



## TAMPA BAY **LatinTech Accelerator**

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### ***Applications Open for Tampa Bay Wave and Tampa Bay Latin Chamber's Inaugural LatinTech Accelerator***

*With support from U.S. Representative Kathy Castor, the new Latin Tech Accelerator will foster greater diversity and inclusion in the Tampa Bay tech startup ecosystem.*

TAMPA, FL (September 2023) – [Tampa Bay Wave \("Wave"\)](#), in collaboration with the [Tampa Bay Latin Chamber of Commerce](#), is excited to announce that applications for its [LatinTech Accelerator](#) are now live [here](#). This milestone comes after the launch of the groundbreaking program earlier this year with a \$500,000 federal grant, championed by [U.S. Representative Kathy Castor](#) and powered by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

***"In our region, we recognize the untapped potential within the Latino community to transform the tech sector. With this program, we're extending an open invitation to founders of Latin heritage or from Latin America. This is an unparalleled opportunity to be part of a meaningful shift in the entrepreneurial landscape," said [Linda Olson](#), Founder and CEO of Tampa Bay Wave.***

### **Addressing the Gap:**

The LatinTech Accelerator was founded to tackle the glaring disparity in tech opportunities for Latino founders. Although the U.S Latino population is significant, it does not have comparable representation in the tech segment. Recent reports show that U.S startups with a Latino founder [received just 2.1%](#) of the nation's venture capital funding in 2021. Another report from Bain detailed that, out of the top 500 venture capital and private equity deals in 2020, fewer than [1% involved a Latino founder](#). Additionally, Latinos remain highly underrepresented in the STEM workforce – making up only [8% of STEM workers](#), despite being the country's second-largest ethnic group. This divide is even more dire for women, with Latinas only holding [2% of STEM jobs](#) in the U.S. even though women comprise [28.8% of the U.S. tech workforce](#). The Tampa Bay Wave, and the Tampa Bay Latin Chamber believe it's time to alter the status quo. Startups qualifying for the LatinTech Accelerator must be at least 50% owned, controlled, and operated by people of Latin heritage.

### **Program Highlights:**

Accepted companies will benefit from Tampa Bay Wave's proven accelerator curriculum, which includes executive coaching, mentorship from industry experts, strategic introductions, and preparation for investor meetings. The program culminates in a Pitch Night, where founders will have the chance to present their innovations to a broad array of national and international investors, community leaders, and media.

### **Who Should Apply:**

Startups from diverse sectors, such as fintech, healthtech, edtech, and more, are encouraged to apply. This is a high-impact, zero-equity program that offers participating startups the mentorship, networking, and resources necessary for long-term success.

### **A Track Record of Success:**

Since its inception, Tampa Bay Wave has been home to accelerator cohorts that have garnered national recognition, winning awards and raising over \$750 million in investment capital. With the support of Congresswoman Kathy Castor and other community stakeholders, the LatinTech Accelerator aims to continue this trend by giving Latino entrepreneurs the resources they need to thrive.

***"As we open applications for this new accelerator, we're not merely introducing another cohort; we're announcing a paradigm shift. Tampa Bay and Florida are poised to become hubs of innovation and entrepreneurial excellence, and our Latino community is an***

***integral part of that vision. This is about opportunity, growth, and building a more robust and dynamic tech ecosystem for everyone," said [Cesar R. Hernandez](#), CEO of Omni Public and Chairman of the Tampa Bay Latin Chamber.***

For more information about the LatinTech Accelerator and to apply starting September 1, visit <https://www.tampabaywave.org/latin-tech/>

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#### **ABOUT U.S. REP. KATHY CASTOR:**

Kathy Castor is Tampa Bay's voice in the U.S. Congress. She was elected in 2006 and represents Florida's 14th Congressional district, which includes Tampa and parts of Hillsborough County. She is the first woman to represent Hillsborough and Pinellas counties in the U.S. Congress. Castor focuses on issues vital to Tampa Bay area families and businesses, and is committed to building a stronger economy that works for everyone as a member of the [Energy and Commerce Committee](#) and Chair of the [Select Committee on the Climate Crisis](#). She works on initiatives to create jobs, protect the environment and consumers, improve schools, ensure veterans receive the benefits and care they have earned, provide access to affordable health care and defend protections for people with preexisting health conditions. Providing better-paying jobs for Tampa Bay is Castor's number 1 priority. She has successfully fought to bring new, good-paying job opportunities to Tampa Bay's small businesses and large economic engines alike, including Port Tampa Bay, University of South Florida, Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute, Tampa International Airport, MacDill Air Force Base and federally qualified community health centers. For more information visit <https://castor.house.gov/>.

#### **ABOUT TAMPA BAY WAVE:**

Tampa Bay Wave, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit providing entrepreneurs with facilitated access to the resources, expertise, and capital they need to grow vibrant technology-based companies in Tampa Bay. Since March 2013, Tampa Bay Wave has supported more than 500 tech startups thanks to grant funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), plus support from its economic development partners Hillsborough County and the City of Tampa. Tampa Bay Wave also receives support from individuals such as Michael and Korrine Fraser, as well as from corporations and foundations such as: A-LIGN, Bank of America, Encore Bank/STi, Delta Airlines/Virgin Atlantic Airlines, The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation (DTCC), EY, Florida Blue, Florida Business Development Corporation, Florida Funders, Foley & Lardner, KnowBe4, Nielsen Foundation, Rays/Rowdies Foundation, Southwest Airlines, Tampa Bay Ventures, TECO, Truist Foundation, and Vinik Family Foundation. Tampa Bay Wave is a member of the Morrow

(formerly Global Accelerator Network) network of accelerators. For more information, visit [www.tampabaywave.org](http://www.tampabaywave.org)

### **About the Tampa Bay Latin Chamber of Commerce:**

The Tampa Bay Latin Chamber of Commerce is committed to supporting the Latin community through expanding the diversity in the professional and innovative ecosystems across Tampa Bay. The Tampa Bay Latin Chamber of Commerce is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that is dedicated to helping to build, scale and grow latino owned companies throughout Tampa Bay.

### **For more information, please contact:**

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### **Images:**

