

Ready to Work: Digital Literacy and the Latino Workforce

With more than 28 million Latinos in the workforce, there is an urgent need for our community to have and maintain the skills necessary to succeed. Today, 53% of jobs in the United States are middle-skill jobs, meaning they require some education beyond a high school diploma. Statistically, eight out of 10 of these jobs require digital skills.

To that end, UnidosUS has partnered with Verizon and four community-based organizations to bring the Latinos @ Work digital literacy program to communities across the country. Latinos @ Work aims to improve digital literacy among Latino workers across the country.

Digital Skills in the Workforce

Digital skills provide a career pathway into middle- and high-skill jobs. Aside from transportation, construction, and installation/repair jobs, digital skills and digital literacy have become a minimum standard for middle-skill jobs in most other sectors. Additionally, low skill jobs continue to decrease and are increasingly susceptible to automation.

Digital skills are now the pre-requisite for basic economic inclusion. Seventy percent of today's jobs are posted online, and according to the marketing analytics firm Burning Glass, nearly 90% of "good" jobs now require high or medium-level digital skills.

How Latinos @ Work Works

The program is being implemented by UnidosUS Affiliates and partner organizations. The program itself is eight to 10 weeks and enhances job-readiness programs with digital literacy content.

Latinos @ Work's Unique Advantage

Unlike many STEM programs that focus on building higher level skills, this program will target participants who fall in the very low- or low-income brackets; work in low-wage jobs; and whose limited digital literacy or job readiness skills prevent them from advancing in the workforce.

What Graduates Will Receive

Graduates of the Latinos @ Work program will be connected to further education, training, and employment opportunities in the financial service sector, information technology, retail and customer service, and hospitality fields.

In particular, any participant who is interested in pursuing a career in the technology sector will be connected with community colleges and/or universities and will receive guidance with furthering their education. Other participants will receive job search assistance.

UnidosUS's Partnerships

Latinos @ Work focuses on preparing Latinos for middle-skill jobs in high-demand sectors of our evolving economy by supporting Affiliate programs that integrate job readiness and digital literacy skills.

As the largest Latino advocacy organization in the United States, UnidosUS brings extensive expertise in culturally and linguistically responsive programs that support Latinos as they seek to attain their American Dream.

UnidosUS is also working with the following local direct-service organizations who bring important knowledge of communities to the program.

- Lawrence Community Works (Lawrence, MA)
- El Centro de la Raza (Seattle, WA)
- Northwest Side Housing Center (Chicago, IL)
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Louisiana Foundation (New Orleans, LA)

UnidosUS is able to launch Latinos @ Work in our community as part of a partnership with **Verizon**. Verizon brings their commitment to creating innovative solutions to equip underserved communities with the skills needed for success in jobs of the future.

Northwest Side Housing Center (Chicago Affiliate)

- In 2015, it was estimated that the unemployment rate among Latinos in the Northwest side of Chicago was 12%, nearly triple the Illinois state rate of 4.9%.
- NWSHC is the only agency that offers job readiness and placement programs on Chicago's Northwest side, which includes the community with the highest number of Latinos in the city.

Lawrence CommunityWorks (Massachusetts Affiliate)

- 74% of residents in Lawrence, MA are Latino, and 30% have limited English proficiency.
- LCW job readiness programs aim to improve low wages, low levels of educational attainment, and the linguistic isolation that are factors that contribute to the cycle of poverty in the city

El Centro de La Raza (Seattle Affiliate)

- The Latinos @ Work program is the first Latino-focused workforce development program in Seattle and King County.
- Nearly 1 in 4 Latinos live below the poverty line compared to 11% of King County's overall population.

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Louisiana (New Orleans)

- From 2000 to 2016, Hispanics in Orleans Parish grew from about 14,000 to more than 21,000.
- The Chamber's workforce training center is the only one of its kind in the state of Louisiana and a majority of participants arrive with sixth grade education.

About Us

UnidosUS, previously known as NCLR (National Council of La Raza), is the nation's largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization. Through its unique combination of expert research, advocacy, programs, and an [Affiliate Network](#) of nearly 300 community-based organizations across the United States and Puerto Rico, UnidosUS simultaneously challenges the social, economic, and political barriers that affect Latinos at the national and local levels.

For more than 50 years, UnidosUS has united communities and different groups seeking common ground through collaboration, and that share a desire to make our country stronger. For more information on UnidosUS, visit www.unidosus.org or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).