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Winthrop Alumna, SBDC Earn 2015 U.S. Small Business Association Awards

Winthrop University



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Quick Facts

- Gladden, who earned her B.S. in business administration, was named South Carolina's Small Business Person of the Year.
- The Winthrop Region Small Business Development Center won the Small Business Development Center Excellence and Innovation Award.



Melissa Gladden

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – Winthrop University will be well-represented at the May 6 **2015 Salute to Small Business**, with alumna **Melissa Gladden '99**, president of **Carolina Recruitment LLC**, and the **Winthrop Region Small Business Development Center (SBDC)** earning top accolades from the **U.S. Small Business Administration**.

Gladden, of Rock Hill, has been named **South Carolina's Small Business Person of the Year**. The **Winthrop Region SBDC** won the **Small Business Development Center Excellence and Innovation Award for the Small Business Administration's Region IV**, which serves Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, the Carolinas and Tennessee. The SBDC award honors an small business development center for excellence in providing value to small businesses and advancing program delivery and management through innovation. Awards will be presented at the special May 6 event in Columbia, South Carolina.

Gladden was runner-up for the S.C. Small Business Person of the Year award in 2014. Her selection puts her in contention for the **National Small Business Person of the Year award**. The national winner will be announced in May from a pool of 54 winners throughout the U.S., District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Rock Hill native, who earned her B.S. in business administration at Winthrop, created **Carolina Recruitment LLC staffing agency** 14 years ago. She started small, operating the company from one room in her parents' home, and expanded gradually. Gladden credits her alma mater – particularly the **Winthrop SBDC** – with helping her create and grow the company, which provides a full range of human resource services in a constantly-evolving workforce.

"My Winthrop experience was a strong foundation of education, resources and experiences that I used to launch my career," said Gladden.

The **Winthrop Region SBDC**, which serves York, Chester, Lancaster, Union and Cherokee counties, provides consultations to assist current business owners as they grow and helps aspiring entrepreneurs – much like Gladden – develop business plans get their ventures open for business.

Roger Weikle, dean of Winthrop's **College of Business Administration**, described the **SBDC** as a "great partnership, efficiently combining the resources of the Small Business Association, the State of South Carolina and Winthrop."

Visit the [U.S. Small Business Administration website](#) for more information about the 2015 awards.

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