

/ inclusiv / Juntos Avanzamos 



CELEBRATING CREDIT UNIONS SERVING HISPANIC COMMUNITIES

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2024





WELCOME

Pablo DeFilippi

Executive Vice President, Inclusiv Network

Hispanic Heritage Month gives us a reason to celebrate and recognize the progress the credit union movement has made in advancing financial inclusion in Latino and immigrant communities and an opportunity to reflect on what lies ahead and how, we as a movement, plan to get there.

We can certainly say that we've come a long way! Today there are nearly 150 Juntos Avanzamos designated credit unions around the country committed to serving Latino and immigrant communities with safe, responsible and affordable financial products and services. Juntos Avanzamos has now a presence in **34 states**: AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, IA, ID, IL, IN, LA, MA, MD, MI, MN, MO, NC, NE, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA and WI; as well as Washington, DC and Puerto Rico. Together these institutions serve over 20 million people through a network of more than 2,000 branches.

While we celebrate this growth, we also need to recognize that our work isn't done. There's so much more we must do to truly meet the needs of this untapped market that, despite its magnitude and size, continues to be underserved by the financial system. This is where opportunity and mission come together for credit unions: where we can do well by doing good. Even beyond our value alignment and the clear business case for serving Latino and immigrant communities, this is an existential mandate. I firmly believe that for many credit unions, their future and relevance will be determined by how well they connect with this market. Just consider this:

- According to new data from the US Census Bureau, between 2022 and 2023, Latinos accounted for 71% of the nation's population growth. In 2023 alone, the Latino population grew by 1.6 million for a total of 65 million, reaching a record 19.5% of the US Population. One in five Americans identify as Latino or of Hispanic descent! And this trend will continue. The Hispanic population is expanding at a substantially faster rate than the non-Hispanic population, which grew a mere 0.2%.
- Immigration is accelerating the growth of the Latino community in the US. According to the Wall Street Journal, "the US is experiencing its largest immigration wave in generations, driven by millions of people from around the world seeking personal safety and economic opportunity." Since 2020, more than nine million people have migrated to the US. That's nearly as many as the number that came in the previous decade. Immigration has lifted US population growth to almost 1.2% a year, the highest since the early 1990s.
- The recent immigrant wave is overwhelmingly Spanish-speaking, 14% come from Venezuela, 13% from Mexico and 8.5% from Honduras. 78% are between the ages of 16 and 64 (in contrast, only 60% of those born in the US fall within that age range). The top five destination states are FL, TX, CA, NY, and NJ.



- The Latino population is projected to rise to 84 million by 2030, which would account for nearly one-quarter of the total US population. But, as the number of Latinos continues to rise, so does the need for equitable access to the financial system. Financial inclusion creates upward mobility and opens up the doors of opportunity to those who have been left behind. We must recognize that Latinos and immigrants have been constrained by decades of structural and individual discrimination leading to significant disparities in access to homeownership, entrepreneurship, education and wages compared to non-Hispanic white Americans.

Juntos Avanzamos can help credit unions serve Latino and immigrant communities better to ensure everyone has the opportunity to achieve financial well-being and build wealth. It is a market-tested financial inclusion framework and the nationally-recognized standard for credit unions serving Latinos and immigrants. It helps identify and remove barriers within credit union policies and processes that prevent so many from accessing the tools and products that have made our movement such an effective enabler of asset building for the middle and working class.

As you will see in this publication, Juntos Avanzamos is a collective, led by Inclusiv but driven and empowered by the passion, the commitment and the leadership of our member credit unions, system partners and supporters. It takes a village to build a movement, and we see inspiring leaders in California and the Pacific Northwest working tirelessly to bring credit unions in those regions together, under a local Juntos Avanzamos chapter, to share and learn from each other. We collaborate with our League partners to promote and support credit unions serving these markets and work closely with the National Association of Latino Credit Unions and Professionals to empower Latino leadership, providing them with opportunities to network, support each other and gain recognition. We're proud of our growing collaboration with the Mexican consulate network and the opportunities to bring asset building products to a community that unfortunately continues to be invisible to the financial mainstream.

We will change that. ¡Si se puede and Juntos Avanzamos!



Juntos Avanzamos CEO Profile:

JENNIFER OLIVER CHAMPION OF CHANGE AND COMMUNITY AT RIZE CREDIT UNION

Jean Carlos Rosario Mercado

Juntos Avanzamos Program Officer, Inclusiv Network

Jennifer Oliver, the CEO of Rize Credit Union, exemplifies transformational leadership, resilience, and inclusivity. Her strategic vision and unwavering commitment have led to a profound reshaping of the credit union, establishing a culture that embraces digital progression and upholds fundamental community values. Oliver's personal and professional journey, characterized by overcoming significant challenges, serves as a compelling testament to the profound impact of leadership in creating opportunities for others and affecting enduring change. Oliver's story is one of inspiration and determination. Growing up in a household that experienced financial hardships, she witnessed firsthand the struggles many families in the United States face. The cycle of poverty seemed unbreakable, but she found a way out through the credit union movement. Her first job at a credit union, driven by her aptitude for math, was more than just employment; it was the beginning of a lifelong passion. At the credit union, she learned the value of financial education and the importance of saving, lessons that would go on to shape her career, and her mission to help others. Her career trajectory is nothing short of remarkable. From these humble beginnings, she rose through the ranks to become a prominent leader in the credit union movement. Her first role as a CEO came during the 2008-2012 recession, a period that tested her resolve and ingenuity.

This period was more than a test of her leadership; it was a defining moment that solidified her belief in the power of credit unions to serve as lifelines during times of crisis. Oliver realized that credit unions are more than financial institutions—they are pillars of support that communities rely on, especially when facing economic uncertainty. Her leadership during the 2011-2012 recession underscored the importance of a strong, resilient credit union ready to serve its members when needed.





Oliver’s ability to adapt and lead was further showcased during the COVID-19 pandemic. She played a crucial role in ensuring the credit union remained operational for its members—many of whom were frontline workers in New York. For Oliver, this was not just about keeping a business running; it was about serving the community and providing stability in a time of unprecedented fear and uncertainty. By saving the charter for 600,000 members, she reaffirmed the mission of credit unions and their essential role in supporting those who serve others.

A true advocate for collaboration and community, she has also been instrumental in fostering alliances that strengthen the credit union movement. As a founding member of the Southern California Credit Union Alliance and a current member of the California Credit Union League, she has been at the forefront of promoting cooperative efforts among credit unions. Oliver believes that by sharing resources and knowledge, credit unions can better serve their members and create a more inclusive financial system. Under Oliver’s leadership, Rize Credit Union has embraced a digital-first mindset, ensuring it remains competitive in a rapidly changing financial landscape. But, beyond technology, she has infused the credit union with a culture of purpose and execution, recognizing that true success lies in serving the community and meeting the needs of all members. She has championed a new brand that reflects these values and is dedicated to uplifting communities by providing knowledge, access, and care.

Her commitment to diversity and inclusion is evident in her efforts to promote the Latino Advisory Committee and the Inclusiv / Juntos Avanzamos Designation at Rize Credit Union. This initiative goes beyond mere representation; it is about actively engaging with and understanding the needs of a diverse membership base. By leveraging the insights and expertise of the Latino Advisory Committee, Oliver is ensuring that Rize Credit Union remains responsive to the communities it serves, particularly those that have historically been underserved by traditional financial institutions.

Jennifer Oliver’s leadership is a testament to the transformative power of credit unions and the importance of inclusivity and community engagement. Her journey from a young girl who learned the value of savings to a CEO leading a dynamic and forward-thinking credit union is a story of resilience, dedication, and vision. Oliver’s work has opened doors for many, creating opportunities for future generations to thrive. As she continues to lead Rize Credit Union with passion and purpose, she reminds us of the power of community, the strength of collaboration, and the importance of never losing sight of the “why” in what we do.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FIELD: DEL-ONE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION JUNTOS AVANZAMOS PROCLAMATION CEREMONY THE FIRST JUNTOS AVANZAMOS IN DELAWARE

Jean Carlos Rosario Mercado

Juntos Avanzamos Program Officer, Inclusiv Network

Last March, we visited Del-One Federal Credit Union in Dover, Delaware, to celebrate their Juntos Avanzamos Proclamation Ceremony. Del-One Federal Credit Union was officially chartered in 1960 and is the largest credit union in Delaware. As of March 2024, Del-One had over \$520 million in assets and served over 72,000 members with 11 branches. **We're happy to announce that they are the first Juntos Avanzamos credit union in the state of Delaware.** A new state joins the growing Juntos Avanzamos Network.

The growth of Juntos Avanzamos designated credit unions is essential for ensuring that Hispanic and immigrant communities have access to relevant financial services. By empowering credit unions to serve underserved populations, promoting financial literacy, and fostering community bonds and trust, this initiative contributes to creating a more equitable financial system. Ultimately, it paves the way for an environment where everyone can thrive and prosper.





Del-One Federal Credit Union received its Juntos Avanzamos designation in December 2023, but its commitment to financial inclusion has been a core value for many years. Numerous community leaders who spoke during the ceremony validated this commitment.

We extend our warmest welcome to Del-One Federal Credit Union'. We look forward to continuing to work together for the financial empowerment of everyone who has been historically excluded from the financial system.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LATINO CREDIT UNIONS AND PROFESSIONALS ANNOUNCES ITIN LENDING SCHOOL

Barbara Mójica

NLCUP Executive Director

The National Association of Latino Credit Unions and Professionals is pleased to announce the upcoming ITIN Lending School workshop, scheduled for November 12th-15th, 2024 at Civic Federal Credit Union Head Quarters in 3600 Wake Forest Road, Raleigh North Carolina 27609. This workshop is designed to equip financial institutions with the knowledge and tools necessary to effectively serve ITIN (Individual Taxpayer Identification Number) borrowers, a critical and often underserved segment of the community.

“As the demand for inclusive financial services continues to grow, this workshop offers a pivotal opportunity for financial institutions to extend their reach and impact in meaningful ways, says NLCUP’s Executive Director, Barbara Mojica.

Participants will gain invaluable insights and practical strategies to enhance their lending programs, allowing them to better serve the immigrant community—a community that has long been overlooked in traditional financial services.

I am deeply honored to lead this initiative alongside my dedicated team. Launching this ITIN Lending School is a significant milestone, not just for us but for the entire credit union industry. For 24 years, top Latino leaders and allies have been seeking effective ways to serve the ITIN-holding community. Today, I am ecstatic to bring together all the solutions, expertise, and resources we’ve gathered over the years into one comprehensive, accessible program.





This school represents the culmination of decades of work and collaboration, and I am confident it will transform how credit unions serve my community.”

NLCUP’s Program Director, Nahibi Kauffman, adds “I’m incredibly grateful to have contributed to such an important project, especially as my first major initiative since joining NLCUP just five months ago. This project not only raises awareness for a community that is often overlooked but also provides essential hands-on training for credit unions looking to close the gap. Seeing NLCUP’s ITIN Lending School come to life is truly inspiring and speaks to the impact NLCUP can achieve.”

This workshop is made possible through the volunteerism of expert facilitators and our esteemed partners: Juntos Avanzamos, Civic Federal Credit Union, and Latino Community Credit Union. Each of these organizations brings unique expertise and shares our commitment to financial inclusion. For more information on registration and event details, visit NLCUP’s Event Registration Page [here](#).

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Scan Here





THE BENEFITS OF GREEN LENDING FOR HISPANIC AND LATINO COMMUNITIES

Fiona Laird

Senior Program Officer, Inclusiv Center for Resiliency and Clean Energy

81% of Latinos say that addressing climate change is a top personal concern, according to the Pew Research Center, and seven in ten Latinos say climate change affects their neighborhoods.

Latinos are not just concerned with climate change – they are among the groups in the United States that are most severely impacted by climate change. Across the United States, Latinos are more likely to live in communities that experience extreme heat.² More than half - 56% - of Latinos across the country live in areas that have experienced extreme weather disasters in the last year.³ And, Latinos are not just impacted by changing climates, Latino households have an energy burden 24% higher than white households, meaning the proportion of their income they spend on energy costs is higher than white households.⁴

Green home improvement projects, including installing insulation, energy-efficient appliances, or solar energy systems, could make homes more comfortable, improve indoor air quality, and lower energy bills. Credit unions, especially Juntos Avanzamos credit unions, could play a critical role in ensuring the benefits of these green home improvements reach Latino communities through affordable green lending programs.

One example of a Juntos Avanzamos credit union’s leadership in green lending is MariSol Federal Credit Union (FCU). Established in 1954, MariSol FCU serves low-and-moderate income members of Maricopa County in the Phoenix, AZ area. MariSol has \$52 million in assets and serves 7,500 members. MariSol is a low-income designated credit union, Juntos Avanzamos credit union, and certified as a CDFI in 2010. Their membership is 60% minorities, primarily serving Hispanic populations.

1 <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2021/10/04/most-u-s-latinos-say-global-climate-change-and-other-environmental-issues-impact-their-local-communities/>

2 <https://unidosus.org/blog/2024/03/25/the-climate-crisis-is-a-latino-civil-rights-crisis/>





MariSol currently offers two green loan products, an Energy Efficient Loan and a Solar Loan and focuses on supporting its members to weatherize their homes to withstand high summer temperatures. MariSol works with solar and efficient air conditioning installers who speak Spanish and serve the neighborhoods where their members live. Many credit unions will find that green loans are similar to existing consumer loans already being offered. In fact, 85% of MariSol’s energy efficiency loans have been to support the purchase and installation of new, efficient, air conditioners.

Credit unions across the country serving Latino and Hispanic communities have the opportunity to offer programs like MariSol FCU’s loan program via a grant opportunity from Inclusiv to support credit union green lending. Via the Inflation Reduction Act’s (IRA) Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) Clean Communities Investment Accelerator (CCIA) program, Inclusiv has been awarded \$1.87 billion to provide grants to credit unions for launching or growing green lending programs.

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Of Inclusiv’s grant, 90% of the funding will be passed through to credit unions in the form of grants. Inclusiv anticipates providing CCIA grants to 300-400 credit unions over six years. Average grant amounts will be \$3.5 million per credit union, and the grant amount each individual credit union receives will be based on factors such as their asset size and the size of green loan program they would like to build. (Maximum grant amounts will be \$11 million per credit union, but no credit union is required to take a grant of that size).

CCIA grant funds can be used to create new or grow existing green loan products; use grants to provide financial assistance to qualified projects; or use grants to build capacity for green loan programs. 100% of the funds must support Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities (LIDACs).

Inclusiv will be hosting convenings across the country to share more about this exciting grant opportunity. Access our schedule of planned convening events [here](#). And please fill out [this expression of interest form](#) to stay up to date on our CCIA program as it develops.

3 <https://unidosus.org/blog/2024/03/25/the-climate-crisis-is-a-latino-civil-rights-crisis/>

4 <https://www.energy.gov/scep/articles/empowering-hispanic-community-through-home-energy-rebates-and-training#:~:text=Recent%20findings%20from%20Energy%20Efficiency,than%20that%20of%20white%20households>

EMPOWERING FINANCIAL INCLUSION: THE LAUNCH OF THE PACIFIC NW JUNTOS AVANZAMOS/ NLCUP CHAPTER



Erica M. Flores, CUDE, CCUFC

President, Pacific NW Chapter Juntos Avanzamos, NLCUP



The Pacific NW Juntos Avanzamos/NLCUP chapter was established on December 20, 2023, to promote leadership, advocacy, outreach, and the advancement of financial inclusion for Latinx communities through collaboration among credit unions in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. Our goal is to build connections, empower future credit union leaders, and foster collaboration within the credit union sector. The chapter is led by a steering committee of nine members representing a diverse range of credit unions in the Pacific NW area, all of which are committed to enhancing the financial well-being of Latinx communities with the support of Inclusiv, the Juntos Avanzamos designation, and NLCUP. We aspire to be a valuable resource for credit unions in our region, addressing both local and national challenges that impact the financial inclusion of Latinx communities.

Currently, the chapter is focused on identifying opportunities for united credit union representation and collaboration to enhance the significance of credit unions within our Latinx communities. One example of this effort is our participation in the Juntos Avanzamos Roundtable, hosted by Unitus CCU, Point West CU, and Embold CU of Oregon. This event will provide a platform to continue discussions on the impact and financial inclusion of Latinx and immigrant communities in the Pacific Northwest. Additional initiatives include engaging in conversations about how to strengthen ties with Latinx community organizations, aiming to better support the financial well-being of our members and communities. We are also designing collaborative efforts among local credit unions to share best practices, products, policies, and services essential for providing a comprehensive banking experience for our Latinx communities. Our goal is to launch chapter meetings by the beginning of 2025, open to all credit union professionals in our region who are interested in making an impact on Latinx communities.



Our goal is to build connections, empower future credit union leaders, and foster collaboration within the credit union sector.

The vision for the future of the chapter encompasses the advancement and promotion of NLCUP membership and the Juntos Avanzamos designation within credit unions. It aims to create opportunities for networking and leadership development among local Latinx credit union professionals, as well as to develop and coordinate training on financial inclusion topics specific to the Latinx communities in our area. Collaboration with chapters in other regions is essential to our success, and we plan to structure this collaboration to enhance our efforts on a national level.

As the chapter president, I am deeply grateful to everyone serving on the chapter steering committee. Their unwavering passion consistently inspires me, and they challenge one another with their commitment and dedication. I am fortunate to count some of these individuals as close friends, united by a shared belief: the financial exclusion of the undervalued members, such as the Latinx community, is the very reason credit unions were established. This chapter has continually reminded me, through every email, post, and meeting, that advocating for and empowering the financial inclusion of the Latinx community—my community—must remain at the forefront of our work.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FIELD: COBALT CREDIT UNION JUNTOS AVANZAMOS PROCLAMATION CEREMONY, THE FIRST DESIGNATION IN NEBRASKA

Jean Carlos Rosario Mercado

Juntos Avanzamos Program Officer, Inclusiv Network



Last July, we visited Cobalt Credit Union in Papillion, Nebraska, to celebrate their Juntos Avanzamos Proclamation Ceremony. Cobalt Credit Union is the largest locally owned credit union in Nebraska, dedicated to serving its members and making a positive impact in the community. Established in 1946, it provides a wide range of financial services, including banking, financial planning, home buying, investing, education, and retirement planning, as well as commercial banking services. With a strong emphasis on member service, Cobalt Credit Union operates 25 locations across five counties in Nebraska and nine counties in Iowa, including 11 in-store branches with extended hours. **We're happy to announce that they are Nebraska's first Juntos Avanzamos credit union.** This new state joins the growing Juntos Avanzamos Network.

Expanding the Juntos Avanzamos network is a significant step towards ensuring that Hispanic and immigrant communities have increased access to culturally relevant financial services. It equips credit unions to serve underserved populations, promotes financial literacy, and strengthens community bonds and trust. Ultimately, it contributes to the creation of a more equitable financial system, fostering an environment where everyone can prosper.



Cobalt Credit Union received its Juntos Avanzamos designation in March 2024, but its commitment to financial inclusion has been a core value for many years. The presence of community leaders and government officials was central to the Proclamation Ceremony, which celebrated diversity and inclusion, as the mayor of the city of Papillion joined the President/CEO of the Nebraska Credit Union League.

We extend our warmest welcome to Cobalt Credit Union. We are excited about the future and look forward to continuing to work together for the financial empowerment of everyone who has been historically excluded from the financial system.



BUILDING A MOVEMENT: THE HEART AND GROWTH OF THE CALIFORNIA JUNTOS AVANZAMOS/NLCUP/CCUL CHAPTER



Diana Cervantes
Vice President, Social Impact, Rize Credit Union, President of Juntos Avanzamos California Chapter

The California Juntos Avanzamos chapter holds a special place in my heart. This chapter began with the inspiring efforts of Pablo DeFilippi at Inclusiv, who brought together credit union professionals with a shared vision of serving our most vulnerable communities. Whether these professionals were seeking the Juntos Avanzamos designation or simply aligned with the broader mission, the collective effort was a testament to the power of community and collaboration.

For an entire year, we convened monthly to discuss best practices that could be employed to elevate our work and impact. These meetings were more than just routine check-ins; they became a vital forum for sharing job descriptions, addressing barriers affecting our communities, and more. The discussions were rich with insights and strategies that each of us could take back to our respective organizations. Quickly then evolving into a safe and supportive space where we could candidly explore the successes and challenges of our professional development. It was in this nurturing environment that we

found the liberty to laugh, cry, and discover both our differences and similarities as a closely-knit community.

The realization soon dawned on us that a monthly call, while invaluable, wasn't sufficient to address the depth and breadth of our shared mission. The growing camaraderie and the increasing number of topics that needed our attention necessitated a more structured approach. Thus, we proposed a more formal structure to Inclusiv, NLCUP, and the CA/NV league. This proposal was met with enthusiasm and led to the official creation of Inclusiv's first California Juntos Avanzamos Chapter.

Today, our chapter is a thriving network consisting of 17 credit unions and nearly 20 dedicated professionals. This expansion is not just in numbers but also in the scope and impact of our initiatives. One of our significant achievements is the launch of a national Juntos Avanzamos Consulate partnership. This initiative has broadened our reach and enabled us to forge meaningful connections with consulates, further cementing our commitment to serving Hispanic/Latino communities and helping other Credit Union achieve the Juntos Avanzamos designation and BankOn certification.



“It’s easy to talk about doing the right thing, but it’s **the people who live doing the right thing that makes a difference in our communities.**” Diana Cervantes

Moreover, the success of our chapter inspired the establishment of a second chapter in the Pacific Northwest. This expansion is a clear indicator of the growing recognition and importance of the Juntos Avanzamos initiative. It also underscores our vision of promoting Hispanic/Latino talent into leadership roles. We are committed to fostering a pipeline of talent that will ascend to C-suite and CEO positions, thus ensuring that our communities are represented at the highest levels of decision-making.

Our journey has been one of growth, learning, and unwavering commitment. The California Juntos Avanzamos/NLCUP/CCUL Chapter is not just a professional network; it is a movement that reflects

our collective dedication to equity, inclusion, and empowerment. The bonds we have formed go beyond professional affiliations; they are the foundation of a community united by a common purpose.

As we look to the future, our vision remains clear and resolute. We aim to continue expanding the reach of Juntos Avanzamos, not just geographically but also in terms of the depth of our impact. We envision a future where Hispanic/Latino talent is recognized, nurtured, and elevated to positions of influence and leadership. We are driven by the belief that when our communities thrive, we all thrive. Our work is far from over, but with the continued support and dedication of our chapter members, we are confident that we will achieve our goals.



CALIFORNIA REPUBLIC



INCLUSIV LENDING PROGRAM AND ITS ROLE WITH ITIN LENDING

Rosa Franco

Vice President of Lending, Inclusiv

Patricia*, a Mexican woman who moved to the US in 2000, a hard-working undocumented immigrant, was scammed by a “friend” and a car dealer. Patricia was added as a co-signer for a loan since they knew she was trying to establish credit. Thanks to a financial counselor who introduced Patricia to the credit union world, she learned she could dispute the loan, open a credit builder loan, and later, she was prepared to become a homeowner. To achieve this goal, she borrowed an ITIN mortgage that helped her purchase a two-family home for \$240,000 with 20% down. A couple of years later, she brought her daughter Maria and, some months later, her brother-in-law, Nicolas, who owns a small landscaping business, to the credit union. They also became homeowners, borrowing approximately \$650,000 in total, thanks to that same credit union that, like many others in Inclusiv’s network, offers products and services, from accounts to financial counseling and loans to ITIN holders, which otherwise would not be accessible to this group.

Credit unions make a difference with their mission-driven work, and we at Inclusiv are committed to being part of that by providing resources and tools so credit unions can focus on their members. A few years ago, Inclusiv added ITIN mortgages to its secondary market, and ITIN mortgages currently make up 19% of our mortgage portfolio, with excellent performance. This program is an important option for credit unions in search of liquidity to keep serving their immigrant communities. Inclusiv, as a reliable partner, is here to support and empower



“ Inclusiv added ITIN mortgages on its secondary market, and currently holds 19% of its mortgage portfolio, with excellent performance. ”

This year, we are building a more robust Lending Program that offers training, technical assistance, credit enhancement, and a secondary market for mortgage lending, small business, and green lending. All these, plus advocacy, include ITIN lending. Our efforts involve leveraging partnerships with private and public stakeholders at local and national levels, because we believe that together, we can make a difference.

We need to hear more success stories, like Patricia, Maria, and Nicolas’s, and reduce the barriers that limit their access to the quality of life they are working so hard to achieve. These success stories are not only inspiring but also a call to action. Let’s celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month with joy and share alternatives to expand our reach and impact. ¡Juntos Avanzamos!

*The original names of the borrowers have been changed.

VENTANILLA DE ASESORÍA FINANCIERA BRINGS FINANCIAL INCLUSION TO FARMWORKERS

Emmanuel Gallegos

Coordinator at Ventanilla de Asesoría Financiera & Mexican Consulate at Oxnard, California



The Financial Advisory Window (Ventanilla de Asesoría Financiera) at the Mexican Consulate in Oxnard is responsible for providing financial education to the Hispanic population in Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo counties in California. To accomplish this goal, the Government of Mexico collaborates with strategic partners such as Inclusiv through the Juntos Avanzamos initiative. This initiative involves three credit unions - Premier America, Ocean Air, and Ventura County Credit Union.

One of the most significant activities undertaken in 2023-2024 to benefit the low-income migrant community was conducting financial advisory workshops at workplaces like agricultural fields. During these visits, 1,518 agricultural workers received workshops covering various topics, such as opening a bank account and the importance of saving and establishing a good credit history.





Spanish:

La Ventanilla de Asesoría Financiera del Consulado de México en Oxnard tiene como objetivo brindar educación financiera a la población hispana de los condados de Ventura, Santa Bárbara y San Luis Obispo, en el estado de California. Para cumplir con esta misión, el Gobierno de México colabora con aliados estratégicos como Inclusiv, a través de la iniciativa “Juntos Avanzamos”, que incluye a tres uniones de crédito: Premier America, Ocean Air y Ventura County Credit Union.

En 2023, uno de los proyectos más importante en favor de la comunidad migrante de bajos recursos fue la realización de diversos talleres de asesoría financiera en centros de trabajo, como los campos agrícolas. Durante estas visitas, se brindó capacitación a 1,518 trabajadores agrícolas sobre diversos temas, como la apertura de cuentas bancarias, la importancia del ahorro y la construcción de un buen historial crediticio.



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What is Juntos Avanzamos?

Inclusiv/Juntos Avanzamos is a designation for credit unions committed to serving and empowering Hispanic and immigrant communities. It was created to help these populations navigate the U.S. financial system by offering them safe, affordable, and culturally relevant financial services. Credit unions that earn the Juntos Avanzamos designation employ bilingual staff, accept alternative forms of identification (like foreign IDs or ITINs), and work to meet the specific financial needs of immigrant members, regardless of their legal status. This initiative seeks to provide financial access, promote savings, and offer affordable lending to communities that mainstream financial institutions often underserve.

For more information about Juntos Avanzamos:

Jean Carlos Rosario Mercado, Juntos Avanzamos Program Officer

Jcrosariomercado@inclusiv.org

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Magazine design by Hazel N. Acha Curcio, Cooperative Outreach Coordinator at Inclusiv