



STRONGER COMMUNITIES. STRONGER AMERICA.

UnidosUS Good Jobs Challenge Narrative

Title: Avanzando 2 Good Jobs

Section One: Project Description and Overview

Section 1a: Executive Summary

Across the United States, Latinx and Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) have experienced disproportionate underemployment or unemployment due to the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, and other factors. To address this need, UnidosUS (UUS), national system lead, will partner with two regional system leads to prepare and connect low-income Latinx and BIPOC workers with in-demand, quality jobs in the mechanical aviation and construction industries in Puerto Rico and the medical administration and human resources industries in Denver, Colorado.

Over the past six years, Puerto Rico has struggled to recover from a series of catastrophic hurricanes and earthquakes, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic which has hit the territory particularly hard. With economic development in mind, UUS will work with One Stop Career Center of Puerto Rico, Inc. (OSCC) to connect 660 jobseekers to the growing construction industry as well as the rapidly emerging mechanical aviation sector.

In Denver, COVID-19 caused job loss for low-income Black, Indigenous, and People of Color at nearly double the rate of their white peers. Mi Casa Resource Center (MCRC), our partner organization, is addressing this by offering a professional career pathway that will create opportunities for 600 low-income Latinx and BIPOC jobseekers to reskill and upskill into promising jobs and advance through a combination of work experience and continued education in the professional services fields of medical administration and human resources.

In both locations, UUS and its partners will work with multiple stakeholders to create and/or further develop effective sectoral partnerships that train low-income Latinx and BIPOC workers with the skills needed for in-demand jobs. As the national system lead, UUS will serve as an intermediary between all stakeholders, creating a community of practice, ensuring that the programs are effectively implemented and employers' needs are met, while creating long-term, positive outcomes for low-income Latinx and BIPOC jobseekers.

Section 1b: System Lead Entity or Backbone Organization

UnidosUS, previously known as NCLR (National Council of La Raza), is applying as a National System Lead. UUS is the nation's largest Latinx 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 U.S. and Puerto Rico, UUS addresses social, economic, and political barriers facing the Latinx community at the national and local levels. For over 50 years, UUS has united communities and organizations seeking common ground through collaboration and a shared desire to make our country stronger and invested in building a stronger America by creating opportunities for Latinx individuals. UUS has a strong commitment to racial justice and tackling the structural issues that affect Latinx individuals in the areas of civil rights and immigration, education, health, housing and economic empowerment, and workforce development through policy, advocacy, and direct services.

Convening Power: As a national convener with nearly 300 Affiliates, UUS partners with community-based organizations that serve Latinx populations across the country. Our Affiliate partners know the practical concerns and policy issues that affect their constituencies and are engaged in implementing innovative solutions. The majority of our Affiliates' clients are low-income and may also be English language learners, immigrants, and have limited formal education. For workforce development initiatives, the populations served by our Affiliates include individuals who are unemployed or under-employed and are seeking education and training leading to higher paying jobs. The majority of workforce development program participants are women of color. For this grant, we will partner with One Stop Career Center of Puerto Rico, Inc. (OSCC), an Affiliate in Puerto Rico, and Mi Casa Resource Center (MCRC), an Affiliate in Denver, Colorado. We selected these two high-performing Affiliates because they have deep expertise in meeting the needs of workers and employers; their workforce systems are well-positioned to support the proposed project; there is strong buy-in from a diversity of partners for the project; and the economies of both regions show potential for growth and opportunity.

Committed support of the executive leadership from the region and buy-in from appropriate stakeholders: We have committed support from executive leadership and buy-in from stakeholders in Puerto Rico and Denver. OSCC has memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with seven Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs): Bayamón-Comerio (2 municipalities), Caguas-Guayama (8 municipalities), Carolina, Nortecentral (8 municipalities), San Juan, Surcentral (5 municipalities) and Sureste (7 municipalities). LWDAs are the local organizations that execute the local public policy designed by the Governor in compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). In Denver, MCRC has obtained commitments from Colorado Governor Jared Polis, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Denver Office of Economic Development & Opportunity, U.S. Senator Michael F. Bennet, U.S. Congressman Jason Crow, and three City Councilmembers. MCRC will partner with the City of Denver, delegate agencies, and multiple local community networks to recruit, identify, and enroll participants into the proposed project.

Relationships and credibility with key players in the workforce ecosystem, including employers, governmental entities, state or local workforce development boards, educational institutions, labor organizations, and worker-serving organizations: Both MCRC and OSCC have strong relationships with key players in the workforce ecosystem, including employers, governmental entities, state or local workforce development boards, educational institutions, labor organizations, and worker-serving organizations. OSCC has partnerships with seven Local Workforce Development Areas, the Puerto Rico Department of Economic Development and Commerce, multiple employers, and the University of Puerto Rico. In Denver, MCRC partners with local and state workforce organizations to advance systemic change. MCRC's CEO sits on the Colorado Workforce Development Council as a community representative. MCRC participates as a stakeholder in: Denver Workforce Services and the Denver Workforce Investment Board act under the umbrella of the Denver Economic Development & Opportunity Office; the Colorado Career Development Association, a state affiliate of the National Career Development Association; and the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce, the key workforce convener in Denver.

Proven Track Record of Coordinating Across Sectors and Driving Successful Action: UUS has decades of experience managing large scale, multi-site, multi-subgrantee projects. UUS has been the recipient of multiple federal grants (including U.S. Department of Labor) between 2006-2011 that were implemented in numerous cities across the US. Between 2014 – 2019, UUS implemented multiple projects in over 20 cities across the country. Most recently, UUS implemented the U.S. DOL RP 1 grant with three subgrantees, serving 500 job seeking young adults. UUS has a structured subgrantee management

strategy that includes hosting program orientation webinars, in-person grantee meetings/peer exchanges, quarterly webinars to share best practices and brainstorm solutions, and monitoring site visits.

Policy and Advocacy: UUS uses its powerful policy and advocacy capacity to advance systems change. We take the lessons learned from programmatic implementation and provide policy recommendations at the local, state, and national levels that can improve opportunities and access for Latinx and BIPOC jobseekers.

Fundraising Capacity: As the largest national Latinx civil rights and advocacy organization, UUS has a strong base of committed donors and partners that invest in our mission and programming. In 2021, we raised \$54.8 million in contributions and grants, reflecting our robust fundraising capabilities.

Dedicated full-time employee(s) focused on addressing regional workforce issues to support regional economic development: One of UUS's core priorities is workforce development. We fight to ensure that Latinx jobseekers have access to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages and offer opportunities for career advancement, and to remove the barriers that create unequal challenges for communities of color when they enter the workforce. We work with UUS Affiliates, other community-based organizations, and corporate partners to create high-quality programs that provide Latinx individuals with the training and skills they need to start or excel in their career. We work with our Affiliates and local partners to develop programs that meet the unique needs of the community being served and with jobseekers to ensure that our projects adhere with human-centered design principles. We currently have six workforce development programs and three systems change initiatives, with a total annual budget of nearly ten million dollars. Between June and August 2020, UUS interviewed 12 partners who are members of the UnidosUS Corporate Board of Advisors (CBA) and Affiliates conducted interviews or focus groups with 71 local employer partners in order to better understand: hiring projections for 2020 and 2021, skills needed for entry-level positions during and post-pandemic, and the role of UUS and its Affiliates in preparing Latinx jobseekers to access these jobs. With these experiences, we are prepared to connect Latinx, BIPOC, and other jobseekers in Puerto Rico and Denver, Colorado with good jobs.

Section Two: Employer Leadership and Commitments and Other Stakeholders and Partnerships

Section 2a: Employer Leadership and Commitments

UUS is part of the Markle Foundation's Rework America Alliance, a nationwide collaboration that aims to help millions of workers, regardless of formal education, move into good jobs in the digital economy by accelerating an effective system for worker training aligned to jobs that employers need to fill. The Alliance has developed a systems approach with the goal of increasing the capacity of community-based organizations that support job seekers and promote inclusive sourcing and hiring practices among employers. UUS will use its membership in the Alliance to support systems development and connect our two partners to employers. UUS is also working with employers to promote inclusive sourcing and hiring practices by deploying a series of tools and trainings to promote change, creating a community of practice, and a local activation strategy to operationalize change.

Employer leadership and commitments already in place or that are anticipated and how additional employers will be recruited: Each Affiliate has consulted with local workforce development boards and employers to identify the need and design of the training programs. OSCC has commitments from three employers: Lufthansa Technik Puerto Rico, LLC, Custom Homes, and MFS Construction. Lufthansa

Technik Puerto Rico, LLC specializes in maintenance, repair, and operations (MRO) services and is interested in hiring at least 60 workers. Both Custom Homes and MFS Construction are construction companies who have committed to hiring 30-40 jobseekers from the proposed project. With the help of Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) with which OSCC has MOUs and the Aeronautical and Aerospace Institute of Puerto Rico (AAIPR), OSCC will continue to assess employers' needs and develop employer commitments in the two target industries. OSCC will work with the LWDA, education providers, and employers to formalize the program implementation and will develop an Employer Advisory Council.

In Denver, employer engagement is a crucial component of MCRC's professional services pathway success. MCRC has hiring partner commitments or potential hiring partner commitments from J. Kent Staffing, First Bank, Alpine Bank, Vectra Bank, Rocky Mountain Prep, Palace Construction, and Mental Health Center of Denver. MCRC is also implementing a communication strategy in partnership with the Rework America Alliance that includes the Oracle Corporation, Wells Fargo & Company, Charter Communications, Salesforce.com, Deloitte LLP, and other employers. Additionally, MCRC will implement an Employer Advisory Council for training input and hiring potential. Meaningful and industry-specific employer partnerships allow MCRC to link participants with higher wage employment options.

Employer involvement in creation, implementation, evaluation, and refinement and improvement of training programs, recruitment and selection of training participants: In Puerto Rico, OSCC worked directly with construction companies to develop the industry-specific career pathway program. The aviation component is being developed in direct response to the workforce needs of Lufthansa, which is building a new hub in Puerto Rico. OSCC has a network of partners in municipalities who help identify and recruit participants. In Denver, MCRC is partnering with the Denver Economic Development & Opportunity Workforce Centers, the Colorado Workforce Development Council, and local community partners to design its career pathways programs and to recruit, identify, and enroll participants.

Section 2b: Other Stakeholders and Partnerships

OSCC works with a continuum of community-based organizations and service providers across the territory who represent workers' voices and provide services in health care, mental health care, housing, childcare, transportation, and other supportive services. A full list of partners is provided as an attachment. MCRC collaborates with multiple entities including government agencies, educational institutions, businesses, collaboratives, and networks to support participants holistically. Their government agency partnerships include, but are not limited to, OEDIT, the Colorado Department of Labor, the Colorado Department of Higher Education, the City and County of Denver, the City of Aurora, and Adams County. They also partner with Denver Public Schools, Metro State University Denver, and Community College of Aurora.

Section Three: Regional Description

Puerto Rico: In Puerto Rico, two catastrophic hurricanes and a series of earthquakes have presented the territory with an opportunity to accelerate economic and workforce initiatives that are outlined in the 2020 WIOA Unified State Plan. Recovery cannot focus only on repairing damages from the disasters; it must also look to economic recovery and Puerto Rico is ripe for transformative innovation. OSCC sees an opportunity with the Good Jobs Challenge to support the construction and mechanical aviation industries, both of which are expected to grow, offer quality jobs, and need skilled workers. With strong partnerships with Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA), pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, and employers, OSCC will identify, recruit, and train interested Puerto Ricans in well-structured programs where they will receive soft-skills and job readiness training, vocational training, pre & apprenticeship or postsecondary education to attain an industry-recognized certification for quality, in-demand jobs.

Construction is one of the largest sectors in Puerto Rico. Although it had been decreasing due to the housing crisis of 2006, it is expected to grow in the following years due to the reconstruction funds allocated by the federal government following the 2017 hurricanes and earthquakes. According to estimates from Estudios Técnicos, the average increase in jobs in the construction sector will be 3,230 per year. Approximately 16,000 new jobs in the construction sector are expected to be created by 2023 and another 9,000 jobs will open up due to job turnover, resulting in a demand for almost 25,000 new workers. This growth will require training and retraining of labor force members to satisfy the demand for labor in this sector.

Globalization in the 21st century launched the economic transformation to advanced manufacturing, service, and knowledge economics, in industries like pharmaceuticals, medical devices, biotechnology, food and export services. This trend has positioned the Puerto Rican economy to move toward the aviation and aeronautics industry, specifically the maintenance, repair, and operations market (MRO).¹ The MRO market is projected to total \$76 billion by the end of 2022, a 36% increase. The trend shows that airlines are increasingly interested in outsourcing their secondary activities in Puerto Rico. An MRO cluster could represent as much as \$600 million to the Puerto Rican gross domestic product (GDP), with essential effects on small and medium businesses and local economies. Aside from the principal services of assembly, cleaning, and coordination, most of the jobs are provided by businesses with fewer than 10 employees. Puerto Rico's MRO cluster is anticipated to be located in the aerospace triangle in the northwest part of the territory, whose center is in Aguadilla. This region has proved to be one of the driving forces of the aviation industry in Puerto Rico.

With these unique opportunities, OSCC is proposing to work with Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs), apprenticeship programs, and employers to identify, recruit, and train Puerto Ricans who have the interest in in-demand jobs within the construction industry and MRO/mechanical aviation sector.

Alignment with CEDs: Puerto Rico does not have a CED. We utilized the most accurate information related to jobs and economic development from two reports: the Economic and Disaster Recovery Plan, released by the Governor's Office in 2018, and the 2020 WIOA Unified State Plan, which states that the growth in construction "will require training and retraining of members of the labor force to satisfy the demand of labor in this sector. The training required...is not commonly offered in traditional post-secondary institutions."

¹ Govt. USA-Puerto Rico. (2020). WIOA State Unified Plan 2020. Page 10

Denver: According to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the gap between educational attainment of the white majority and Latinx minority in Colorado is the second largest in the nation. The Latinx community comprises Colorado's fastest growing population segment, and yet only 25% of Latinx Colorado residents over the age of 25 achieve an associate degree or higher.² The current disconnect in educational attainment and demographic trends is worrisome.

By 2050, the Latinx community will comprise 36% of the Colorado workforce, up from 18% in 2010.³ Notably, among Latinx MCRC participants, the rate of post-secondary educational attainment is even lower – with only an estimated 15% of participants reporting achievement of an associate degree or higher. This so-called Rocky Mountain Divide is one of Colorado's greatest opportunities and challenges.⁴

Additionally, COVID-19 is also impacting Latinx jobseekers in Colorado. Data shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate effect on low-income workers of color. The accommodation and food service industry has 21.3% of the share of total Colorado Unemployment Insurance claims in 2020, followed by retail trade and health care and social assistance. These industries are the most likely to employ BIPOC individuals and have seen devastating losses without recovery. Furthermore, many low-income workers lack the digital skills and resources needed to job search and interview in a virtual environment. Without training and support, they face significant barriers to recovery post-COVID-19. MCRC's professional services pathway creates opportunities for jobseekers to reskill and upskill into promising positions and advance through a combination of work experience and continued education. These positions offer health benefits, retirement plans, tuition reimbursement, and the potential to work remotely.

Alignment with CEDS: The Denver Metro Area does not currently have an active CEDs, but the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade has combined its annual reports from 2017, 2018, and 2019 along with the Blueprint for Economic Development into a "CEDS-equivalent" plan. According to the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, the Denver metro will add more than 300,000 jobs by 2030, accounting for more than half of the state's job growth. Healthcare is Denver's fastest growing industry.

² Colorado Workforce Development Council, "Colorado Talent Pipeline Report 2021", <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BT7nWA5mVA3qjmR92WKUMyeoRJAF8o6T/view>

³ The Bell Policy Center, "Demographics: A Changing Colorado", chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgiclfindmkaj/viewer.html?pdfurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.bellpolicy.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2018%2F01%2FDemographics-Guide-to-Economic-Mobility.pdf

⁴ Anthony P. Carnevale, Tanya I. Garcia, and Megan L. Fasules, "Rocky Mountain Divide", chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgiclfindmkaj/viewer.html?pdfurl=https%3A%2F%2Fstatic1.squarespace.com%2Fstatic%2F61b53e492ea58d13b806ccb3%2Ft%2F61bb80ee337d26672b68da8c%2F1639678193198%2FCEW_Colorado_Report.pdf&clen=2414477&chunk=true

Section Four: Impacts of the Regional Workforce Training System

Section 4a: Specify program phase (system development, program design, or program implementation)

	Puerto Rico	Denver
System Development	3 months	
Program Design	6 months	6-9 months
Program Implementation	Months 9 - 36	Months 9 - 36

For the Good Jobs Challenge, UUS is proposing system development, program design and implementation in Puerto Rico and program design and implementation in Denver.

Section 4b: Explain how the proposed project would meet EDA’s Recovery and Resilience Investment priority

Our proposed project meets five out of seven of EDA’s Recovery and Resilience Investment priorities: equity, recovery and resilience, workforce development, manufacturing, and environmentally sustainable development.

Both workforce training programs in Puerto Rico and Denver, Colorado will **advance equity** across America through investments that directly impact Latinx and BIPOC people. Given Puerto Rico’s standing as a U.S. territory island, it faces unique challenges. For example, residents receive fewer federal benefits than other Americans. Puerto Rican residents are ineligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit and earn less, on average, in Social Security and veterans’ benefits.⁵ Structurally, the island suffers massive debt, partly due to federal funding gaps. With our proposed project, we will work with OSCC, government agencies, workforce development entities, and employers to expand economic opportunities in the territory. Similarly in Denver, Colorado, UUS and MCRC will work together with multiple stakeholders to address the economic gap that exists between Latinx and BIPOC people and the white majority.

As noted above, COVID-19 caused job loss for low-income BIPOC people at nearly double the rate of their white peers. Data shows that Latinx people were impacted most heavily and that many jobs have not returned. With the proposed project, MCRC will work with educational institutions and employers to upskill and reskill low-income jobseekers into promising positions and advance through a combination of work experience and continued education.

Both of the proposed **workforce training** programs focus on **recovery and resilience**. Not only do they consider employers’ current needs but also focus on long-term recovery from COVID-19 and natural disasters. After Irma and Maria hit Puerto Rico in 2017, the Puerto Rican government created an economic plan to transform Puerto Rico’s economy. Puerto Rico identified the construction and aeronautics and aviation industries as two promising areas for economic expansion. Construction is one of the largest

⁵ Amelia Cheatham, “Puerto Rico: A U.S. Territory in Crisis” *Council on Foreign Relations*, November 25, 2020, <https://www.cfr.org/background/puerto-rico-us-territory-crisis>.

industry sectors in Puerto Rico and includes **environmentally sustainable projects**. The construction sector in Puerto Rico will grow due to reconstruction funding and require additional trained personnel to satisfy the increase in demand.

For the aviation industry, we are proposing Puerto Rico as a hub for the maintenance, repairing and operations (MRO) sector. The MRO market is projected to total \$76 billion by 2022, some 36% more than the current \$56 billion. The trend shows that airlines are increasingly interested in outsourcing their secondary activities in the territory. An MRO cluster could represent as much as \$600 million to the GDP with essential effects on small and medium businesses and local economies. This component of our project prioritizes economic development planning and implementation activities that encourage job creation, business expansion, technology and capital upgrades, and productivity growth in manufacturing, including efforts that contribute to the competitiveness and growth of domestic suppliers and to the domestic production of innovative, high-value products and production technologies.

As mentioned previously, 49% of Denver, Colorado's employment is classified into the professional services industry. The trend does not show signs of decreasing, therefore, MCRC along with its stakeholders are working to ensure an effective workforce that includes Latinx workers, meeting both EDA's equity and workforce development priorities.

Section 4c: Describe the number and type of expected jobs

In total, the Avanzando 2 Good Jobs project will place 885 people in jobs, 525 in Puerto Rico and 360 in Denver.

O*Net Online reported projected employment for the construction industry in 2028 to be 13,050, an increase of 3% compared to 2018. Also, O*Net shared that construction workers in Puerto Rico on average earn \$8.81 per hour, and 10% of workers earn \$7.76 or less per hour. OSCC estimated that 90% of the 450 positions available earn more than \$8.50 per hour and that as they complete the stages of the apprenticeship, their income increases by 10% per achievement reached.

For the aviation industry, O*Net reported projected employment for 2028 to be 650, an increase of 8% compared to 2018. Also, O*Net shared that Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians in Puerto Rico on average earn \$22.82 per hour, and only 10% of workers earn \$14.00 or less per hour. OSCC estimates that 90% of the 60 positions available earn more than \$14.00 per hour and that as participants complete the stages of the apprenticeship, their income increases by 10% per achievement reached.

49% of Colorado's workforce is in the professional services industry. Professional jobs are one of the top emerging industries according to Colorado's WIOA State Plan with an expected employment of 69,685 between 2018 and 2028.⁶

Section 4d: Explain the feasibility of the proposed partnership or system

The proposed training program is based on UUS's history of successfully implementing projects of similar scale. In 2017, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded \$3.9 million to UUS for a three-year grant to fund its

⁶ Colorado State Plan: 2020-2023 WIOA State Plan, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/144a1vZD6VHCae-zhL78wF6Q4dis9zzU0/view>, page 11.

Young Adult Re-Entry Project. The program featured a targeted approach that included technical assistance, training, and other activities to improve transitions for justice-involved young adults. UUS partnered with three Affiliates including OSCC. The grant specifically funded the work of these Affiliates in their efforts to assist nearly 500 young adults to enroll in the program. Outcomes for that program are provided as an attachment. With funding from the Good Jobs Challenge, UUS will build on its expertise implementing programs using a systems-change approach that includes in depth data analysis, convening of stakeholders, and alignment across training providers and employers.

Section 4e: Describe the target demographics of participants and specific stakeholder groups

Puerto Rico: OSCC will focus its efforts on recruiting a diverse group of participants from across Puerto Rico. The population served by OSCC is 46% female and 47% male; 13% are involved with the justice system. The median household income in Puerto Rico is \$20,539 and the poverty rate is 43.5%. To recruit participants, OSCC will carry out a media campaign, communicate to the Local Workforce Development Areas, post program information in housing developments of the Puerto Rico Department of Housing, and work with government partners and other organizations that serve unemployed and underemployed residents.

Denver: At MCRC, the participant community served is 74% female, 25% male, and 1% non-binary or another gender identity. Under its Career Pathways program, 63% of the participants are Hispanic or Latino, 17% are White, 10% are Black or African American, 3% are Asian, 1% are American Indian or Native American, 1% are Middle Eastern or North African, and 5% identify as Other or as multiple races and/or ethnicities. In total, 81% identify as BIPOC. According to HUD income level, 92% of Career Pathways participants are low-income (56% are extremely low, 18% are very low, and 18% are low). MCRC utilizes a robust recruitment strategy to expand its reach while maintaining a focus on its target population and demographic. For this program, MCRC staff will use a combination of in-person and virtual outreach to reach new and existing participants, with an emphasis on relationship-building. MCRC conducts in-person outreach, with a full-time Outreach Coordinator, via conducting visits to faith and community-based organizations in targeted neighborhoods, neighborhood events, collaboratives, and networks.

Section Five: Funding Request and Program Design and Implementation

Section 5a: Provide an estimated funding request for the proposed partnership(s) or system

UUS is requesting \$11,380,401.03 in funding to support system development, program design and program implementation in Puerto Rico and program design and program implementation in Denver.

Section 5b: Describe anticipated System Development, Program Design, and Program Implementation projects.

Puerto Rico

System Development (3 months): UUS has asked the International Youth Foundation (IYF) to apply its proven “closing the gap” methodology to make data-driven recommendations backed up by employer insights on how to address skills gaps in the target sectors in Puerto Rico. Leveraging big data harvested from online job boards, investment data, industry reports, and key stakeholder interviews, IYF will conduct

four labor market assessments. The labor market assessment will identify the demand for entry level positions for each educational level (short-term training, community college, university) and the critical skills for each. Then, through a design-thinking interactive workshop, IYF will work with regional employers in each sector to define and prioritize scarce and critical skills for entry level positions. IYF will compare the identified skills for each sector with relevant curricula from each education level determining to what degree the skills are represented in the curriculum, both in terms of content and application and will make recommendations of how to address the identified skills gap. Next, IYF will review the career pathways made up of available and planned trainings at each educational level, taking into account alignment with relevant career certifications, to ensure that the articulation between one level of education to the next builds upon the skills previously developed, and ensure that graduates have all the required skills upon completion without repeating trainings. Finally, to meet the needs of English language learners, IYF will overlay its curricular analysis with an analysis of whether the English competencies required for success in the next level of training and/or by employers is effectively incorporated into each training pathway. IYF will leverage its expertise with contextualized functional English language instruction to ensure that the resulting recommendations are viable within the curricular structure.

Program Design (6 months): OSCC's program will offer community-centered training and education programs to prepare workers for careers in construction and mechanical aviation. During the design phase, OSCC will work directly with employer partners and LWDA's to design the program to meet the unique and diverse needs of employers and people in Puerto Rico and will develop contracts with training providers who can host training cohorts in rural areas and hard-to-reach mountain municipalities so participants do not have to travel long distances to participate. Also, during the program design phase, OSCC will:

- Work with local communities to develop effective plans to identify and recruit participants.
- Hold monthly convenings with all program partners and staff to create action plans for each municipality to ensure they are ready to provide participants' services.
- Update its intake and assessment forms, job readiness curricula and ensure they have the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), computer hardware, and software needed to provide classes.
- Hire and train the additional staff it needs to implement the project successfully.
- Formalize contracts and other resources needed for program implementation.

Given that OSCC will be working in different parts of Puerto Rico simultaneously, it will concurrently have multiple operating programs with varying program completion timelines. All partnership meetings will continue quarterly after the initial program planning phase. OSCC will hold bi-weekly meetings with LWDA and employer partners to inform them of employment needs. OSCC will continue identifying and sourcing new employer partners.

Program Implementation (Months 9 - 36)

Case Management: Upon enrollment, every participant will be assigned a Case Manager, who will help participants build resiliency and succeed in moving into the academic and career pathways programs. An OSCC Case Manager (CM) will meet with each participant and conduct an in-depth intake and assessment to identify their strengths, barriers, education, and employment goals. Based on this information, the CM will work with participants to create a goal plan and an Individual Development Plan (IDP). OSCC will require participants to meet with their CM after completing their IDP, which assists participants in eliminating barriers for employment. Once OSCC identifies a cohort of 25 participants, OSCC's Job Readiness Instructor (JRI) will begin a soft skills and job readiness training (JRT) series.

Life Skills/Job Readiness Training and Continued Case Management: All participants will be enrolled in a five-week, 80-hour course focused on developing skills needed for success in life and the job market. The Life Skills/ Job Readiness Training covers insights into the thinking traps; self-control skills for managing emotions; critical thinking skills for solving problems; interpersonal skills for dealing with difficult confrontations, resume and cover letter writing, interview preparation, job application, and form completion, workplace ethics, strategies for job retention and working on teams.

Once participants complete this phase, they will co-enroll in an academic and career pathway that includes vocational training, apprenticeship, or postsecondary education. During this stage of the program, participants will work toward attaining an industry-recognized certification identified in their IDP in the construction or mechanical aviation industry and/or start applying for jobs. If OSCC or participants identify additional barriers after enrollment, the CM will revise the IDP and adjust it.

Depending on the participant's interest and the training program they enroll in, participants will be engaged in educational activities for nine to twelve months or longer. During this period, CMs will meet with the participants every week. Participants will also leverage digital tools to keep in touch with participants. Two weeks before completing the training, participants will work with their CM and job developers to apply for jobs. Once placed in a position, the CM and job developer will check-in with the individual every week for the first four weeks and then monthly for 12 months.

English Language Proficiency: OSCC will assess participants' English language proficiency and will offer contextualized English classes or dual language instruction for English language acquisition, especially for those entering the mechanical aviation training program where English language proficiency has been identified as a barrier.

Academic and Career Development Pathways

Construction: Participants who enter the Construction pathway will be enrolled in small cohorts at five community-based locations across the territory. They will receive 300 hours of work-based instruction in the construction trades, preparing for jobs as Tile and Stone Setters, Construction Laborers, Helpers--Brickmasons, Blockmasons, Stonemasons, and Tile and Marble Setters Pipelayers, Helpers—Electricians, Drywall and Ceiling Tile Installers, Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers, Painters, Construction and Maintenance, Carpenters, Helpers--Pipelayers, Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters, First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers Brickmasons and Blockmasons, Terrazzo Workers and Finishers, Construction Managers, and Tapers.

Mechanical Aviation: Participants in the mechanical aviation pathway will be placed in the University of Puerto Rico- Aguadilla: Aeronautical and the Aerospace Institute of Puerto Rico (IAAPR) pre-apprenticeship certification program. This program includes 1700 hours of instruction over a nine-month period and offers a Certification of Aircraft Overhaul. Two cohorts of 30 will be enrolled in the program during each nine-month period. Those who complete this program will be placed in jobs with airlines, in positions including Program Aircraft Service Attendant (starting wages of \$18,650). Others who are qualified may enter the Lufthansa Technik Puerto Rico (LTPR), a 3-year Certified Apprenticeship on Aeronautical Mechanics Program, which prepares workers for jobs as Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians, with an average annual salary of \$47,470. Throughout these apprenticeships, participants receive industry Level 1 and Level 2 Aeronautical Mechanics Certification.

According to each participant's Individualized Development Plan (IDP), some will also start interviewing for part-time jobs if they need immediate employment. Once the participant has completed their training, they

will interview LWDA or OSCC employer partners. If needed, OSCC will provide fidelity bonds to employer partners and list benefits available like the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). OSCC will place participants in a 12-month follow-up period upon job placement. During this 12-month, case managers will check in every week with the participant for the first four weeks and then continue checking in monthly. Participants will maintain, including during follow-up, their eligibility for needs-based supportive services.

Denver

Program Design (6-9 months): MCRC, in partnership with Community College of Aurora (CCA), Metropolitan State University Denver (MSU Denver), and local banks and credit unions, launched in September 2019 a first-of-its-kind stackable credential pathway for the financial services industry to on-ramp students to meaningful employment, a certificate of completion, and postsecondary credentials simultaneously. MCRC also partners with The Bell Policy Center to document and capture learnings about the pathway's design and operations. An important aspect of the financial services project is identifying promising practices and models that can be scaled, replicated, or built upon to close equity gaps. 2021 offers MCRC the opportunity to replicate our work to continue meeting the needs of vulnerable jobseekers in Colorado.

MCRC is expanding our career and educational work into the Professional Services Pathway for Medical Administration and Human Resources. The Rework America Alliance has identified through a labor market analysis occupation families with viable and high-growth careers in Colorado: business/legal professionals, health professionals, managers, office support, STEM professionals, and transportation services. MCRC's Professional Services Pathway aligns with three of these occupation families: legal and human services, medical and healthcare administration, and management support. Professional Services careers can include office administration, healthcare administration, Human Resources, recruitment, and customer service representatives.

For low-income Latinx and BIPOC people, careers in professional services create opportunities for jobseekers to reskill and upskill into promising positions and advance through a combination of work experience and continued education. These positions offer health benefits, retirement plans, tuition reimbursement, and the potential to work remotely. Professional Services are necessary components in all economic sectors, from sports and entertainment to healthcare to small businesses, which employ 49% of Colorado's workforce. This range allows for flexibility for each individual's personal and professional goals. The pathway will begin with MCRC's training, which prepares participants for immediate entry-level employment within these occupational families. Participants can then continue their workforce and education growth through the next steps in the pathway.

MCRC is offering a Stackable Credential framework to support the educational advancement of the Professional Services Pathway through Prior Learning Assessments (PLAs). PLAs offer a low-cost alternative for individuals to earn credit based on existing work experience or non-traditional learning. MCRC's training will align with 6-9 credits under the Community College of Aurora (CCA) Human Resources Certificate and the Arapahoe Community College (ACC) Medical Office Administrative Assistance Certificate. MCRC is working with CCA, ACC, and MSU Denver to ensure certificates can be mapped into continuing education for associate's and bachelor's degree programs, including a bachelor's in Healthcare Management, Business, and Management.

Employer engagement is a crucial component of the pathway's success. MCRC is implementing a communication strategy in partnership with the Rework America Alliance that includes the Oracle Corporation, Wells Fargo & Company, Charter Communications, Inc., Salesforce.com, Inc., and Deloitte

LLP, in addition to other key strategic employer partners. MCRC will implement an Employer Advisory Council for training input and hiring potential.

Program Implementation (Months 9 -36): The Professional Services Pathway will recruit nontraditional learners, individuals with barriers, incumbent workers, high school students, and dislocated workers. MCRC will offer a hybrid learning environment, both virtual and in-person, to ensure access. To address digital equity, MCRC provides digital access and technology support via consulting, webinars, and training. First, if a participant does not have a laptop and access to broadband, MCRC loans a Chromebook for the training duration and provides access to low-cost broadband. Upon training completion, participants receive a \$150 voucher for PCs for People, a partner organization that provides low-cost computers, computer repair, internet service, and digital learning resources. Digital literacy includes, but is not limited to, online job searching, Microsoft Word, and communication technology (Zoom and Teams).

MCRC's Project Services include the following:

Navigation: MCRC's navigation services use a strength-based approach that identifies attitudes, capacity, levels of self-determination, and community and family resources. As part of its wraparound services MCRC connects job seekers to basic needs supports – food, health, housing, legal, etc. as needed. The team uses a strength-based approach that identifies attitudes, capacity, levels of self-determination, and community resources.

Career Coaching: MCRC's strength-based coaching offers individuals support and encouragement through the vulnerable job seeking process. MCRC's bilingual Employment Success Coaches offer advising appointments to provide individualized technical skills training on their job search tools, digital literacy, and communication skills.

Professional Services Technical Skills Training: Participants work with our trained Recruitment staff to ensure the Professional Services Training is the program that best fits their needs, interests, and goals. This skills-based training is industry and education-aligned. Topics and skills include:

- Employment Acquisition Skills (interview skills, resume writing, job search, etc.)
- Customer Service and Communication
- Data Entry and Database Management
- Leadership and Management
- Computer Basics and Digital Literacy (Microsoft Packages and Google Suite)
- Budgeting and Basic Billing
- Business Acumen

Postsecondary Attainment: Throughout the Professional Services training, participants can earn postsecondary credentials through Prior Learning Assessments (PLAs) to jumpstart their path to higher education. In partnership with CCA, students who graduate from our program can take PLAs and earn up to nine college credits that lead to an 18 credit Human Resource Management Certificate. In partnership with ACC, students who graduate can earn up to 4 credits that lead to a 9-credit Medical Office Administrative Assistant Certificate. Both certificate programs are designed to be completed within a 6-month range. Upon certification completion, participants will have the option to continue into MSU Denver's associate's and/or bachelor's degree programs in Healthcare Management, Business, or Management.

Employer Engagement and Placement: Meaningful and industry-specific employer partnerships allow MCRC to link participants with higher wage employment options. Within the professional services sector,

MCRC receives feedback and input on our curriculum, hiring trends, and linkages to potential employment opportunities. MCRC also implements a quarterly Employer Advisory Council to engage partners. MCRC offers one year of employment retention coaching and technical assistance.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL): The Avanzando 2 Good Jobs program will utilize a comprehensive, participatory, and culturally responsive performance monitoring strategy to capture impact on the Denver and Puerto Rico workforce systems. UUS will lead the execution of the performance monitoring plan, as well as leverage Mi Casa and One Stop's well-established data collection experience gathering client data on an ongoing basis. In order to continually assess program performance, replicate best practices, and address challenges, UUS will also lead the implementation of a Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) plan that outlines activities that will be embedded into the regular operations of the program and will incorporate the voices of workforce system stakeholders at all levels. Selected learning questions will guide CLA activities in order to foster adaptive management and learning among Avanzando 2 Good Jobs subawardees, system partnerships, and EDA. The attached MEL plan provides more details on our evaluation framework and process.

Section 5c: Identify any anticipated barriers to worker participation and mitigation plan

OSCC anticipates that participants may need assistance with transportation, childcare, and coaching. They will offer all participants case management, transportation, financial coaching, childcare, health career navigation and job coaching during the program. OSCC will also connect participants in need of mental health counseling or substance abuse rehabilitation to appropriate service providers. Case Managers will help participants obtain government identification documents, apply for benefits, or assist with other support, as needed. Participants will be eligible for supportive services (SS) throughout their engagement with OSCC. OSCC purposely conducts classes in small groups to follow COVID-19 protocols, prevent group discord, and ensure that each participant receives individualized attention. All participants will receive information on other community-based organizations (CBOs) that can support them in eliminating barriers to employment, whether for accessing housing, employment, education, health, or other services. needed. After completing the program, OSCC will ensure that participants succeed in their new jobs by offering job placement and other ongoing support

MCRC's navigation team has relationships with a vast, established network of resources (government agencies and other providers) to address housing, childcare, and transportation, among many other barriers. Community-based partners include but are not limited to The Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning (ESL and Adult Basic Education classes), PCs for People (digital literacy and technology access), Dress for Success (professional attire), Colorado Hispanic Bar Association (legal counseling), and local health organizations to provide health information through Cafecito style workshops. MCRC's wraparound services are provided through a navigation model offered by MCRC's Employment Success Coaches, using a strength-based approach that identifies attitudes, capacity, levels of self-determination, and community and family resources. MCRC connects job seekers to basic needs supports – food, health, housing, legal, etc. as needed. Government agency partnerships include, but are not limited to, OEDIT, the Colorado Department of Labor, the Colorado Department of Higher Education, the City and County of Denver, the City of Aurora, and Adams County. They also partner with Denver Public Schools, Metro State University Denver, and Community College of Aurora.