

Kevane Grant Thornton Puerto Rico Helps Empower Communities to Succeed

BY MARIO BELAVAL DÍAZ

According to Aida Ramírez, CPA, and Partner (Audit) at Kevane Grant Thornton (KGT), one of the leading accounting and business advisory firms in Puerto Rico, continuity of efforts is essential for the success of corporate social responsibility initiatives. “To create a culture of service to others, a company has to have a true and deep commitment to the well-being of their clients, their people, and the communities where they operate,” said Ramírez. “In our case, since 2011, our Social Responsibility Committee has maintained a philosophy of giving back to the community with a high level of engagement from our employees and clients.”

For the team at KGT it was as easy as looking out the windows of their offices in the Hato Rey neighborhood of San Juan, where they could see the *Emilio del Toro Cuevas* public school. “We have worked side by side with the school and participated in activities such as painting the school, where we provided the materials, and our employees joined the school community in that project,” said Ramírez. “The important fact is that they know they can count on and come to us, and we will be there for them.” She added while there are activities that may be a one-time experience, when it comes to social responsibility, KGT has developed a close, constant working relationship with the communities it helps.”

Another example of KGT’s ongoing social responsibility initiatives is the firm’s work with *La 23* community, located in the Honduras sector of the Medianía ward in the municipality of Loíza. “Our work in *La 23* community is based on our philosophy that yes, while it is good to provide the materials and goods a community might need, it is more important to educate, help foment, and encourage self-sufficiency,” said Ramírez. “In the case of *La 23* community, we provided residents with a half-day presentation on how to seed and care for garden vegetables and (egg) laying hens, with the goal of helping the community develop an agricultural project and community farm, from which they could benefit from a commercial venture to support themselves.”



Aida Ramírez, CPA, and Partner (Audit)
at Kevane Grant Thornton (KGT)

Ramírez explained that KGT’s social responsibility commitment also involves promoting the private sector’s participation, and is reflected in Peter Bodin (Grant Thornton International’s CEO) serving as Chair on the IMPACT2030 board – a private sector-led coalition that aims to direct the collective skills, experience and passion of corporate volunteers towards helping the United Nations achieve their Sustainable Development Goals. Every year, around 130 country member firms celebrate GT in the Community, a global network event that seeks to promote the development of potential for growth of those in need. “When it comes down to it, it is about the satisfaction of knowing we have made a difference in the quality of life for our clients, our people and the communities in which we live and work,” said Ramírez.