

Lara Media Services

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Owner: Victoria Lara

What is your business?

Lara Media is a trusted cultural broker for all market-related communication needs. In business for 14 years, we offer marketing and advertising services, specializing in reaching communities of color, in particular the Latino community. We also focus our efforts, messaging and communications on equity, equality, social justice and education. For us it's very important to promote positive changes that help these communities integrate in the whole society and become more active, and to help connect them with resources in order to get a better way of living and support economic development, higher education and other opportunities.



What was the most important thing you learned from the Small Business Development Center?

I learned to say “no” to sales that do not support my business needs. When you start your business, everything is about persistence, getting clients and saying yes to clients. But at the end, it's not working for your business and you have to learn to say no. I started valuing my business and also valuing what we have to offer. And that was an amazing discovery for me.

What are you doing differently as a result of what you learned?

Working “smarter.” If you don't have a system in place you waste time, money and resources, and you can't charge a client for that because it is part of your lack of knowledge. But when you learn to do it, you have more time, a smarter way to work and you don't have to work so hard.

Are you growing now?

We are growing in job creation, sales and income. Last year, including me, we had three full-time and six part-time employees. This year we have six full-time and six part-time employees, some of whom are finishing school.

What are one or two key regional factors that you believe have led to your growth?

Communities of color are growing and also growing is the need to communicate with them. Outreach efforts may not succeed if they don't take into consideration the Latino community. I'm an immigrant from Mexico. I know the challenges. I know the uncertainty we have, and I know how to talk to these communities.