

**LIFESTYLE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS, NEWS**

# **EDIC/LYNN EN ESPAÑOL**

---

SUBMITTED BY PAUL HALLORAN | August 4, 2022

---

LYNN — As the new outreach manager for the Economic Development & Industrial Corporation of Lynn (EDIC/Lynn), Justin de la Cruz understands just how important it is to be tapped into his community.

A Lynn resident, de la Cruz says he welcomes “any opportunity to help out the community.” From his roles as a Little League coach to a disc jockey, he is a familiar face to many. He had been hoping to work for the City of Lynn for some time and when he saw the EDIC/Lynn job posting this spring, he was immediately interested.

“I was intrigued by the fact they were looking for someone bilingual,” said de la Cruz, who speaks English and Spanish fluently.

De la Cruz was interviewed by a committee made up of EDIC board members Magnolia Contreras, Charles Gaeta, AJ Saing and staff member Mary Jane Smalley. He was unanimously recommended by the committee and hired by Executive Director James Coddell.

“Justin is a product of Lynn. He went to school here, he lives here and he has chosen to raise his family here,” Coddell said. “He is fluent in Spanish and that will help a great deal as more and more Latino businesses are opening up in Lynn. He has a strong work ethic and is a great addition to the EDIC team.”

De la Cruz grew up in Lynn and is a 2009 graduate of Lynn English High School. His grandparents immigrated to the U.S. from the Dominican Republic and owned their own businesses in downtown Lynn. He says his family mainly spoke Spanish at home.

“I picked up English in school and with friends,” he said.

In his new role at EDIC, de la Cruz is responsible for assisting the city's diverse small business community, providing office support for EDIC and assisting in expanding outreach throughout the Lynn business community. One of his priorities has been making business owners aware of funding opportunities – particularly through EDIC's small business grant program. In January, the city allocated \$3 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to the grant program.

"I've been focusing on that and helping people get their applications to the finish line," said de la Cruz, adding that some of the submissions have been incomplete.

EDIC has already distributed \$2.5 million in grant funding, and has been working with local organizations, such as the Greater Lynn Chamber of Commerce and the North Shore Latino Business Association, for additional outreach. Part of the motivation to hire an outreach manager was to get the word out that the agency still has funding and is distributing it.

Since starting on July 11, de la Cruz has enjoyed the direct communication with the individuals he is serving.

"It's really cool to see how appreciative the Latino community has been," he said.