Los Tacos de Montana, LLC  
Cut Bank, MT

“Rich Gannon with the Great Falls SBDC helped me pilot my vision for Los Tacos De Montana through his extensive knowledge and understanding of what it takes to start and run a successful business. Thanks to Rich and SBDC for being very personable and knowledgeable in helping their clients.”  
Heidi Morales, Co-Owner

Heidi, a teacher with a long line of Blackfeet-Irish entrepreneurs in her family, spent most of her childhood helping her grandmother with the family business. Cesar was raised in a traditional Mexican family, and he loves cooking authentic Mexican food, especially street tacos.

After serving as a Marine, traveling the country, and serving his community as a police officer, Cesar and his wife Heidi saw an opportunity to serve their community in another way.

The growth of food trucks all over the nation has been incredible. The soaring numbers of visitors to Glacier National Park in the last five years inspired the opportunity to open a food truck with Cesar’s authentic Mexican food.

They met with Great Falls Development Authority’s SBDC Rural Business Advisor, Rich Gannon, to explore options and figure out how to get started. Rich helped them understand the differences in business structures and how to register an LLC. He also shared opportunities for QuickBooks training, traffic counts to help with their business forecasts, and a Glacier Port Authority Grant Application.

Heidi and Cesar used the Great Falls SBDC’s LivePlan software to do financial forecasts and create a business plan. The plan and projections were integral in receiving a $2,000 micro startup grant from the Glacier County Regional Port Authority. They also attended a three-part class hosted by the GFSBDC called “The Website Bootcamp” to develop and launch an online footprint for travelers to find them. https://www.glaciertacos.com [glaciertacos.com].

The startup created a self-employment opportunity for Heidi and her husband during record-high visitation to Glacier National Park. In addition to the Glacier Port Authority $2,000 grant, the couple invested nearly $5,000 of their own money. Those funds purchased a trailer for storage and transportation, a 36-inch flat top griddle, and the material to build their custom portable taco stand.

According to U.S. Census Bureau statistics, Glacier County has the lowest median household income of any county in the state of Montana, just 66% of the state average. Glacier County also has the second highest poverty rate of any county in Montana. Therefore, the ability to supplement a family’s income, capture non-resident tourism dollars, and contribute to the income of other businesses has had a cascading effect on the regional economy.

The couple is on pace to purchase about $10,000 worth of supplies during the 2021 tourism season, including locally raised beef and pork. While their initial plans are to run the taco stand on their own, the couple hopes to grow the business to a point where they will be able to hire additional staff.