

San Antonio Veteran Launches Manos Unidas Learning Center to Expand Education and Opportunity on the Southside

New community-based initiative aims to strengthen digital skills, financial stability, career development, and access to essential resources for local residents.

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS — April 2026 — A new community initiative is working to bring education, career development, and greater economic opportunity to residents of San Antonio's Southside. Founded in 2026 by U.S. Army veteran and community leader Joe Alfaro, Manos Unidas Learning Center was established with a clear mission: to help individuals and families build stronger futures through accessible education, practical training, and community support.

Located on San Antonio's Southside, Manos Unidas Learning Center seeks to address barriers that can prevent residents from accessing the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to succeed in today's economy. Guided by its motto, *"Empowering Communities Through Education, Opportunity, and Hope,"* the organization is developing a welcoming learning environment where people can strengthen their abilities, explore career opportunities, and take meaningful steps toward greater independence.

A Mission Rooted in Service

The founding of Manos Unidas Learning Center reflects Alfaro's years of experience working with individuals and families facing employment challenges, economic hardship, and other barriers to stability.

A U.S. Army veteran, Alfaro began building his career in community service as a Case Manager with the American GI Forum and Endeavors, where he provided direct support to vulnerable populations. He later served as a Career Advisor with Workforce Solutions Alamo, helping individuals identify employment opportunities, improve their job prospects, and pursue professional growth.

His commitment to workforce development extended beyond Texas to Denver, Colorado, where he worked as a Senior Career Counselor with Mi Casa Resource Center. In that role, he supported community members working toward economic stability and greater self-sufficiency.

Most recently, Alfaro served as a Digital Skills Instructor at Empower House, helping participants develop technology skills essential for navigating an increasingly digital world.

These professional experiences helped shape his vision for Manos Unidas Learning Center: an organization that brings education, workforce preparation, financial knowledge, and community resources together under one mission.

Building Skills for a Changing World

Manos Unidas Learning Center is focused on providing educational opportunities that respond to the practical needs of individuals and families. Its planned and developing program offerings include digital literacy, computer training, financial literacy workshops, small business education, career development, and access to online learning opportunities through Coursera.

Digital skills training is particularly important to the organization's mission. From creating email accounts and navigating the internet to using productivity applications and online employment platforms, basic technology skills can help people participate more confidently in education, employment, and everyday life.

Financial literacy is another central focus. Through educational workshops, participants can develop a better understanding of budgeting, credit, debt management, saving, and other financial topics that support informed decision-making and long-term stability.

The learning center also aims to encourage entrepreneurship through small business workshops and to help individuals pursue professional development through online courses and career-focused training.

In addition to educational programming, the organization identifies food pantry support as part of its commitment to addressing essential community needs. By connecting practical assistance with learning opportunities, Manos Unidas seeks to support individuals and families as they work toward greater stability.

Investing in the Southside Community

For Alfaro, establishing the learning center on San Antonio's Southside is a deliberate choice. The initiative is designed to bring learning opportunities closer to residents who may face financial, technological, or other barriers to accessing educational and workforce resources.

Rather than viewing education as something limited to traditional classrooms, Manos Unidas embraces the idea that learning can happen at every stage of life. Whether someone is preparing for a first job, changing careers, developing computer skills, improving financial habits, or exploring a small business idea, the organization aims to provide opportunities for continued growth.

The center's approach also recognizes that community members often need more than one resource to move forward. Education, employment preparation, financial knowledge, and access to essential services can work together to help individuals pursue their goals.

Looking Toward the Future

As a newly founded organization, Manos Unidas Learning Center is establishing its programs, developing community connections, and working toward a sustainable foundation for future growth. Its long-term vision is to expand access to practical education and resources while building partnerships that can strengthen the services available to Southside residents.

Alfaro's journey from military service to case management, career counseling, and digital skills instruction has shaped an organization centered on service and opportunity. Through Manos Unidas, he is putting that experience toward a community-focused effort intended to help people develop skills, discover possibilities, and build confidence in their futures.

The founding of Manos Unidas Learning Center represents more than the creation of a new organization. It represents a commitment to the belief that access to education, practical resources, and supportive learning environments can help individuals and families move toward a brighter future.

For more information: Visit www.manosunidaslearningcenter.com to learn more about Manos Unidas Learning Center, explore its educational offerings, and connect with the organization.