

**Assembly Committee on Jobs, Economic Development, and the Economy**  
**Assembly Select Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship**  
**Economic Recovery of Women- and Minority-Owned Businesses**

*Wednesday, August 18, 2021, at 2:00 pm in the Assembly Chamber of the California State Capitol*

**Panelist Biography**

Prior to her work in the non-profit arena, Pat worked in procurement management for major retail corporations for 15 years. Pat graduated from California State University, Sacramento in 1985 with a B.S. in Business Administration, concentration, Marketing, and a minor in Communications.

**Carmen Herrera-Mansir**, Executive Director, El Pájaro Community Development Corporation and host to the Regional Women's Business Center



Carmen Herrera-Mansir is the Executive Director for El Pájaro Community Development Corporation (El Pájaro CDC) a microenterprise development organization whose mission is to “*promote equal access to economic opportunity*” and that *provides services in Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito Counties.*

Ms. Herrera-Mansir started with El Pajaro CDC on April 2004. She has experience working in public administration and project management. Her experience in business management began early in life: she grew up working in, and eventually managing, her family's bakery in Mexico.

Under the leadership of Carmen Herrera-Mansir, El Pajaro CDC has become a leading practitioner of innovative and effective microenterprise development in the Central Coast region. The granddaughter of Bracero farmworkers and the daughter of a farmworker-turned-successful-entrepreneur, Herrera-Mansir has always been deeply drawn to creating opportunities for broader economic inclusion for underserved communities. Her family history provides her a unique perspective and an inspiration for El Pajaro CDC's success.

Under her tenure, El Pajaro CDC developed the EMPRESARI@ business Education Program, and expanded services from the Pajaro Valley in Santa Cruz to now covering Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito Counties. This has greatly increased the economic impact of the organization. In the past five years, they served over 2000 clients with technical assistance, training, and access to financing, many of them farm workers and rural communities. In 2013 they launched a Kitchen Incubator-- a shared use commercial kitchen that currently houses 35 food-based businesses. The Incubator is expanding to become a food cluster that includes an organic produce farming business, food hub and soon a small batch co-packing facility that will support food entrepreneurs looking to scale up and small farmers seeking to develop value- added products.

Recently, Herrera Mansir and her team launched a new microloan program and became an SBA Women's Business Center, thus building the entrepreneurial ecosystem that affects thousands of rural and urban micro and small business owners in the region.

Carmen is currently a board member of the California Association for Microenterprise Opportunity (CAMEO). She is also a board member for the Santa Cruz Workforce Development Board and participates in several economic development and recovery groups along the Monterey Bay region.