



News Release  
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## **WED, SBDC announce Nominees for 2021 Awards Banquet**

WILLISTON, N.D. – Williston Economic Development (WED) and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) have announced the nominees and winners that will be honored at the annual awards banquet on Friday, May 7, 2021 at The Eleven Restaurant and Lounge.

This is the first awards banquet to be held since 2019. WED Executive Director said it is good to be back.

“We are happy to have our awards banquet back this year. We have a lot to celebrate in economic development. This banquet will showcase some of the exceptional small business owners in our community,” said Wenko.

The following are the nominees for the 2021 WED awards. One winner will be recognized from each category. Votes were cast by the Williston STAR Fund Board of Directors, Williston City Commission and Williston Regional Economic Development Board of Directors.

**WED Ambassador of the Year Nominees:** Chris Jundt, Debbie Richter and Terry Olson

- This award is presented to an individual who has demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities towards the advancement of the region.

**WED Community Partnership of the Year Nominees:** Kasmer & Aafedt Oil Golf Tournament, MonDak Animal Rescue and Upper Missouri District Health Unit

- This award is presented to individuals or organizations who demonstrate leadership qualities that enhance the community and region.

**WED Regional Business of the Year Nominees:** Innovation Academy, Outrigger Energy II and Vantis

- This award is presented to a business or entity that has shown exceptional leadership within the region and its field.

**WED Icon of the Year Nominees:** Ekblad, Inc., Electric and Magneto and Zurich Agency, Farmers Union Insurance

- This award recognizes individuals and businesses that have been a staple in the community for many years.

The following are the winners for the 2021 SBDC awards. Three nominees in each category received votes from members of Williston STAR Fund Board of Directors, Williston City Commission and Williston Regional Economic Development Board of Directors. The winners have been notified.

**SBDC New Business of the Year:** Safari Trampoline Park

- This award is presented to an individual or individuals who have demonstrated superior success with a new business startup purchase or remodel.

**SBDC Existing Business of the Year:** Western Veterinary Clinic

- This award is given to a business that has demonstrated staying power within the community. Not only have they demonstrated success, but they have given back to the community in a positive way.

**SBDC Woman Owned Business of the Year:** 26<sup>th</sup> Street Liquor

- This award is presented to any women-owned startup that has demonstrated exemplary business success within the community.

**SBDC Lender of the Year:** Kirby Kain of First State Bank and Trust and Tracy Whitney of the Lewis and Clark Certified Development Company

- The Lender of the year is given to a financial representative that has demonstrated a willingness to support new and existing business development and growth within the region.

The awards banquet will begin at 5:30 p.m. at The Eleven Restaurant and Lounge. Space is very limited. Contact Ann Kvande at [annk@ci.williston.nd.us](mailto:annk@ci.williston.nd.us) about potential ticket requests. The ceremony will be livestreamed via Williston Economic Development's Facebook page. The program will begin at approximately 7 p.m. Watch for notifications.