

Pitch it! UI Extension enhances entrepreneurship workshops with Celebration Event

AT A GLANCE

Extension heightens adult entrepreneurship program experience by connecting current and potential entrepreneurs with business professionals.

The Situation

Canyon, Ada and Cassia counties have a combined 20.4 percent population of Hispanic/Latinos, and 16.1 percent of these counties combined population speaks a language other than English at home. For minority and underserved audiences, language and culture can be barriers for participation in Extension programs.

Through a National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant, University of Idaho Extension provided in-person, bilingual, culturally-appropriate entrepreneur workshops specifically for Latinas. By offering these programs, participants received much-needed entrepreneurship education and developed new skills. However, the opportunities to put these new skillsets into practice were lacking, and this void needed to be addressed.

Our Response

Two weeks following the completion of all adult entrepreneur workshops, Extension hosted a 3.5-hour Celebration Event for program participants. This Celebration Event included a professional pitch competition (judged in Spanish and English), professional networking with like-minded entrepreneurs, and



Entrepreneur workshop participants visit with local organizations and get new resources at the Celebration Event.

interaction with community organizations providing local information and resources for Idaho entrepreneurs.

These organizations covered a vast amount of information such as:

- Financial stability
- Start-up costs
- Self-empowerment
- Personal entrepreneurial experiences
- Building a business plan

Individuals who attended the in-person workshops in Nampa, Boise or Burley were personally invited to participate in the Celebration Event. The purpose of

this event was to take the knowledge gained and the skills attained in the entrepreneurship workshops and apply these learned skillsets in a pitch competition with qualified judges as well as to network with local organizations and entrepreneurial colleagues.

Program Outcomes

Entrepreneur workshop participants had a wide variety of business interest and expertise. By providing the Celebration Event, which included a judged pitch competition and professional networking with local organizations and other like-minded individuals, entrepreneurs were offered the opportunity to share their unique ideas, and receive valuable feedback while applying concepts taught within the workshops. The Celebration Event created the opportunity for potential entrepreneurs and even current entrepreneurs to practice real-life skills and learn from business professionals.

There were 33 individuals that attended the Celebration Event and 10 total pitch competition participants. Half of the program participants who took the Celebration Event post-evaluation took it in Spanish, indicating roughly half of the Celebration Event participants were Spanish-speakers. Almost 93 percent of Celebration Event evaluation respondents reported they were very satisfied with the event. Evaluations showed that 100 percent of respondents reported that organizations available and resources provided during the event were helpful. By offering quality resources, speakers with expertise and bilingual facilitators, participants received new opportunities to build confidence and increase personal and entrepreneurial skillsets. Extension entrepreneurship programming efforts increased education to underserved entrepreneurs and positively influenced communities throughout Idaho.

The Future

Continued collaboration between University of Idaho Extension and community organizations to provide

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entrepreneur workshops that address language and cultural barriers will result in increased capacity to educate underserved clientele. Two additional in-person entrepreneurship program sites are already scheduled in Owyhee and Canyon counties.



Entrepreneur workshop participant gives business pitch to bilingual judges during the Celebration Event pitch competition.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

The workshops and Celebration Event were supported by many community organizations and individuals.

These included:

- United State Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (Award No. 2016-69006-24831)
- Central District Health Department
- Centro de Comunidad y Justicia
- Children's Therapy Place
- Community Council of Idaho
- Idaho Central Credit Union
- Idaho Department of Labor
- La Panera Market #2
- La Poderosa/La Gran D Radio Station
- Maricela Rios, Joy Ignitor
- Southwest District Health
- Susie Rios, Burley Community Champion
- U.S. Small Business Administration
- Wells Fargo