

Jacqueline Franco Bio

Stony Brook SBDC

Jacqueline, a certified bilingual business advisor, brought to the SBDC over 20 years of remarkable managerial experience in financial institutions, as well as her project development, sales management, marketing, and consulting expertise in private, public, and cooperative organizations. She has a deep understanding and talent for aesthetics and organization through intentional design from her initial career enhanced by her strategic planning, sales and marketing skills in her professional performance in a wide range of industries. This background enables her to provide valuable guidance to business owners in how to improve the effectiveness of their processes; establish and meet their short-and long-term objectives in sales and growth; execute the lead generation marketing campaigns, strengthen the team engagement, and articulate all parts of the organization to ensure that they work together seamlessly. As a tireless advocate for the Hispanic community, she also develops activities and events designed to contribute to their economic development. Jacqueline has been honored numerous times over the years from economic development and civic organizations as well as government officials such as Senators, Town Supervisors, Legislators and Assembly persons for her efforts to facilitate Hispanic entrepreneurship development. She is passionate about her job and a terrific representative for the SBDC throughout Long Island; in Suffolk County about 15% of small businesses are owned by Latino entrepreneurs.

Jacqueline's education includes an ASA in Architecture & Engineering Drafting and Design – and a Master's degree in Business Administration. She completed a Post-graduate Degree in Marketing and a Certificate in Management Consulting from EAFIT, a private university in Medellin, Colombia.

Jacqueline's focus over the last 5 years has been Hispanic small business economic mobility with technical support to strengthen and drive responsible growth. Her advisement methodology provides a road map for success across all industry sectors and provides resources for sustainable growth. Since Jacqueline has begun her advising career with the Stony Brook SBDC over 5 years ago, there has been an ever increasing demand for her assistance.

The 2023 Joint Economic Committee brief, Hispanic Entrepreneurs and Businesses are Helping to Drive the Economy's Entrepreneurial Growth and Job Creation, discussed that 'nearly 1 in 4 new businesses are Hispanic owned.' The brief goes on to state that "the Hispanic-owned business starts increased by 34% compared to an increase of just 1% among non-Hispanic business owners."

Although the economic contributions of Hispanic businesses are extensive, and growing, they need Jacqueline's help. Hispanic entrepreneurs and Hispanic small business owners face limited access to capital and 'structural inequalities' that hinder them relative to their competitors. Those disparities in wealth, resources, and other outcomes result not only from discriminatory practices but also lack of confidence outside their ethnic communities. Jacqueline conducts her business advisement and workshops in Spanish, their native language, assisting the Hispanic entrepreneur to more fully comprehend what they need to do in order to sustain and grow their business. An important component is that while providing advisement, Jacqueline also assists in providing the confidence needed to move forward in their business growth. Through her continuing engagement with economic development and civic organizations throughout Long Island, Jacqueline has not only strengthened her reputation as an important resource to Hispanic entrepreneurs, but also the and the SBDC's reputation as such. Jacqueline

is not only a vital resource for the Hispanic entrepreneurs on Long Island, but she also has won numerous awards, accolades and recognition from Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, Hispanic Bar Association, Government officials such as Senators, Town Executives, Legislators and Assembly persons. Jacqueline was honored as a Hispanic Heritage Honoree in 2018 by NYS Senator Phil Boyle and in 2019 by NYS Senator Monica Martinez for her efforts to facilitate Hispanic entrepreneurship development. Jacqueline's programs have won funding from major banks for the last few years for her special projects such as the Hispanic MWBE and Procurement Bootcamp. Jacqueline also oversees the weekly Bilingual Newsletters and an español portion of the Stony Brook SBDC website.

Jacqueline has tremendous outreach events with Hispanic Entrepreneurs and extensive networking connections with local trade associations, consulates and government officials to support the growth of Minority Business Enterprises. She currently covers Nassau and Suffolk counties, yet has received invitations and is recognized as a resource in Brooklyn as well as on Long Island. Jacqueline has been an uplift for the entire Stony Brook SBDC by going above and beyond in hours spent on clients and support/networking events to advertise the center's services to the Hispanic community. She oversees the social media marketing content and promotion of the events, often creating the content, including for a radio podcast.

Jacqueline's most recent project was a multi-faceted, multi-month MWBE virtual training program to assist the Hispanic community in learning the benefits of MWBE certification to gain private and government contracts. The program included informational sessions on the benefits of MWBE certification in the local, state, federal and private sectors followed by application instruction and assistance. The final segment brought local entities to speak on how to do business with them; Brookhaven National Lab, Stony Brook University MWBE procurement, Business Network for Offshore Wind, and others. This multifaceted program involved recruiting presenters, panel members, and translators to speak in the native language (Spanish) of the target audience. Jacqueline develops and translates content for PowerPoint presentations and has conducted about 65 training programs in Spanish, including a workshop series for start-ups, one on Digital Transformation, an annual Business Conference, all of which attracted large audience turnouts.