



NEWS RELEASE

School of Continuing Education
Marketing

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UWM SBDC EVENT TO ANNOUNCE OPENING OF NEW HISPANIC ENTREPRENEURIAL CENTER

MILWAUKEE--El Centro Empresarial, The Hispanic Entrepreneurial Center, is a new initiative from the Small Business Development Center at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Continuing Education. It will be formally introduced at a free community event March 5, 5-8:30pm, at the United Community Center, 1028 S. 9th. St.

Nelson Soler, a Program Director at the School, will oversee the new center. The purpose of the initiative is to nurture aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners through training, technical assistance and networking activities. "Our purpose is very clearly stated in our motto: Supporting Economic Strength through Hispanic Entrepreneurs," Soler says. "But the effect of this program is not limited to one segment of the community. The more stable and strong the Hispanic business community is, the healthier the economy is for the entire area."

According to the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, there are more than 1.2 million Hispanic-owned businesses in the United States and Puerto Rico. The businesses earn more than \$200 billion annually.

In Wisconsin, 3020 Hispanic owned businesses generate more than \$800 million in annual sales, and in Milwaukee the numbers are 750 businesses generating \$193 million. Between 1990-2000, the population of the seven-county southeastern Wisconsin area rose seven percent. Over that same time period, the Hispanic population in the city of Milwaukee nearly doubled.

Lucy Holifield, Director of the UWM SBDC, says that to help grow an already impressive Hispanic business community in Milwaukee is the goal of the initiative. "There are many successful and thriving businesses out there. What we want to do is to help develop new ventures by supporting emerging entrepreneurs in the Hispanic community."

The March 5 kick-off event will feature presentations by successful Hispanic business owners and other community representatives. A "resource fair" will feature information from the Department of Commerce and other financial resources. The resource fair also will feature information and advice from lawyers, bankers and others involved in the process of starting a new business.

The event is **free**. Café El Sol is providing appetizers and snacks. The event is presented in partnership with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, UWM-Latino Alumni Association, the UWM Roberto Hernandez Center, WWBIC, Abrazo Marketing, US Bank and Northshore Bank.

RSVP by February 15 to Nelson Soler at 414-227-3105 or nsoler@uwm.edu.

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To Learn More:

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