

Puerto Rico Small Business and  
Technology Development Centers

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Helping businesses  
grow, innovate and export



**20**  
YEARS  
1997-2017

AMERICA'S  
**SBDC**  
TECHNOLOGY ACCREDITED  
PUERTO RICO  
INTER AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

# Partners Support



**MANUEL J. FERNÓS, ESQ.**  
President  
Inter American University  
of Puerto Rico



**YVETTE COLLAZO**  
SBA District Director  
Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands

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The Puerto Rico Small Business and Technology Development Centers funding partners are the Inter American University of Puerto Rico and the Small Business Administration (SBA) with enablers, such as the Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company (PRIDCO), Caguas Municipality, and the Department of Agriculture of Puerto Rico.

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# Executive Director's Message

**SINCE 1997**, the Puerto Rico Small Business and Technology Development Centers, hosted by the Inter American University of Puerto Rico through a cooperative agreement with the Small Business Administration (SBA), has developed Certified Business Consultants to offer services to support small business startups and established businesses to grow, innovate and export. The Puerto Rico SBTDC is part of a network of 63 Programs nationwide and one with the value added of a Technology Accreditation for small business innovation since 2006.

The PR SBTDC's Mission is "To provide integrated multidisciplinary business solutions for Small Businesses within a competitive, innovative and technological environment." The Strategic Plan is aimed at supporting the Mission and the program's Vision to "Be world class leader's supporting small business growth in Puerto Rico." To achieve the mission and effectively deliver quality business solutions through counseling, training and mentoring, our program has engaged in the Baldrige Journey applying the Malcolm Baldrige Excellence Criteria. Through a strategic alliance with the Quality Texas Foundation as the designated liaison to the National Baldrige Program, the PR SBTDC has successfully completed two self-study applications

to gain Baldrige quality feedback to improve the SBTDC. This process has benefited the program by enriching our Strategic Plan to focus on creating a customer-focused efficient organization to increase local economic development.

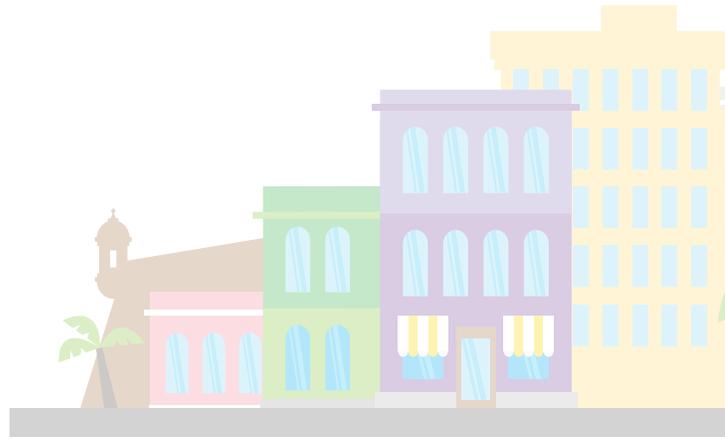
Services were provided through a team of highly qualified, certified professionals, engaged and committed to support clients to be resilient and overcome any challenges to achieve their business goals. The following report summarizes efforts and initiatives completed by the PR SBTDC for the fiscal year from October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016.

2017 marks the 20th anniversary of Puerto Rico Small Business and Technology Development Center's commitment with the entrepreneurial community, and last year was more than a year that celebrated past accomplishments, instead our collaborators focused on raising the bar of excellence in business solutions.



*Carmen Martí*  
Carmen Martí

# Economic Impact



	2016	(TOTAL)	
	5,035	43,412	Jobs created & saved
	\$3,761	\$4,846	Cost of a new job
	\$210 MILLIONS	\$669 MILLIONS	Sales increase & saved
	\$48 MILLIONS	\$918 MILLIONS	New capital
	97%	95%	Client satisfaction
	\$15	\$17	Financial leverage per dollar invested
	\$5.3 MILLIONS	\$51 MILLIONS	Government tax revenues gained

Source: 2016 ASBDC National Economic Impact Report

## Counseling & Training Services

**4,074** clients, **1,880** women, served through **35,957** hours, **156** new businesses achieved, assisted by **40** certified specialists.

**\$1.5 billion** **2010 - 2016**  
**Economic Impact for Puerto Rico**

The Puerto Rico SBTDC, serves clients by building their entrepreneur and business capabilities providing updated, effective business tools and solutions. To improve the knowledge of entrepreneurs, the program offered **125** training events through training seminars and workshops to **2,516** attendees amounting to **18,933** training hours. The attendee profile was **99%** minority, **46%** women and **3%** veteran.



# Global Competitiveness Baldrige Program

**THE PUERTO RICO SBTDC** created the Global Competitiveness Alliance in 2011 with state and private partners such as the Department of Economic Development, Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company (PRIDCO), SBA, Manufacturers Association (PRMA), PR Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Marketing & Food Industry, PR Products Association, American Society for Quality (ASQ), PR Economic Development Bank (EDB), United Retailers Association (CUD) and the Inter

American University of PR (IAUPR) with the Puerto Rico SBTDC. As part of the Alliance, the Puerto Rico SBTDC launched in 2016 the 6th Annual Baldrige Educational Program for Small Businesses with workshops on Organizational Profile and Leadership Criteria. This program is a stepping stone to drive high performing small businesses to the next level. National Baldrige Examiners and Awardees were invited to each criteria topic to share their learning experiences.





# InterEmpresa Program

THE PUERTO RICO SBTDC developed the InterEmpresa Program to increase the participation of faculty and students in entrepreneurship. The Internship module exposes students in related fields to real case studies while providing experiential learning. Students work on developing business plans, human resource plans, financial projections, market research, and other solutions with the assistance

of a Certified Business Consultant at the SBTDC.

By engaging students to participate in our counseling processes as interns through the InterEmpresa Program, they learn firsthand of the challenges and commitments of starting a business. This also serves to encourage them to pursue their goals having more knowledge of their business competencies.



# Empowering Women

**THE WOMEN START-UP** supplemental program “Ser Empresaria” “Be entrepreneur” was designed to foster women entrepreneurship, by providing training and technical counseling to women-owned nascent businesses. In collaboration with micro-lenders such as COFFEC, the program was simultaneously offering services in the Arecibo, Ponce, San Germán and San Juan SBTDCs. The women in the program completed twelve hours course with the following topics: Leadership and Motivation, Business Planning, Financing Alternatives, Regulations, and others.



The program reached **353** participants islandwide and **273** attendees.





# Agri-Business Program Farmers, Ranchers & Fishermen

**THE AGRI-BUSINESS PROGRAM OFFERS** entrepreneurship and business education to strengthen competitiveness of the agriculture sector to 1,600 attendees through our network. To expand the scope, last year fishermen were included in the program. The training topics included financial management responsibilities and how to execute their small business goals, the industry and the marketplace. The basics of financial management were presented. For exam-

ple, a case study and team-based assignments were provided to strengthen attendees' financial understanding. They learned how to make better informed decisions by analyzing and extracting data from key financial statements. Through partnerships with the USDA, Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture, FIDA and the agricultural extension agents, the SBTDC addressed the needs of young entrepreneurs who plan to commercialize their agriculture production.

# Innovation and Commercialization

**THE PUERTO RICO SBTDC** collaborated with local partners, such as, the Puerto Rico Science, Research and Technology Trust, PR TEC and INTECO (tech incubators), Guayacán Group (business venture program), Parallel 18 (tech business accelerator) and Neeuko (collaborative-maker-space), to raise awareness in small business innovation. Collaborators communicated regularly to refer cases and find opportunities to leverage resources.

The PR SBTDC collaborated with the PR Science Trust and a team of former NSF, NIH and USDA Pro-

gram Managers to assist clients. Regular outreach presentations were offered for engineers and science departments of different universities, in collaboration with the PR Science Trust, hosting four SBIR and STTR Writing Workshops with former NSF, NIH and USDA Program Officers. The PR SBTDC participated, mentoring clients to support with federal registrations, commercialization plans, grants-writing and match-making opportunities between researchers and small businesses to increase the submissions and quality of proposals for the SBIR Program.



# Fostering Business Exports

**THE INTERNATIONAL** Trade Center of the Puerto Rico SBTDC has developed network capabilities to empower all SBTDC consultants to build export ready clients.

The Puerto Rico SBTDC is an ExIm Bank City/State Partner since 2001. This relationship that had been key to facilitate ExIm Bank’s financial tools to the export community extends credit for international buyers and finance export operations. To support small business exports, several educational activities were offered, such as, the Riddle of the Exporter Course, designed to facilitate the client through the complete process of exporting a hypothetical product. Another event was the How to Export Services Seminar with guest speakers from the McConnell Valdés Law Firm, Department of Economic Development and Commerce, ExIm Bank, PRIDCO and the SBA District Office. A total of 50 entrepreneurs participated in the Export Seminar.



This year the Puerto Rico SBTDC has provided **226** international trade counseling sessions, resulting in an increase in export sales reaching **\$8,073,338** with **721** jobs retained.





## 2016 Small Business Summit

**CELEBRATING SMALL BUSINESS WEEK**, in April 2016, the Puerto Rico SBTDC hosted the summit “Añada Valor a su Negocio” “Add value to your business” Event. It included networking and presentations in areas such as Valorization, Financial, and Digital Marketing concepts and a bankers round-table about financing opportunities. Among the panel participants were Commercial Credit Vice Presidents of Banco Popular, First Bank, CooPaca, Coffec and SBA. Also, eighteen (18) SBTDC entrepreneurs were recognized during the activity for their outstanding performance as small business leaders.



# Awards Ceremony Small Business Week

**IN 2016**, five clients of Puerto Rico SBTDC were awarded by SBA at their Annual Awards Ceremony.

Entrepreneurs recognized included:

- FERNANDO RODRÍGUEZ - SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR
- EDGARDO VEGA - CONTRACTOR OF THE YEAR
- FA. MONTERO - FAMILY OWNED BUSINESS OF THE YEAR
- DR. MARISOL SANTIAGO - WOMEN OWNED BUSINESS OF THE YEAR
- JAN CARLOS CRUZ - YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

Their stories are summarized at the success stories section in the following pages of this report.



# Small Business Person of the Year

## Fernando Rodríguez

### Prime Janitorial Services, Ponce

**FERNANDO RODRÍGUEZ** has been a Ponce SBTDC client since 1998, seeking for advice in strategic management, financial and international trade seminars. This has provided him with needed business skills to grow his business. He has also served as speaker at Puerto Rico SBTDC activities sharing his testimonial to young entrepreneurs about his success and challenges faced during his business venture. With over 26 years of professional experience in the cleaning and maintenance industry, Fernando founded the business at the age of 18, when he was just beginning college. His father, who used to be an employee of a maintenance Company, was his source of inspiration to develop the business. He learned the negotiation skills from his father, passion for business from his grandfather, and composure and strength from his mother. His limited resour-

es of personnel and transportation did not interfere with his dream. He visited prospect clients as well as offered the services himself and worked on the administrative business aspects. In 1998, Prime Janitorial was incorporated and started operations in 1999 with only a \$50,000 capital investment obtained with the support of his uncle. In 2005, he was awarded Young Entrepreneur of the Year by SBA. Fernando is a visionary entrepreneur with technical knowledge as Certified Building Service Executive, and with the administrative knowledge with an MBA in Management. Fernando Rodríguez has been participant of the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program and is an active member of the Advisory Board of Puerto Rico SBTDC. At present, Fernando Rodríguez is the President of the Manufacturer's Association and the Chamber of Commerce of the Southern Region.





## Family Owned Business of the Year Sofrito Montero, Juana Díaz

**BEST SEASONING GROUP** is the parent company of Sofrito Montero trademark, a family owned business established in 1990. Efraín Montero Ruiz and Leticia Martínez, founders of Best Seasoning Group were aware of market opportunities for a home-made “sofrito” as well as the challenging economic situation. The business began as an artisan production home-based business manufacturing “sofrito” for their family, neighbors and friends. Sofrito Montero has experienced an increased demand of its products. This rise in sales has created the need to expand its manufacturing, production and warehouse facilities to accommodate goods. The Company decided to request a SBA loan and relocate its facilities at the Industrial Park located at Juana Díaz. Since then, Efraín Montero Arroyo, the founder’s son, has been involved in the company’s management as

President. His focus to preserve its family tradition based on healthy vegetables, herbs, ingredients is constant. Sofrito Montero has transformed itself, becoming a leading brand of sofrito in the Puerto Rican market with an operation that have grown to become a full manufacturing Company with 11,500 square feet facility, 15 direct and 50 indirect jobs. At present, the company manufactures 50 different products. Recently, it released a full line of powder seasonings (adobos) as well as several co-packing projects involving a variety of soups, BBQ Sauces, hot sauces and seasoning concentrates. The Ponce SBDC staff has assisted the client during the preparation for its financial proposal. The client is also completing the Hub Zone Certification to identify federal government bidding opportunities. This strategy will support its future market expansion.



“We are grateful for all the assistance received that has helped us to achieve our dream. If you are starting a business, start with the SBDC. They can guide you through the business planning process”

**JAN CARLOS CRUZ**

## Young Entrepreneur of the Year Jan Carlos Cruz Intermezzo Caffè, San Juan

**JAN CARLOS CRUZ** has been working in family owned businesses since he was 12 years old as a baker, pastry cook, assistant chef, service clerk, and floor manager and recently before opening his own business, general manager. In 2013, he opened the cafeteria of The Conservatory of Music of Puerto Rico. Being a musician himself, Jan Carlos thought that the Conservatory was the perfect site to start a successful business with ambition to grow and take the concept to other level by opening in other universities. One of the many innovations Jan Carlos made by creating this concept was that he established a 20 feet wagon strategically, able to handle a community of 2,200 people inside the Conservatory, and even he has managed to get to some people around the community of Miramar outside the Uni-

versity Campus that actually visits on a daily basis his business. Another big opportunity in his market was to arrange with the University to hire 75% of his employees out of their students. He filled three job positions with students recommended from the office of the Dean for student affairs. InterMezzo offers in the 20 feet wagon a menu from criollo food as stewed chicken with rice and beans to a variety of sandwiches, custom made pizzas and calzone, homemade desserts, breakfast, soups and frappe, all day long. Intermezzo Caffè also stands up as a specialty coffee shop in the Miramar area where you can get a 100% real Puerto Rican coffee with flavors from trained baristas. With the advice of San Juan SBTDC, Jan has invested in establishing the Intermezzo concept to the next level.

# Federal Contractor of the Year

## Edgardo Vega

### Ed Contractors, Carolina

**ED INTERIOR CONTRACTORS INC.** was established in 2004. At that time, the Puerto Rico SBTDC helped him with the business plan and loan packaging. As part of new business strategies the company changed its name to ED Contractors Inc.

The company is managed by Edgardo Vega, who has been in the commercial industry for over fifteen years with extensive experience on site supervision of construction and project management. Edgardo is a civil engineer technician with a Bachelor Degree in Construction Management. Also, he has continued education on PMP from the University of New Orleans. ED Contractors Inc. provides engineers, estimators, electricians, construction managers, business professionals and skilled tradesmen experience on each area of construction and design. The company perform commercial and industrial building construction, poured concrete foundation, masonry contractors, painting and wall covering, plumbing, heating and air conditioning, flooring contractors.

The Fajardo SBTDC had assisted Edgardo in the preparation of the business plan, sales forecasting, financial proposal, and forms for an SBA Express Loan. After the approval of the loan, marketing strategies were implemented. ED Contractors Inc. has experienced an extraordinary growth obtaining multiple federal contract awards.



**8<sup>A</sup> CERTIFICATION**  
 Edgardo Vega has the 8a certification and the SBD Small business disadvantage to acquire benefits contracting with federal agencies.



## Women Entrepreneur of the Year Marisol Santiago Grafed Solutions, Villalba

**DOCTOR MARISOL SANTIAGO CINTRÓN** is the president of Grafed Solutions Corp., a pharmacy known for being of the community, specialized with a “Clean Room” and an infusion center that began in December 2009. This new concept is different from traditional pharmacies. These treatments are used on patients with rare chronic conditions and are implemented by injections, infusions and orally. Marisol Santiago has a Doctorate Degree in Pharmacy and vast experience in the pharmaceutical area since she began as a Regent Pharmaceutical at the State Insurance Fund Corporation in 2007. The pharmacy has Pharmacists, Medicine Doctors, Medical Technologists, Pharmacy Technicians, Registered Nurses, Project Manager, an Accountant, Attorney, Sales and Marketing Operator and a Medical Sales Representative. Grafed Solutions Corp. opened in 2010

in the town of Villalba. The corporation received a loan for the purchase of equipment and inventory. In 2011 Grafed Pharmacy Solutions opened its Specialty Pharmacy division making it the first of its kind in the Central South area of Puerto Rico to offer this service. By the end of 2011, Dr. Santiago added 3 new jobs to its workforce with an assistant pharmacist, pharmacy technician, and an assistant manager. In 2015, Dr. Santiago visited the Ponce SBTDC Service Center requesting a proposal line of credit for the purchase of specialized drugs. The proposal was approved by the bank. The Company has expanded its services to its Infusion Team by obtaining contracts with Pharmaceutical Institutions of limited distribution for Infusion medications. This has allowed Grafed Infusion Center to become one of twenty one Infusion Centers in Puerto Rico to provide such services.

# Caribe Paint, Guaynabo

## Milton Ayala and Jessica Costa

**MILTON AYALA** is a young entrepreneur, active military, veteran and a professional accountant. Milton and his wife Jessica Costa acquired CARIBE PAINTS CORP more than five years ago. The couple has worked hard to sustain their brand by developing new products and servicing private labels. CARIBE PAINTS CORP. is dedicated to manufacturing, distribution, wholesale and retail sales of sealants, paints and accessories by creating a number of innovative products focused on quality eco-friendly designs for resource conservation. Target customers include the private sector, government and individuals. Located close to a principal road in Caguas, they wanted to acquire a place that would offer a better exposure to Puerto Rico's market.

In 2014, Milton was referred to the Caguas SBTDC by SBA Officer for assistance with their business plan and financing. Immediately, the consultant began attending several seminars offered by the SBTDC.

The Caguas team offered counseling services in operations, finance and a legal agreement with his landlord. This assistance provided the couple with information and strategies used for negotiations and the development of tenant's agreement to restructure its operations. This included manufacturing facilities for sales and wholesale distribution and a retail facility relocated at a commercial facility in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico. As a result of this decision, the company has tripled sales, while reducing its rent cost by 60%.



“By attending these seminars, I have acquired vast business knowledge and competencies to examine my company and apply those business best practices.”

**MILTON AYALA**

“I want to thank the Fajardo staff for all their professionalism, knowledge and support during our business transformation and growth phase”.

**ROBERT LAMSON**



## Catamaran Getaway, Fajardo

### Robert Lamson

**ROBERT D. LAMSON JR.** is a third generation Captain with over 25 years of experience in marine industry. He has been the sole proprietor of D/B/A Catamaran Getaway since June 2005 and with his wife are responsible for the business, including advertising, booking and reservations, customer service, government permits, USCG inspections and food and beverage. Robert Lamson is a graduate from Chapman School in South Florida and also has two years in Business Administration Program from the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Fajardo Campus. He is a 16 year Licensed Merchant Marine Officer, 100-ton Master Captain License, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid Training, Reefs Marine Biology courses and PRTC. In 2005, Getaway received its first boat financed through a commercial loan guaranteed by SBA. Since 2005,

the business provides services of snorkeling, sailing and beach tours from Fajardo, to the Virgin Islands and Culebra Island. Getaway provides trips from around the world on an unforgettable experience to enjoy Puerto Rico pristine beaches and crystal clear waters. Guests onboard can enjoy various amenities, including a picnic style deli buffet, tropical beverages and a variety of sodas. Fajardo SBTDC assisted Robert Lamson in the development of its loan package preparation to buy its second boat “On the Way”, to complement his first boat “Getaway”. In 2016, the business received a SBA 7a loan. Two jobs were retained and two more jobs were created. Getaway has received Certificates of Excellence TripAdvisor in 2016 and 2015 and Promotional Endorsements for Tour Businesses and Touristic Activities by the Puerto Rico Tourism Company.

# Cold Stone Creamery, Mayagüez

## Nydia Martínez

**NYDIA MARTÍNEZ** identified an opportunity to purchase an ice cream franchise store with more than 1,000 stores around the world. In 2014, as Chairwoman of GBP Creamery, Inc. she bought a Cold Stone Creamery franchise located in Mayagüez. Ms. Martínez's daughter worked at the store for the past five years as a manager, growing its business potential by applying sound business practices and implementing marketing strategies. With her experience as a Certified Public Accountant and her academic knowledge as a Ph.D. in Business Administration, Martínez saw that it was an excellent combination of a great product that never gets old and a great stable business. To achieve her goal to buy the franchise,

Ms. Martínez decided to visit the San Germán SBTDC Center in 2014, to receive consulting services for the financial proposal. The San Germán Technology Consultant, provided assistance and feedback with the financing process and their business plan. The bank approved the loan for the project. Sales rapidly started to grow during the first quarter. Today, the business has grown to nine (9) employees. Cold Stone Creamery in Mayagüez sells ice creams of a variety of flavors and combinations, waffles and ice cream cakes produced daily with fresh ingredients. It also offers milkshakes, smoothies and frappes. The owners expect to grow the business by acquiring other stores in the future.





“Thanks to the SBTDC team for the orientation and assistance during the process of starting my business. Counselors were an essential guide and actually they are helping to grow my business. They had a great commitment with clients”

**EFRAÍN RIVERA**

## LabChems Corp., Mayagüez

### Efraín Rivera

**EFRAÍN RIVERA** had been displaced of his job in the medical devices industry. He immediately started LabChems Corp in 2009 and began as a single service corporation, with the world in mind as the canvas for growth and development of the Laboratory Support Service for the Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Industry. As time passed, it evolved to a LCC is a Consulting Firm, Staffing Organization and Lab Service Support provider. The combination of these services is what has driven LCC grow and define its future. Thanks to more than 20 years of experience working within the Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Industry of LCC's President & CEO Efraín Rivera, a Chemical Scientist, the company has been experiencing big steps to success. With colleague recognition and customers' excellent response to its services, LCC experienced a 400% growth on the first year after the acquisition of major capital projects. His vision,

knowledge and sense for the industry's needs are the platform for which the company was founded. Nowadays, its success has made the company grow to help other industries as well and to broaden its target market. LabChems Corp. provides the right resources and services for all staffing needs in the areas of Engineering and Validation Services, Human Resources Staffing and Lab Support and Testing. Laboratory services include: microbiology, analytical chemistry and environmental testing, stability testing, on site sampling, analysis of raw materials and finished goods, method development and validation, method transfer, laboratory and manufacturing validation and investigations. Today the Company has over 50 employees, located at BDTC Building - Guanajibo Research Innovation Park in Mayagüez. The San Germán SBTDC offered counseling services in the areas of business planning, accounting systems and different trainings.

# Playa Húcares Service Station & Supermarket, Naguabo

## Elvis López

**PLAYA HÚCARES SERVICE STATION & Supermarket** sells regular, premium and diesel fuel, and provides services for fluid replenishment, air for tires and vehicle tools. The gas station also has a convenient store that sells products such as: fresh baked bread, pastries, frozen meats, soft drinks, propane gas and ice, oil and fuel for marine vehicles and fishing tools, among others. Elvis López identified an opportunity of starting his own business with a gas station and supermarket for the Playa Húcares and surrounding communities. With new accessible restaurants, spas, and tourism expanding in the region; Elvis recognized

the client need of a neighborhood gas station in the area. When compared to potential competitors, the nearest gas station is between 3 to 4 miles from this location. Playa Húcares Service Station & Supermarket provides 24 hours services during 7 days a week, focusing on its customer service. As an electrical engineer and contractor, Mr. López reduced his monthly electricity bills to \$800 by changing to green energy and reducing operational costs. With an enthusiastic personality that characterizes Elvis López, he continuously evaluates clients' needs to offer the best service and products to retain customer satisfaction.

“I had no business experience, but I knew that if I was successful, my family would be successful as well. In addition, it is necessary to be organized and have clear priorities. Through the help of the SBTDC consultants, we obtained our financing goal to begin our dream. We are highly grateful of the support. This opportunity is priceless”

**EFRAÍN LÓPEZ FIGUEROA**





## Vaquería Martínez, Vega Baja Manuel Martínez and Wanda Loarte

**MANUEL MARTÍNEZ ARBONA** and wife, Wanda I. Loarte Fontán, are owners of an agriculture operation dedicated to the production of milk at the Municipality of Vega Baja, Puerto Rico. In 2001, the Arecibo SBTDC assisted the couple in the preparation of the financing proposal. In 2015, Manuel Martínez decided to refinance his existent loan with the purpose to improve his cash flow and ensure business growth. They consequently visited the Arecibo SBTDC Center and requested assistance in the preparation of an updated versions of its financial proposal, business plans and strategies.

The SBTDC staff reviewed the terms and conditions of the loan and potential cost related for refinanc-

ing terms for the medium versus a long-term period. Also, the team identified growth business strategies for its agricultural operations. As a result, Vaquería Martínez was able to re-finance. The reduced interest cost allowed the purchase of additional assets and growth opportunities for Martínez's business. The farmer increased the number cows, improved current structure, and purchased new equipment. The economic impact reflected better production and sales of milk. This strategy has enabled the retention of seven (7) employees. This family owned business has received a succession process trainings for a successful business model continuance of a future generation of farmers.

# Septix, Ponce

## Gary and Lymaris Santos

### SBA Family Owned Business 2012

**WITH OVER 40 YEARS** of experience in the waste and portable toilet service industries, Septix has become the Island most trusted service company providing portable toilet, restroom trailers, roll off containers, septic tank cleaning, grease trap cleaning and sales and plumbing services. The owners Gary and Lymaris Santos have the perfect management combination. Gary grew up in the waste service and portable toilet industries. Lymaris, Gary's wife, is an accountant by profession with vast experience in business administration. Together with an excellent

administrative staff and service technicians have taken Septix to the next level.

The whole team works hand in hand to stay on top of its competition. Construction sites require portable toilets and roll off container services. Septix has them both for an special event at home or outdoors this company has variety of restroom trailers, from a basic trailer to a black tie unit. Septix provide customers, timely service. Leadership always keeps in mind our environment, customers, and the community. Septix has been a Ponce SBTDC client since 2011.



“Our customers come for all kinds of reasons. Some of them have a broken washer or dryer, some others want to save water and/or electricity and many of them have no desire to make them work”.

**GERÓNIMO  
GUEVARA**



## Lavanderiapr.com, San Juan Gerónimo Guevara

**GERÓNIMO GUEVARA** wanted to offer a new type of laundromat to his future clients: “A laundromat with forefront technology and services”. His job-related experience is in marketing and advertising. This explains his business name, Lavanderiapr.com, and the fact that its web page preceded the business opening. Gerónimo hired a company to study the market needs and to determine his opportunities of success. The location selected on Loiza Street has a large number of elders, lots of condominiums and a high student population. That coupled with the economic slowdown and high electricity costs were factors taken into consideration before making his final decision. Most laundromats around the area are small, rundown and most with old and obsolete equipment. Gerónimo prepared a preliminary business plan presented during the counseling session. The San Juan SBTDC reviewed the plan and edited as needed.

The loan proposal was prepared with the financial projections and the SBA 7A loan package was sub-

mitted. The loan was approved and Guevara began the process of opening his business. The road before opening his business was rough, bumpy and full of unpleasant surprises. However, he has no regrets. The general community welcoming has been excellent.

Lavanderiapr.com has also some commercial customers: hotels, spas and restaurants. Lavanderiapr.com facilities are modern and spacious. There is a reading area, a kids play area, a coffee bar, free Wi-Fi and entertainment machines. To make its customers job easier there is a soap, bleach and detergent dispenser, change and soft drink machines in addition to parking behind a building next door. The laundry has 14 dryers, washing machines of 20 pounds loads and seven others of 40 pounds loads. Washing machines dispense both hot and cold water. The company seeks to be ecofriendly so its equipment consumes less water and electricity. Dryers heat faster and use less gas. All washer machines run with filtered rainwater.

# Ana Camila Laboratory, Salinas Johanny Ortiz & William Martínez

**ANA CAMILA LABORATORY** is a business created by Johanny Ortiz and William Martínez. The clinical laboratory was opened in 2014 to satisfy the population at the municipality of Salinas. The marriage pursued their dream to establish a clinical laboratory. Ana Camila Clinical Laboratory is located at the edge of the urban area of Salinas, less than five minutes from the town square and less than 10 minutes from the principal highway in Puerto Rico. This facility is centrally located with respect to the most important transportation routes. Its offices are located just minutes from dozens of medical offices and other health services. The laboratory provides testing services: hematology, chemistry, doping, by reference bacteriology, urinalysis, parasitology and serology to meet

the most common requirements of the population and doctors. The lab offers its services to patients who seek it either entering or collecting personally to the laboratory results for “serve-lab”, or delivery, according to the public or doctors. There will be a delivery service and sampling results at home according to patients needs. For example, for elderly in centers, disabled and those feverish condition within the service area. At the Caguas SBTDC, technical consulting assistance was provided on business models, business planning, credit analysis, financial projections and financial package. As a result the business was able to create 4 direct jobs and 2 indirect jobs. As they grow, services are ongoing to so as to develop marketing strategies and grow the business.



“We always had the dream of become entrepreneurs, but we didn’t know how we’re going to achieve it; how it could be realized. The Caguas SBTDC helped us in the difficult process to become entrepreneurs. Through courses and personalized advice, guided us; the dream came true.”

**JOHANNY ORTIZ**



# Advisory Board

**THE PUERTO RICO SBTDC** invites partners and leaders to the Advisory Board. This provides an effective mechanism to gain feedback, perspective and to develop strategies for the vitality of the business sector. Board meetings are held bi-annually as part of the strategic planning process of the SBTDC. The majority of members and all past Presidents have been leaders in the industry and in society. For example, current President Oscar Quiles, employs 350 people in Pentaq Manufacturing and through federal procurement contracts has secured jobs for other small businesses in the Southwest Region.

This Advisory Board includes business owners, and representatives of different institutions such as SBA, the Inter American University of PR, Trade Associations, Government, Regional Initiatives of municipalities and the banking sector, among others.

# Regional Efforts

The Puerto Rico SBTDC's regional directors periodically lead special meetings or “bankers roundtables” with community and bankers to increase business solutions and access to capital.



# Islandwide Presence

**CENTERS LOCATED** in the Inter American University of Puerto Rico campuses include the San Juan, San Germán, Ponce, Fajardo, and Arecibo SBTDC. Additional service centers were added through strategic partnerships including the Caguas SBTDC in partnership with the Municipality and the International Trade Center (ITC) and the Center for Innovation and Technology (CIT) supported by the Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company (PRIDCO) to provide specialized services throughout Puerto Rico.



## Star Performer

2016

**Félix Sáez**  
Business & Technology  
Consultant  
San Germán SBTDC





During the past 20 years, the Puerto Rico SBTDC certified business consultants has been serving start-ups, established and growth companies, providing high quality business solutions to transform and develop a strong entrepreneurial economy.



## REGIONAL CENTERS

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### ARECIBO REGIONAL OFFICE

Inter American University  
PO Box 4050  
Arecibo, PR 00614-4050  
Tel. 787-878-5269

### CAGUAS REGIONAL CENTER

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Caguas Municipality  
PR 00725  
Tel. 787-744-8833 ext. 2909

### FAJARDO REGIONAL OFFICE

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PO Box 7003  
Fajardo, PR 00738  
Tel. 787-863-2390 ext. 2360

### SAN GERMÁN REGIONAL OFFICE

Inter American University  
PO Box 5100  
San Germán, PR 00683-5100  
Tel. 787-264-1912 ext. 7717

### SAN JUAN REGIONAL OFFICE

Union Plaza Building, Suite 1013  
416 Ponce de León Avenue  
Hato Rey, PR 00918  
Tel. 787-763-5108

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Tel. 787-842-0841

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### CENTER FOR INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

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### BUSINESS EXCELLENCE ACCELERATION PROGRAM

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Río Piedras, PR 00926  
Tel. 787-250-1912 ext.2221



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