

Community Navigator Pilot Program: December 2023 Update*

The SBA Community Navigator Pilot Program, a program funded through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, was designed to advance equity through its priority focus on socially and economically disadvantaged small businesses, rural communities, and small businesses owned by women and veterans. All 50 states and Puerto Rico received services during the two-year pilot program.

In November 2021, the SBA awarded \$100 million in grant funding to 51 grantee “hub” organizations that are working to close resource gaps for U.S. small businesses in underserved and under-represented small business communities across America. Since the pilot’s launch, SBA grantees (“hubs”) have established hundreds of trusted and hyperlocal community navigator organizations (“spokes”) to connect directly with the smallest of the small businesses.

The hubs are positioned at the center of a network of the spoke organizations that deploy trusted community champions to work with small businesses that most likely have not received SBA services before or do not know about SBA or SBA Resource Partners. These networks leverage the business and operational expertise of the central hub organization and the community credibility, connectivity and trust of spoke organizations to meet our small businesses where they are, both in rural and urban America.

Throughout this pilot program, this diverse national ecosystem of hubs and spokes delivered free community navigator small business services to increase awareness of, connection to, and participation in, programs of the SBA as well as other federal, state, and local resources.

**This report is based on data covering the first 21 months of the program, from December 1, 2021, through August 31, 2023. Grantees are currently in the process of submitting data for the period of September 1, 2023, through November 30, 2023, due in January 2024.*

Program Data and Results

Topline Data through August 31, 2023⁽¹⁾

- Total Business Owners Trained: 351,076
- Unique Counseling Clients: 33,389
- Total Hours of 1:1 Counseling: 175,387
- Total Funding⁽²⁾ Approved: \$270.79M to 3,393 clients.
- Median Approved Funding per funding unit: \$5,200
- Services in over 40 Languages

1. Data was pulled on October 11, 2023
2. Funding is inclusive of loans and grants

Racial and Ethnic Breakdown of Small Business Clients Served⁽³⁾

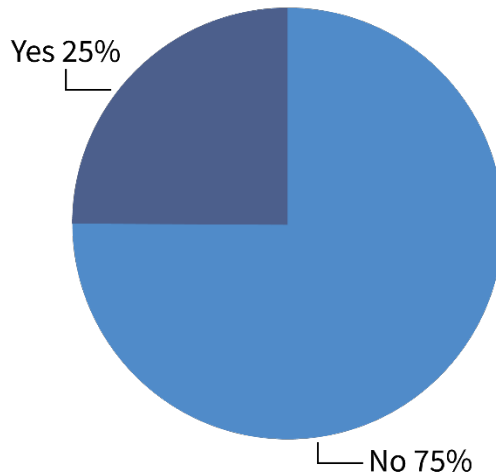
Target group	CNPP Progress to Date
Race	77% submitted info⁽⁴⁾
Black	42.9% ⁽⁵⁾
Asian	9.8% ⁽⁵⁾
Native American	5.9% ⁽⁵⁾
Ethnicity	70% submitted info⁽⁴⁾
Hispanic/Latino	27.6% ⁽⁵⁾
Disability	74% submitted info⁽⁴⁾
With a Disability	8.3% ⁽⁵⁾
Military Status	74% submitted info⁽⁴⁾
Veteran or Military, or their Spouse	8.2% ⁽⁵⁾

The above table indicates a breakdown of Community Navigators counseling clients across small business ecosystems. Demographic data is optional to provide but encouraged. 80% of Community Navigators clients fall into the category of “underserved and/or underrepresented.”

3. Community Navigators Progress to Date data: December 1, 2022 – August 31, 2023.
4. Indicates the percentage of small business owners served that elected to share the information
5. Indicates what percentage of the respondents (those sharing demographic information) reported in this category

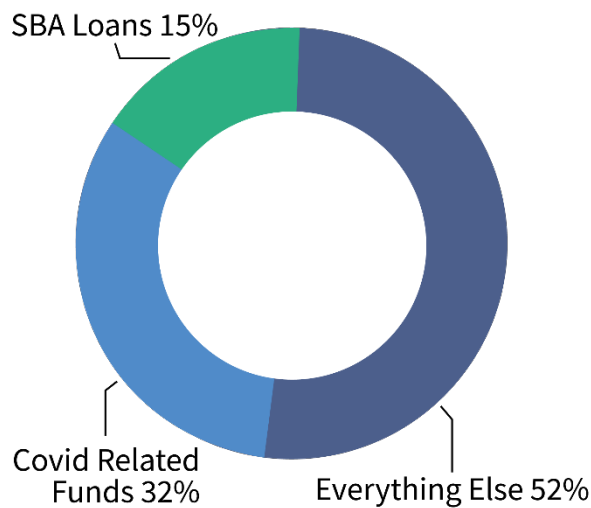
Additional Insights from Community Navigators Data

“Did you receive SBA Services in Past 5 Years?”



Above: The Community Navigators asked their small business clients if they had received services from the SBA in the Past 5 years, and 3/4 of respondents said they had not.

Breakdown of Approved Funding



Above: Counseling and mentorship from the Community Navigators help small business owners and entrepreneurs to access loan and grant capital from a variety of sources to help them access capital, including pandemic funding, SBA loan products, and other governmental and private capital sources.

Community Navigator Notes from the Ground

SBA Community Navigators are delivering critical small business assistance across the country, with an emphasis on relevant, actionable tools and solutions that are presented in culturally competent, inclusive, and accessible ways:

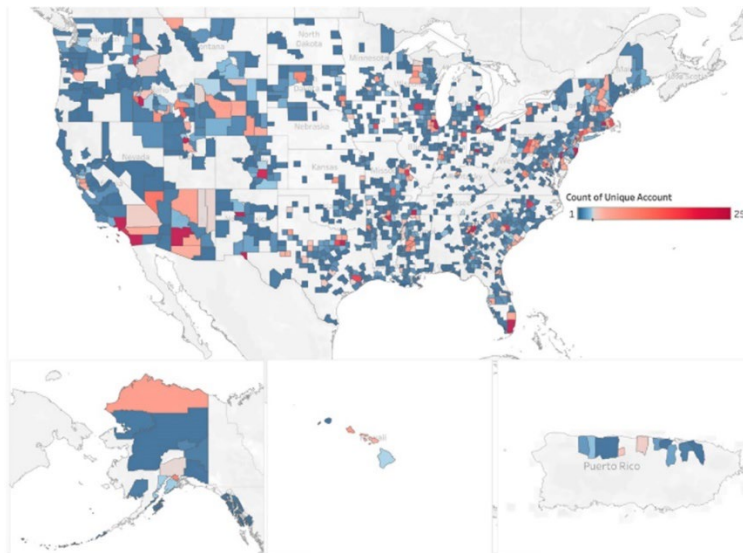
- ✓ In response to supply chain disruptions, the **U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce** (Tier 1 Hub) and its Community Navigator network delivered “How to Overcome Supply Chain Issues, Today and Tomorrow.”
- ✓ Through the **Local Initiatives Support Corporation** (Tier 1 Hub), childcare businesses in Phoenix applied for childcare stabilization grants offered by the State of Arizona.
- ✓ The **U.S. Black Chambers** (Tier 1 Hub) held an event with SBA and the U.S. Treasury highlighting federal procurement and contracting opportunities for underserved businesses.
- ✓ The **Florida SBDC at Florida International University** (Tier 2 Hub) conducted curated trainings—both in English and Spanish—on federal certification readiness and procurement opportunities.

With 51 hubs and over 400 spokes, the Community Navigators are undertaking a wide array of activities across the country. Below are additional examples of recent and distinguished work on the ground from other Community Navigator grantees.

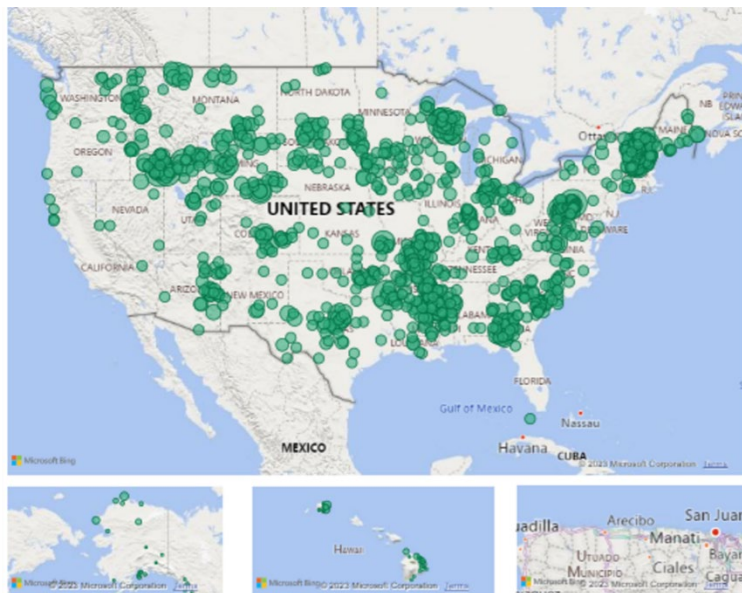
- ✓ In the aftermath of Hurricane Fiona, the **Foundation for Puerto Rico** (Tier 2 Hub) pivoted towards a focus on recovery for the thousands of small business owners affected. Many suffered damages, lost entire inventories, or even had to shut down operations. FPR supports the most vulnerable communities on the island and recently held educational sessions with SBA representatives on SBA Disaster Loans.
- ✓ **Life Asset** in Washington, D.C. (Spoke of **National Disability Institute** or NDI) worked with low-income entrepreneurs with disabilities to access microloans, coupled with training and one-on-one coaching. NDI has engaged a Life Asset entrepreneur with a disability to assist them in outreach strategies to engage even more low-income entrepreneurs with disabilities.
- ✓ Five libraries within the **Laramie County Library System** (Spoke of **Wyoming SBDC**) are providing on-site technical assistance to small business owners and entrepreneurs looking to start a business. The business outreach staff reports that public libraries can be a familiar and less intimidating place to ask for help, with low barriers to access.
- ✓ This summer the **Pride Center of Terre Haute** (Spoke of **West Central Indiana SBDC**) hosted the area’s first Rainbow Marketplace – a business expo for LGBTQ+ businesses. The Community Navigator staff educated participating vendors on upcoming opportunities. Vendor feedback was positive and resulted in heightened interest in working with the team.

Client Footprint

Coverage by County



Rural Coverage



Above: The Community Navigators are working with small business owners and entrepreneurs across the country, covering all 50 States, D.C., and Puerto Rico. The first map above shows the geographic distribution of small businesses (across US counties) served by SBA Community Navigators. The second map plots (in green) all the clients located in rural areas.

In Their Own Words: Tier 1 Grantees

Ron Busby, U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. (USBC)

The Community Navigator Pilot Program (CNPP) resources have helped to make a significant difference for businesses and Black chambers during the year. The resources made possible by the SBA have deepened our relationships with our private, philanthropic and government agency partners, enabling USBC to more effectively serve entrepreneurs and businesses still struggling with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our chamber network has become stronger in its technical service provision, helping firms like Black businesses continue to become aware of programs that in the past have eluded them, and we can literally meet our businesses "where they are" with access to capital connections. USBC continues our work to empower, develop and grow Black enterprises and the SBA CNPP program has helped us galvanize a collaborative approach to override systemic barriers and focus on the delivery of benefits essential to building economies of scale that provide equity and parity for all businesses.

Mike Haynie, Executive Director, Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University

Across all aspects of the transition from military to civilian life, research consistently demonstrates that veterans identify navigating the landscape of supportive services and resources as among the greatest transition challenge. However, for those aspiring to business ownership, the Community Navigator Pilot Program is uniquely positioned to address this persistent challenge by way of an innovative

The Community Navigator Pilot Program has enabled Syracuse University's D'Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families, in collaboration with our many partners, to coordinate comprehensive advisory services accessible to military-connected entrepreneurs in a way that accelerates start-up and growth opportunities for the community of veteran business owners.

Ramiro Cavazos, President & CEO, United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC)

Over the past year with our strong network of five Community Navigator spokes, USHCC has been providing Hispanic small businesses and entrepreneurs timely guidance as they navigate through today's challenges and opportunities that will make them start, grow, and contribute to the economy at large. As we continue to expand the outreach to underserved communities via the SBA Community Navigator Pilot Program, we strive to help Hispanic entrepreneurs' dreams become a reality and be part of the Hispanic business community that contributes \$2.8 trillion dollars to the U.S. economy every year, making it collectively the 5th largest GDP in the world.