

## International Dialogue on Migration

28 February 2019

10:30 – 11:30 – Panel 1: Understanding youth migration: beyond facts and figures

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*What are the main findings of your research on young immigrant entrepreneurs, the occupational and educational attainment of immigrant students*

- Despite advocacy efforts to increase access to higher education for undocumented students, the lack of comprehensive immigration reform has left millions of people working "in the shadows", even with college degrees. However, even though undocumented immigrants are not legally allowed to work as employees in the US, anyone regardless of immigration status, can legally earn a living as independent contractors or business owners.
- Previous research estimates that there were approximately 912,472 undocumented entrepreneurs in the U.S. in 2014, accounting for almost 10 percent of the working-age undocumented population. These individuals often create American jobs and generate approximately \$17.2 billion in business income (New American Economy).
- Latino millennial immigrants, particularly those who are undocumented, are more likely to pursue entrepreneurship, compared to U.S. born citizens. I estimated that almost 32% of the self-employed Latino millennial population is undocumented.
- Self-employed undocumented immigrants have higher average business income in comparison to both naturalized immigrants and the U.S.-born groups.
- Undocumented immigrant Latino millennials are overrepresented in STEM fields, compared to both naturalized immigrants and the U.S.-born groups.

*Based on these findings, what are your recommendations for the governments and the society?*

- Pass comprehensive, sensible and humane immigration reform. The last immigration reform was in 1986, since then there are approximately 11.1 million undocumented immigrants in the US and over half have lived in the US for over a decade. About 1.6M (16%) ages 16-24.
- Increase access to education for all migrants
- Increase awareness about alternatives to employment through entrepreneurship (particularly at the high school level, given that DACA is no longer an option for younger undocumented immigrants)
- Increase support for immigrant entrepreneurs (non-profit, private, and the public sectors)

*How does Immigrants Rising work with state and non-state actors to improve evidence on young migrants' situations and to promote effective migration policies?*

- We empower undocumented young people to achieve educational and career goals through personal, institutional and policy transformation.
- Provide financial support for college and social entrepreneurship
- Provide leadership opportunities through fellowships
- Engage in advocacy efforts to expand access to education and career opportunities for undocumented students