



\$tand By Me Negocios to support Latino business development in Delaware Program launches with a statewide networking event on Jan. 25 in Dover

\$tand By Me is launching a new program in January 2018 to support the startup and growth of Hispanic small businesses in Delaware.

As part of the launch, \$tand By Me Negocios (*negocios* means “businesses” in Spanish) will hold networking meetings in Kent, Sussex and New Castle counties in the first half of 2018. The first networking meeting will be held in Kent County on Jan. 25 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at El Pipil Restaurant in Dover, Delaware.

“\$tand By Me Negocios was developed to help Hispanic entrepreneurs achieve their dreams of owning a successful and thriving business,” said Maria Freudenthal, director for \$tand By Me Negocios. “The program will serve as a GPS for small business owners, by helping them to connect with the business resources they need to grow.

Hispanic entrepreneurs will work with a personal financial coach to establish and achieve their personal financial goals and business goals, learn about services available in Delaware for small-business owners, and get help qualifying for minority business certifications. The coach will also help business owners to improve their personal finances so they can improve their chances of qualifying for potential small business loans.

\$tand By Me — a financial empowerment program and joint project of the state of Delaware and the United Way of Delaware — provides Delawareans with financial coaching, information and ongoing support to help them take charge of their finances to increase their personal financial security. \$tand By Me Negocios was established as a partnership between \$tand By Me and the Delaware Hispanic Commission to build capacity for Latino businesses.

Nationally, Hispanics are opening businesses at a faster rate than other populations are despite language difficulties and limited credit history. Hispanic-owned businesses have grown 31.6 percent since 2012, more than double the growth rate of all businesses in the U.S. (13.8 percent), according to the Hispanics in Business 2017 study published by Geoscape and the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

The Hispanic share of new entrepreneurs represented 24 percent of all businesses, compared with 10 percent a decade ago — a 140 percent increase.

“With the continued growth of Hispanic businesses here in Delaware and across the nation, we wanted to expand \$tand By Me so that we could help remove barriers to business growth, particularly to access guidance, training and procurement opportunities,” said Jerry Hunter, chief operations officer at United Way of Delaware.

The Jan. 25 networking event targets budding entrepreneurs, existing Hispanic business owners, local business leaders and government officials. To follow will be meetings in Sussex County on March 29 and New Castle County on May 24. All meetings run from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

To learn more about \$tand By Me Negocios or upcoming networking meetings, go to standbymede.org/negocios.