



Partnership Agreement
Memorandum of Understanding
One Stop Career Center of PR, Inc

AND

Workforce Development Local Board of Ponce
as known as *Conexión Laboral Area Local Ponce*

PARTIES

AS FIRST PARTY: ONE STOP CAREER CENTER OF PR, INC is a non-profit domestic corporation duly organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, registered in the Department of State under number 35586, represented in this act by its **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MRS. CARMEN COSME PITRE**, of legal age, single, and resident of San Juan, Puerto Rico, hereinafter referred to as “OSCC” for its acronym in the English language.

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AS SECOND PARTY: The WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT LOCAL BOARD OF CONEXION LABORAL AREA LOCAL PONCE (“WDLB”) is herein represented by its **PRESIDENT, JAIME L. SANTIAGO CANET, PhD.**, of legal age, single, executive, and resident of Ponce, Puerto Rico.

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 Both will be collectively referred to this Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) as the “Parties.”

About One Stop Career Center of Puerto Rico (OSCC)

OSCC is a domestic non-profit private organization established in 2000 to enhance the quality of life and impact communities, improving their quality of life through workforce development, health, housing, legal and education programs, and empowering populations with low socio-economically status in urban and rural areas.

About Workforce Development Local Board of Ponce and
Conexión Laboral Area Local Ponce

Section 107 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) orders the constitution of a Local Board in each Local Workforce Development Area. The Local Board is responsible for developing strategies to improve and strengthen the workforce development system through innovation in aligning and improving employment, education, and training programs to promote economic growth. In coordination with the Chief Elected Official of the Local Area, it is responsible for establishing the public policy of *Conexión Laboral Área Local Ponce* and the additional functions delegated to WIOA. The Chief Elected Official is also responsible for the funds of the Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth programs.



WIOA provides a wide variety of workforce development activities to help job applicants, dislocated workers, and in and out-of-school youth access new employment opportunities, education, training, employment services, and support to succeed in the labor market. Plus, it matches employers with the qualified job candidates they need to compete in the global economy.

Law 171-2014 created the Workforce Development Program (WDP). It became integrated into the Department of Economic Development and Commerce, known as DDEC, giving it the legal authority to manage the services and programs provided in accordance with WIOA. In addition, gave WDP the primary obligation to comply with WIOA's mandatory partners, including WDP administrators and oversees federal training and employment funds under Title I of Public Law No. 113-128 of July 22, 2014, known as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) assigned to the Government of Puerto Rico.

On November 3, 2022, the Workforce Development State Board adopted Public Policy No. DDEC-WIOA-08-2022 in relation to the launch of the new brand known as *Conexión Laboral* (Labor Connection). This new brand provides a solution to the name disparity between the CGU/AJC by establishing a state-unique identifier or brand known as "*Conexión Laboral*." Likewise, the rebranding seeks to attract more participants, promote the services provided through the designated funds of the WIOA Act, and unify the fifteen (15) Local Development Areas (ALDLs). Therefore, on November 14, 2022, took place the official launch of the "*Conexión Laboral*" brand.

Conexión Laboral is a public brand used by the WDLB Ponce with the mission of developing employees to integrate them into the workforce, providing the necessary tools with an emphasis on education, occupational, vocational, and training programs implemented through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in the municipality of Ponce.

PURPOSE

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is hereby entered into for the purpose of participating in a collaborative process with **One Stop Career Center of Puerto Rico** programs: *Avanzando 2* Good Jobs initiative (A2GJ), and Second Chance Act Program.

The success of the OSCC network is greatly dependent on strong collaboration and highly engaged partnerships with local stakeholders, community members, and project partners. As such, OSCC is convening a sectoral partnership to help guide and finalize the OSCC plan for the *Avanzando 2* Good Jobs initiative in Puerto Rico. On the other hand, OSCC provides professional support and case management to people who have had problems with the law in the social and labor reintegration process through the Second Chance Act. As a prominent member of the community and key partner to the project, we would like to invite your organization to participate as a project partner for the recruitment process of both programs.





OVERVIEW

The U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Good Jobs Challenge awarded Unidos US for administrating and offering services in Puerto Rico through One Stop Career Center of PR Inc.'s (OSSC) the *Avanzando 2 Good Jobs Program* (A2GJ). A2GJ's goal is to impact and accelerate growth while rebuilding local economies and expanding opportunities across local communities to make them resilient to future challenges.

A2GJ will focus on providing equal opportunities across diverse populations, regions, and communities, through coordinated and comprehensive approaches that reduce and remove systemic barriers for workers. To obtain these results, it is essential to recognize the workforce as a primary player in the economic development, growth, and stability as a family, as community members, and as a social component of the island's economy.

PARTIES' RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

For this project, OSSC serves as the "lead" organization. As the lead organization, OSSC is responsible for the following:

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- Convening the local OSSC *Avanzando 2 Good Jobs* project partners.
 - Coordinating planning activities for the OSSC project, including but not limited to organizing focus groups, workshops, interviews of key stakeholders, etc.
 - Drafting, revising, and completing the OSSC project implementation plan upon evaluating findings and recommendations.
 - Participating in measuring key outcomes and indicators for *Avanzando 2 Good Jobs*' implementation.
 - Overseeing the implementation of the OSSC's project over the grant period.
 - Provide soft skill courses and coordinate technical courses in Mechanical Aviation and Construction to prepare participants with the necessary skills and knowledge for job placement.
 - Refer participants to *Conexión Laboral Ponce* for assessment and support services based on requirements and availability.


Under this MOU, *Conexión Laboral Area Local Ponce* agrees to:

- Support *Avanzando 2 Good Jobs* outreach efforts for community meetings and planning activities, community survey days, program marketing, and dissemination efforts in the represented municipalities.
- Refer job prospectives to A2GJ Case Manager for aerospace and construction sectors after job seeker required assessment held by *Conexión Laboral*.
- Refer prospectives for OSSC Second Chance Act reintegration program.



- Provide Case Management service to A2GJ participants referred by OSCC for support services based on *Conexión Laboral* available resources, such as English-speaking training; childcare and family care; transportation; financial assistance, and food and lodging payment, among others.
- Participate in meetings as needed to engage with and listen to job seekers and community members and provide space meetings if needed.
- Share organizational knowledge and expertise as they provide input into the OSCC's planning process.
- Share data as needed to support the planning, design, and implementation efforts of the OSCC project and recommendations that help the success of the program.

All Parties Agree to:

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- Dedicate organizational expertise, time, and resources as detailed in the roles and responsibilities below to advance and sustain *Avanzando 2* Good Jobs initiative's goals.
 - Catalyzing transformational approaches to the design and implementation of programs and policies to increase career readiness and disseminate lessons learned to the rest of the country.
 - Use the approved system brand, logos, and language for all press releases, brochures, printed and digital material, reports, and newsletters related to the *Avanzando 2* Good Jobs Initiative.



ANTICIPATED BENEFITS OF THE PARTNERSHIPS

- Existing partnerships among state agencies are leveraged to support the development of career pathways for people and to bring Puerto Rico closer to its job training and employment goals.
- Regional pathways initiatives across Puerto Rico, now supported by state agencies, will achieve greater sustainability.
- A more vibrant Puerto Rico economy that is growing due to the role of this work in strengthening local industries and economies.
- Alignment and expansion of resources to support pathways development across state agencies.
- Collaboratively developed metrics for evaluation and processes for data sharing to ensure continuous improvement.
- A significantly increased number and percentage of community members who successfully earn a postsecondary credential with labor market value and launch a career with opportunities for further education and career advancement.
- A developed talent pipeline of professionals that closes the skills gap and hiring shortages that Puerto Rico employers experience and attracts new employers to the state.



TERM OF EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS MOU:

This MOU shall follow the grant effectiveness period, beginning upon signing this document and remaining in place through September 30, 2026.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. All Parties agree to abide by all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding confidential information. In carrying out respective responsibilities, each Party shall respect and abide by the confidentiality policies and legal requirements of all the other Parties.
- B. Each Party will ensure that the collection and use of any information, systems, or records that contain personally unidentifiable information will be limited to purposes that support the programs and activities described in this MOU.
- C. Each Party will ensure that access to software systems and files under its control that contain personally identifiable information will be limited to authorized staff members who are assigned responsibility in support of the services and activities described herein. Each Party expressly agrees to take measures to ensure that no personally identifiable information is accessible by unauthorized users.
- D. To the extent confidential, private, or otherwise protected information needs to be shared amongst the Parties for the Parties' performance of their obligations under this MOU, and to the extent, such sharing is permitted by applicable law, the appropriate data sharing agreements will be created and required confidentiality and ethical certifications will be signed by authorized individuals.

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TERMINATION

This Agreement may be terminated in whole or in part by either party without cause. Written notice of termination shall be given in writing to both OSCC and *Conexión Laboral Area Local Ponce* and shall be sent via certified or registered mail with the return receipt requested. Failure to honor any of the obligations stated above may also result in the termination of this Agreement.

Notifications of termination shall be sent to these official mailing addresses, which are as follows:

Conexión Laboral Area Local Ponce
PO Box 331709
Ponce, PR 00733-1709

One Stop Career Center of PR
Plaza Universidad 2000
839 Afiasco St., Suite 5
San Juan, PR 00925



AUTHORITY

The individuals signed below have the authority to commit the partner they represent to the terms of this MOU and do commit by signing. The undersigned partners bind themselves to the faithful performance of this MOU.

This document will serve as an agreement between OSCC and *Conexión Laboral Area Local Ponce*. If the partner agrees to the terms stipulated in this agreement, please sign in the space provided below and return one copy to OSCC.

OSCC REPRESENTATIVE

By: 

Date: 25 de octubre de 2023

Printed Name: Mrs. Carmen Cosme Pitre

Title: Executive Director

Organization Name: One Stop Career Center of PR, Inc

Email: ccarmen.admin@onestopcareerpr.org

SSP: 66-0593598

ACCEPTANCE

The lead organization accepts the above-described document on the terms and conditions set forth in the foregoing agreement and agrees to perform its responsibilities under it.

CONEXION LABORAL AREA LOCAL PONCE REPRESENTATIVE

By: 

Date: 25 - octubre - 2023

Printed Name: Jaime L. Santiago Canet, Ph.D.

Title: Presidente

Organization Name: *Conexión Laboral Area Local Ponce*

SSP: 66-0433627

ACCEPTANCE

The partner accepts the above-described document on the terms and conditions set forth in the foregoing agreement and agrees to perform its responsibilities under it.