers and courses</p> 	<p>Identifying a specific challenge or problem to be addressed by the entrepreneur; determine courses, centers, programs that may assist the client and are available in the entrepreneurial network; facilitate the process to connect the entrepreneur with a resource.</p>	<p>UVI-CELL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCORE Virgin Islands Director, Steve Clayton, served as a resource for participants and assisted them with individual support for challenges they have encountered with their business. He also started researching possible CDFI funds that our local businesses can get to help them grow. • Liza Margolis (Program Leader) consulted with several of the participants in regards to marketing, accounting, sales and general business logics. She provided resources to various local and off island companies that will assist with growing their business. • Dr. Suzanne Darrow-Magras (Program Director) started conversations with the SBDC, the UVI School of Business Entrepreneurship Program and the UVI Provost regarding undergraduate and graduate opportunities for potential entrepreneurs. • Twenty five (25) entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs continued receiving information on SCORE, a free service that offers mentoring, webinars and several programs for new and established entrepreneurs. As a registered member, they receive constant updates on programs and webinars. • Twenty five (25) entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs completed the GCSEN course (the Global Center for Social Entrepreneurship Network). GCSEN is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization that teaches a 'pracademic' entrepreneurship curriculum with experiential learning through formulating your own social venture built on a solid foundation of social entrepreneurship fundamentals. <p>In February UVI CELL UNIVERSITY CENTER graduated ten (10) students who completed all the course work and passed all the tests. Those students were enrolled in GCSEN 102 that started in March 2023 and will continue through June 2023.</p>	

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Activity	Task	Benefits/Outcome/Impact
<p>Dissemination of all activities that impact economic development in the region</p> 	<p>BEDC-UPRM</p> <p>Outreach efforts to make the BEDC programs publicly known and share the diverse opportunities available in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Among the activities carried out were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coloquio Empresarial: Mujeres Rompiendo Barreras <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GEW2022: E-Ship Meet Up Orientación DDEC Tu decisión, tu poder, tu destino Empresarismo Femenino: Lo bueno, lo malo y lo feo FB live incentives & checklist Prof. Glennys Rivera and other BEDC staff participated in various radio interviews and different public activities such as: business fairs, and services fairs talking about the subject of entrepreneurship, and motivating hundreds of future entrepreneurs. Venturewell's "OPEN Connecting for Impact 2023" conference, in Washington held March 22-24, brought together faculty, administrators, administrative staff, and students from various STEM-related majors to share experiences and research, learn best practices, and create new relationships dynamics. During the talk "The Benefits of Training Students to Be Leaders and Experts", doctors Moraima De Hoyos Ruperto and Mari Luz Zapata Ramos presented to the attendees "That Worked! Experiential Learning. On March 24, the Business Congress Event held by the Public Housing Administration was held at the Puerto Rico Fair Complex in Ponce, where Professor Glennys Rivera Vargas talked about business permits in P.R. <div>    </div>

Activity	Task	Benefits/Outcome/Impact
<p>Dissemination of all activities that impact economic development in the region</p> 	<p>Outreach efforts to make the BEDC programs publicly known and share the diverse opportunities available in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.</p>	<p>UVI-CELL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UVI CELL EDA University Center continue outreach effort campaigns to support and promote program participants. • The center started collected logos and information from the various businesses that are displayed on the website to give more exposure to the entrepreneurs and what they do. • The center Director and Manger attended several community engagement events promoting the program, the resources and the curriculum. • The Director and Manger continued reaching out to UVI auxiliary groups and related community groups on potential collaborations for the participants and supporters for the program. • Invited media outlets to graduations and sent press releases to inform them of the progress of this program. • Worked with all the Center partners to promote the graduation ceremonies and program on Social Media. • In February 2023, UVI CELL EDA University Center held a completion ceremony for all twenty five (25) participants and graduation for 10 participants that completed the coursework was promoted on Social media. • In January 2023, UVI CELL EDA University Center launched a webpage on the UVI Cell site to promote the program. https://cell.uvi.edu/eda-university-center/default.aspx. In November 2022, the center had a flyer made to hand out the various events they attendee to promote the program. • In November 2022, the center had a flyer made to hand out the various events they attendee to promote the program. <div>     </div>



BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Timeline

The Business & Economic Development Center (BEDC), a University Center (UC) at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez campus (UPRM) for 36 years, and the Center for Excellence in Leadership (UVI CELL) compose the Caribbean Regional University Center (CRUC). During the 2022-2023 period, the CRUC has completed and exceeded all programmatic and program components goals and activities. **We created thirty eight (38) jobs, seventy six (76) retained jobs, and investments (\$217,000) in cash, and (\$59,925) in-kind for a total of \$275,925 on investment.** In addition of several other social and indirect economic impact.

BEDC UPRM	September 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023	UVI CELL	September 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023	TOTAL
Jobs Created Goal: 15	38	Jobs Created Goal: 5	0	38
Jobs Retained Goal: 40	51	Jobs Retained Goal: 50	25	76
Investment: Goal: 500K-1M	\$255,925	Investment: Goal: 250-500k	\$21,000	\$257,925



BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Milestone

Anticipated Impact by Program Milestones -UPRM

Program Milestones	UPRM Benchmark Metrics per Year PI: Pre- incubation Businesses	UPRM Benchmark Metrics per Year GB: Growing Businesses	UPRM Metrics September 1 2022 through March 31,2023 PI: Pre- incubation	UPRM Metrics September 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023 GB: Growing Business
1. Technical Assistance (TA)				
1.1 Educational Program (S&A)- I&E VMP	10	5	30	6
1.2 One - on-One TA	50	5	60	4
1.3 Mentorship program	13	3	9	2
2. Applied Research Efforts				
2.1 Challenge Identification And plan Development	15	5	3	0
2.2 Resource Identification- Matching Process	15	5	4	0
2.3 Successful Completion of AR Program	7	3	6	0
3. Dissemination Efforts				
3.1 Outreach Activities	4	4	3	3
3.2 Engagement Businesses and Potential Entrepreneurs (Solicitation of TA)	75	10	3	3
3.3 Successful Completion of PI or GB Program	25	5	23	1



BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Milestone

Anticipated Impact by Program Milestones - UVI

Program Milestones	UVI Benchmark Metrics per Year PI: Pre - incubation Businesses	UVI Benchmark Metrics per Year GB: Growing Businesses	UVI Metrics September 2021 through August 31,2022 PI: Pre- incubation	UVI Metrics September 2021 through August 31, 2022 GB: Growing Business
1. Technical Assistance (TA)				
1.1 Educational Program (S&A)- I&E VMP	5	2	15	35
1.2 One - on-One TA	10	3	9	21
1.3 Mentorship program	5	2	9	21
2. Applied Research Efforts				
2.1 Challenge Identification And plan Development	5	2	3	7
2.2 Resource Identification- Matching Process	3	2	3	7
2.3 Successful Completion of AR Program	2	2	0	0
3. Dissemination Efforts				
3.1 Outreach Activities	2	2	1	1
3.2 Engagement Businesses and Potential Entrepreneurs (Solicitation of TA)	10	5	6	2
3.3 Successful Completion of PI or GB Program	5	2	10	0

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Client and Ecosystem Building Success Stories



Karina's Galettes

Karina's Galettes, began as a class idea, in a business plan development course, where the student saw the development of the business as promising, for which she was guided and accompanied during the process of image development, sales, creation of products and registrations, currently Karina's Galettes has its social networks where it programs and sells its products, it also aims to appear in supermarket chains in the not too distant future



C'est La Vie

C'est La Vie is a venture created by former students of the College who have faced various challenges. It currently has a space of 13,000 square feet and additionally one that we are using as a parking lot. That space would enter phase 3. Phase 3 consists of an "art walk", where we will be giving away five 10 x 10 stations for craft kiosks. C'est La Vie wants to recover the culture of dance and music. In Puerto Rico you no longer see places where bomba or plena are danced and places where the saxophone is played. That, in a time ago, were things that united us. When we are united, life is richer, purer and fuller.



GCSSEN

We do not just have 1-3 success stories, we have 10 very significant success stories. The 10 students who passed the GCSSEN 101 course to go onto the GCSSEN 102 have brought their business to a more successful level with our help over the 6 months.

Smith Wiltshire (The gentleman with the vest in front) was quoted as saying "I was very reluctant to sign up for this course because I did not have the time, now I can't imagine my business with out it. I was able to have card made and revamp my business to run more efficient to serve more customers".



Monifa Potter (second from the left) had a small donut company on the side and told us that with our help she was able to think beyond what she was doing and grow her business into cookies and other baked good.



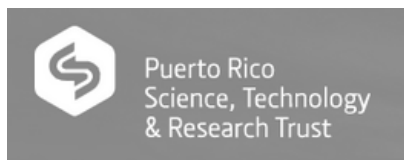
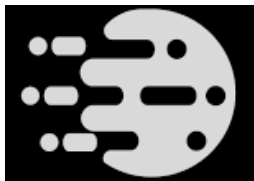
Michelle Johnson (Fourth from the left) has a clothing boutique that just reopened at a new location. We were able to help her promote and market her new location, revamp the layout of her store to be more visible plus get her staff training. She was able to retain her employees.

Jelani Hall- Our students with the BOC cried when he received his certificate. He told us he never received anything like this or thought any of this was possible for him. He now has hope and is looking forward to starting his TECH company when he gets out in August.



BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The BEDC continue as a hub of the *UPRM E-ship Network* serving as a role models to the other campuses and organizations in the process of strengthening and developing their I&E Ecosystem. During this period Dr. Mariama De Hoyos had the opportunity to participated in the UPR-Cayey symposium: Master Lesson "Design-driven learning: The case for pedagogy of making to nurture creativity and innovation via aesthetic reasoning." Also support several allied programs such as the project management course and Medical Science Transition program, CFP of the "Research Grants Program", SBIR Committee and "Phase I" of the PRSTRUST, I-Corp Guayacán, P18, and Venturewell Funds, among others. We still collaborate with projects related to CDBG-DR grants, such as CRECEN and Finca Explora (PRTEC). We continue leveraging our impact on Puerto Rico's west side, through collaboration with programs such as UPR Utuado, Creative Startups, Mercado Colegial, ACS Org, PRASBE, among others. In the case of UVI-CELL they work closely with the SBDC VI, GCSEN and SCORE to complement the UC program.



Challenges and Mitigation

For the BEDC the biggest challenge is that UPRM accounting office stay the invoicing and other financing things updated. To accomplish that Dr. De Hoyos have had several meetings with the administrators to identify ways to assist them. For UVI-CELL during this period, we were able to get back on course with the changes and turn the program around to be successful. Therefore, the biggest challenge now is securing more funding so more people can participate in the whole series with the curriculum, materials and one on one coaching. We have so many inquiries from people who want to participate.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Press Engagements / Opportunities:

Examples of media coverage of the BEDC's accomplishments, its clients and partnership initiatives.



Figure 1:
<https://www.uprm.edu/portada/2022/11/23/eshipmeetup2022/?fbclid=IwAR2sXRwlhYCo5Heukye-dM3N28v-aiCP1r2xX2Eg8ebSYeR3TKLDM38GGpY&mibextid=Zxz2cZ>



Figure 2:
<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=682761197191640&set=a.497715135696248>



Figure 3:
<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=688639473270479&set=a.497715135696248>



Figure 4:
<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10167401707820397&set=pcb.10167401713070397>