



NOTES ON HOUSTON

HOUSTON EMPOWERMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM FOR WOMEN



OVERVIEW

Empowerment & Entrepreneurship Program for Women Entrepreneurs in Houston, a program of United4Change Center, began in 2023 after a needs assessment identified a need to support Spanish-speaking immigrant women in our homebase community. The evidence-based, culturally relevant program helps women overcome systemic health and employment access barriers through business education, personalized mentorship, and preparation for access to capital. Participants are Hispanic women seeking to grow their ventures and build business sustainability.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM - HOUSTON WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS PROGRAM



THE CHALLENGE

Houston (the fourth largest and most culturally diverse city in the United States) and its surrounding communities are home to over seven million residents. Approximately one in every four Greater Houston residents is foreign-born, with 68% of those coming from Latin America. The Hispanic community alone represents approximately 45% of the Greater Houston population. Despite this cultural richness, 18% of Houston-based immigrants live below the poverty line, a rate 1.4 times higher than the Texas average. A study conducted by United4Change Center found that these Houston-based vulnerable populations face critical barriers to education and economic opportunities/services. Latin women are significantly impacted, facing challenges such as fear, trauma, lack of transportation, language and cultural barriers, discrimination, limited access to healthcare, and social exclusion. These factors significantly hinder their ability to thrive economically or build resilient futures.

THE INNOVATION

Through a co-creation process with Greater Houston Hispanic women, the Women Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Program empowers Spanish-speaking women in Houston to develop their entrepreneurial potential and elevate their business ideas. Delivered entirely in Spanish, the curriculum is facilitated by professionals with over 30 years of combined experience in economic development, entrepreneurship, and business management.

The program is grounded in a Human-Centered Design approach (Hear, Create, Deliver) and the Design Thinking problem-solving techniques. It is structured around five foundational pillars:

- **Personal Empowerment:** Emphasizes self-awareness, wellness, creativity, gender equality and overcoming personal limitations arising from prior traumatic experiences.
- **Entrepreneurship/Business Education:** Includes brand identity, financial literacy and assessments, operational processes, and personalized mentorship touchpoints.
- **Leadership & Intelligence:** Focuses on emotional, cultural, and financial intelligence.
- **Growth Strategies:** Focuses on building sustainable businesses through marketing, access to capital, and the development of scalable growth strategies.
- **Implementation & Communication:** Covers sales strategies, effective communication, and personalized mentorship.

Women attend classes at Impact HUB Houston, and in addition to classes, participants receive one-on-one mentorship and build a peer support network that continues for years to come.

THE IMPACT

HOUSTON

WEPH
Women
Entrepreneurship
Program
Houston 2025

**2023
Cohort**

77 %

Participant retention rate
Despite significant access barriers
faced by women in the program.

96 %

Applied their new skills
Within six months of starting the
program.

**2024
Cohort**

11

**Graduates joined the Business
Mentorship Program**

Receiving a total of 420 hours of
personalized mentorship.

**2025
Cohort**

29

**Spanish-speaking women entrepreneurs
successfully graduated**

Demonstrating the program's continued relevance
and transformative potential.

Program Support

Proudly supported by:



JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.



Whose support ensured inclusive access, high-quality training, and lasting impact.

UN
Sustainable
Development
Goals:



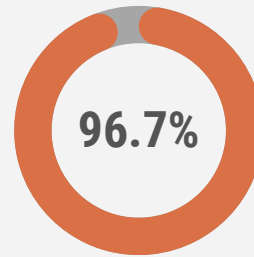
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THE IMPACT

HOUSTON



GRADUATED

+30

**Participants with
90% retention**

11

**Women entrepreneurs
accepted through a
competitive application
process**

483

**Total hours of
personalized mentorship
scheduled**

420

**Total hours of
personalized
mentorship delivered**

10

**Total hours of group
reinforcement workshops**

91%

**Of participants felt the
program met or exceeded
their expectations**

Source: Surveys results from United4Change Center, 2024



SPOTLIGHT STORY

BRENDA RODRIGUEZ

When people meet Brenda, they see her warm smile. They don't always see the road it took to get there. After escaping domestic violence and financial instability, Brenda arrived in the U.S.A and started over without a safety net—carrying one clear dream: to build a jewelry brand that would help women feel radiant and seen. That dream became Breymar Jewelry. In 2025, Brenda joined the Personalized Mentorship Program launched by United4Change Center (U4C) and Impact Hub Houston. For four months, she showed up with determination, supported by mentors who helped her shape her brand, develop a marketing strategy, and grow in confidence as an entrepreneur. Today, Breymar Jewelry is gaining recognition for its elegance and authenticity—and Brenda is no longer surviving; she is building and leading. Her impact is now becoming generational: in 2025, her daughter—pregnant with her first child—joined her in U4C's Women's Empowerment & Entrepreneurship Program, and they attended sessions side by side, creating a legacy of empowerment for their family.

“All my life, people told me my dreams were unrealistic... But something changed...I know now that everything is possible when you believe in yourself and have a community that believes in you too.”

Brenda Rodriguez , Houston

