



News Release

For Immediate Release

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## **SBDC recognizes 2021 Award Winners**

WILLISTON, N.D. – The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) celebrated the achievements of local entrepreneurs and lenders at the annual awards banquet on Friday, May 7, 2021 at The Eleven Restaurant and Lounge.

The following awards were presented at the banquet:

### **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. Safari Trampoline Park opened in 2019 and has become an entertainment destination in Williston. The facility features trampolines, foam pits, climbing walls, bumper cars, a large arcade, full-size kitchen and much more. Jay Surani of Safari Trampoline Park provides a unique, one-of-a-kind experience in a safe and family friendly environment.

### **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. Western Veterinary Clinic has been locally-owned and invested in the people and pets in Williston since 1973. The firm offers a variety of medical, surgical and emergency services and is able to care for pets no matter the type or size.

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

- This award is presented to any woman-owned startup that has demonstrated exemplary business success within the community. Sheila Goehring purchased 26th Street Liquor in Williston in 2008 and added a second location in Minot in

2018. 26th Street Liquor sets itself apart with their knowledgeable staff and the largest selection of beer, wine and liquor in the area. With plans to expand her Williston store, Goehring continues to grow her business in western North Dakota.

**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.

In 2016, Kirby Kane started as a credit analyst at First State Bank & Trust. He was later promoted to a commercial loan officer. By helping his customers obtain different types of commercial financing, Kain has been able to help businesses and entrepreneurs develop western North Dakota.

In 2007, Tracy Whitney started working with the Lewis & Clark Development Group, which is a collaboration of three separate non-profit organizations. The firm provides programs and loans to support and advance economic and community development across North Dakota. Whitney estimates he has put together more than 150 loan packages totaling more than \$500 million over his entire 30 year commercial lending career.

**SBDC Champion of the Year: Dr. John Miller**

This is a new award created to recognize an individual who has supported the mission of the SBDC. Dr. Miller has maintained much loyalty and support for the SBDC during his tenure as the president of Williston State College. Miller is retiring this spring.

To watch the videos of the winners' acceptance speeches, visit [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAp7jcyYMzsbFgWZ8BIUJOz\\_jE0hRwHtK](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAp7jcyYMzsbFgWZ8BIUJOz_jE0hRwHtK).