

## **The 2024 40 Under 40 Award Winners Announced for America's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network**

The winners of the America's SBDC 40 Under 40 awards will be honored at a reception during the 45th Annual America's SBDC Conference on Wednesday, September 11th, at the Marriott Marquis in Atlanta, GA.

This prestigious award recognizes outstanding individuals under 40 in the SBDC Network. A panel of judges from the America's SBDC Millennial Interest Group carefully selected the winners. These youthful visionaries will receive accolades for their mastery of commerce, sparks of innovation, and steadfast dedication to nurturing the growth and prosperity of their communities. Charles "Tee" Rowe, America's SBDC President & CEO says, "These ambitious leaders are changing communities and employing unique perspectives and strategies that resonate with a modern workforce. Small businesses thrive when they feel connected to a compelling mission and a community that supports their growth, such as the SBDC Network."

The annual award program is being sponsored for the third year by the [Thryv Foundation, a longtime partner](#). The Thryv Small Business Foundation ("Thryv Foundation") is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that empowers, develops, and invests in small businesses so they can be more successful, make better decisions, and inspire a community.

Celiene Aleksejus, Director of the Thryv Foundation and Ambassador Program says, "The Thryv Foundation is honored to celebrate these exceptional leaders who are making a significant impact on their communities. We share a common goal of developing growth and success among small businesses and we're proud to support these rising stars in their journey."

The **2024 America's SBDC 40 Under 40 Awards** go to;

**Heather Wright**, Alabama

**Katie Nave**, Alaska

**Harley Tennant**, Alaska

**Esmeralda Estrada**, Arizona

**Florence Meadors**, Arkansas

**Marisa Castañeda**, California

**Roman Franklin M. Tudela**, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Small  
Business Development Center Network

**Lauren Shakes**, Colorado

**Caroline Hermance**, Delaware

**John Emsing**, Florida

**Amy Newburn**, Florida

**Andrea Walker**, Florida

**Matthew Oleson**, Georgia

**Chase Cowart**, Georgia

**Maria Ramos**, Illinois

**Michael Wampler**, Iowa

**Johnna Wilford**, Kentucky

**Claire Bridges**, Kentucky

**Aaron Harned**, Kentucky

**Dillon Sullivan**, Louisiana

**Vicki Hagberg**, Northland Minnesota

**Christopher Henagin**, Northland Minnesota

**Ian Carlstrom**, West Central Minnesota

**Leslie Fischer**, Missouri

**Madison Shirley**, Nevada

**Carlos Mejia Castillo**, Nevada

**Kaitlyn Schwantes**, Nevada

**Dominique David Chairez**, New Mexico

**Anna-Lena Specht**, New Mexico

**Abigail "Abby" Kaselak**, Ohio

**Randy R. Cedeño**, Ohio

**Jessee Paxton**, Oklahoma

**Kayla Banda**, Oregon

**Zakiyyah Smith**, Pennsylvania

**Marco Rios**, South Carolina

**Madison McCann**, Tennessee

**Madison Greene**, Tennessee

**Monique Little**, Tennessee

**Carla Cardenas**, Texas

**Kathryn Jackson**, Wisconsin

For more information about America's SBDC 40 Under 40 Awards and the conference, please visit <https://americassbdc.org/40-under-40-awards/winners/>.

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**About America's SBDC Program:** America's SBDC (Small Business Development Center) Network is a partnership uniting private enterprises, government, higher education, and local nonprofit economic development organizations. It is the Small Business Administration's largest partnership program, providing management and technical assistance to help Americans start, run, and grow their businesses. Learn more at [www.americassbdc.org](http://www.americassbdc.org).

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