



Small Business Development Center
Big Sky Economic Development
201 North Broadway
Billings, MT 50101
November 27, 2023

Small Business Administration
Government & Community
Helena, MT 50601

Dear Award Committee,

I am writing to wholeheartedly nominate Karen Grosz, an exceptional small businessperson, for the 2023 Small Business Champion SBA Award. Karen's outstanding contributions to her business, Canvas Creek Team Building, and the surrounding community make her a standout candidate for this prestigious recognition.

Karen Grosz's unwavering commitment to entrepreneurship, innovation, and customer satisfaction distinguishes her as a role model for both aspiring and established small business owners. Her entrepreneurial journey is marked by resilience and creativity, enabling Canvas Creek Team Building not only to weather challenges but to thrive in an ever-evolving business landscape.

Canvas Creek Team Building, under Karen's leadership, has earned a well-deserved reputation for exceptional services and outstanding customer care. Karen's dedication to quality, coupled with her team's commitment to exceeding customer expectations, has resulted in a loyal and growing customer base. Beyond her business achievements, Karen actively contributes to the community through participation in local initiatives, support for charitable causes, and mentorship of fellow small business owners. Her strong sense of social responsibility and community engagement is truly commendable.

Karen Grosz embodies the entrepreneurial spirit and dedication that the Small Business Champion Award seeks to honor. Her accomplishments not only contribute to the success of her business but also positively impacts the broader community, serving as an inspiration for others pursuing their small business dreams.

I wholeheartedly support Karen Grosz's nomination for the Small Business Champion Award and encourage the award committee to consider her outstanding contributions to the small business world. I am confident that Karen is a deserving candidate for this prestigious award and would serve as an excellent representative of the small business community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lorene Hintz".

Lorene Hintz
SBDC Regional Director
Lorene@bigskyeda.org



U.S. Small Business Administration

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I hereby waive any and all claims for compensation, remuneration, fees or costs related to the use of materials granted herein.

I hereby waive any right that I may have to inspect or approve any edited or unedited version of the finished product or products comprised of materials and any written copy or other matter that may be used in connection with materials or to approve the use to which materials may be applied.

I understand that SBA policy prohibits the depiction of persons younger than 18 years of age in any of its materials, and I acknowledge that I am 18 years of age or older.

I acknowledge that nothing in this release shall be deemed to obligate SBA to use any of the rights granted herein.

I hereby represent, by my signature below, that I have the right to authorize, grant and release materials and that any use thereof by the SBA, its assigns, contractors and affiliates, will not infringe or violate the right of any third party. I further state that I have read the foregoing, prior to its execution, and that I am fully familiar with the contents hereof.

Signature:  Date: 11/20/2023

Printed Name: Karen Grosz Business name: Canvas Creek

Owner
Title: _____

Address: box 21122 Billings, Mt. 59104

Telephone: 4066905999 Email: karend144@gmail.com

Project: SBA Small Business Champion Nomination 2023

Privacy Act Statement: This information is provided to comply with the Privacy Act (PL 93-579). 5 U.S.C. 301 and 7 CFR 260 authorizing acceptance of the information requested on this form. The data you furnish will only be used to provide the U.S. Small Business Administration with contact information pertaining to this release form.



SBA Form 3300

Award Nominee Background Form

Instructions:

This form must be completed by:

- Each individual nominated for an award
- All members of teams nominated for an award
- The official representative of a small business nominated for an award

The completed form must be submitted with the nomination package as noted in the National Small Business Week Award Nominations Guidelines. Answer each question as fully as possible; if it is not applicable, state N/A. Use additional sheets if necessary.

It is important that questions 9-11 be answered completely. An arrest or conviction record will not necessarily disqualify you; however, an untruthful answer will cause your nomination to be denied. If you answer "yes" to 9, 10, or 11, provide details on a separate sheet. Include dates, location, fines, sentences, whether misdemeanor or felony, dates of parole/probation, unpaid fines or penalties, name(s) under which charged, and any other pertinent information.

-
1. State your name in full. If no middle name, state (NMN), or if initial only, indicate initial. List all former names used, and dates each name was used.

Karen D Grosz

2. Provide the following information:

- a. Job title:

President

- b. Business name:

Canvas Creek Team Building

- c. Business address:

box 21122 Billings, Mt. 59104

d. Business phone number:

4066905999

e. Mobile number:

4066905999

f. Fax number:

g. Business email address:

karend144@gmail.com

3. Provide your home address, city/state and zip code.

726 Parkhill, Billings, Mt. 59102

4. Provide your date of birth (month, day and year).

08.01.63

5. Are you a United States citizen?

yes

6. If you are not a United States Citizen, are you a lawful permanent resident alien (include alien registration number)?

7. Are you presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, or declared ineligible for the award of contracts or financial assistance by any Federal agency?

no

8. Have you been notified of any delinquent Federal taxes for which the liability remains unsatisfied? Federal taxes are considered delinquent if the tax liability is finally determined and the taxpayer is delinquent in making payment.

no

9. Are you presently under indictment, on parole or probation? (If yes, indicate date parole or probation is to expire).

no

10. Have you ever been charged with and/or arrested for any criminal offense other than a minor motor vehicle violation? Include offenses which have been dismissed, discharged, or not prosecuted. (All arrests and charges must be disclosed and explained on an attached sheet).

no

11. Have you ever been convicted, placed on pretrial diversion, or placed on any form of probation; including adjudication withheld pending probation, for any criminal offense other than a minor vehicle violation?

no

I authorize the Small Business Administration Office of Inspector General to request criminal record information about me from criminal justice agencies for the purpose of determining my eligibility for a small business recognition award and to participate in the related activities, including programs authorized by sections 4(h) and 8(b)(1)(A)(iv) of the Small Business Act, 15 U.S.C. 633(h) and 637(b)(1)(A)(iv).

CAUTION: Penalties for False Statements

Knowingly making a false statement on this form is a violation of Federal law and could result in criminal prosecution, significant civil penalties, and a denial of program participation or other benefits awarded by the agency. A false statement is punishable under 18 U.S.C. §§ 1001 and 3571 by imprisonment of not more than five years and/or a fine of not more than \$250,000 and under 15 U.S.C. § 645 by imprisonment of not more than two years and/or a fine of not more than \$5,000;

Signature and Date

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to be 'JG' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

11/20/2023



National Small Business Week

SBA Form 3315

District Office Award: Small Business Champion 2023

Instructions: Refer to the National Small Business Week Award Nominations Guidelines for detailed instructions for submitting nominations.

This form must be completed by the nominee or by the nominator. The completed form must be submitted with the nomination package as noted in the award guidelines. Answer each question as fully as possible; if it is not applicable, state N/A.

1. Lead Nominee Information:

a. Name:

Karen Grosz

b. Title:

President

c. Business name:

Canvas Creek Teambuilding

d. Business address:

Box 21122, Billings, Mt. 59104

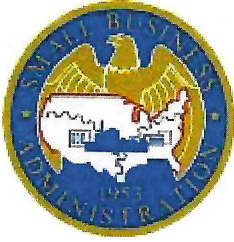
e. Business phone number:

4066905999

f. Business email address:

karend144@gmail.com

2. Co-nominee(s) Information (Note: you may nominate up to 3 additional co-nominees per business. Each co-nominee must fill out the SBA Form 3300):
 - a. Name(s):
 - b. Title(s):
 - c. Email address(es):
3. Nominator Information (if you are nominating yourself, write n/a):
 - a. Nominator name:
Lorene Hintz
 - b. Title:
SBDC Regional Director
 - c. Address:
201 N Broadway, Billings, MT 50101
 - d. Phone number:
406-869-8404
 - e. Email address:
lorene@bigskyeda.org
4. Provide the nominee(s) percentage of ownership or stock owned in the small business.
100
5. How many years has the nominee's business been operational?
12
6. How many employees does the business currently have?
3
7. Does the business have a website? If yes, list the URL:
cavascreekteams.com



National Small Business Week

SBA Form 3315

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This form must be completed by the nominee or by the nominator. The completed form must be submitted with the nomination package as noted in the award guidelines. Answer each question as fully as possible; if it is not applicable, state N/A.

1. Lead Nominee Information:

a. Name:

Karen Grosz

b. Title:

President

c. Business name:

Canvas Creek Teambuilding

d. Business address:

Box 21122, Billings, Mt. 59104

e. Business phone number:

4066905999

f. Business email address:

karend144@gmail.com

2. Co-nominee(s) Information (Note: you may nominate up to 3 additional co-nominees per business. Each co-nominee must fill out the SBA Form 3300):
 - a. Name(s):
 - b. Title(s):
 - c. Email address(es):

3. Nominator Information (if you are nominating yourself, write n/a):
 - a. Nominator name:
Lorene Hintz
 - b. Title:
SBDC Regional Director
 - c. Address:
201 N Broadway, Billings, MT 50101
 - d. Phone number:
406-869-8404
 - e. Email address:
lorene@bigskyeda.org

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100

5. How many years has the nominee's business been operational?
12

6. How many employees does the business currently have?
3

7. Does the business have a website? If yes, list the URL:
cavascreekteams.com

Answer each of the following questions in 200 words or less.

8. Provide a biography for the nominee(s):

Karen Grosz, CPC, hails from the iconic presence of Mount Rushmore, infusing her with a passion for lofty ideals and ambitious pursuits. With a quarter-century spent in Alaska and current residency in Montana, diverse landscapes have shaped her resilient frontier spirit and unyielding can-do attitude. Overcoming shyness, Karen has evolved into an award-winning speaker, serial entrepreneur, and coach, inspiring individuals and teams to pursue their goals through her book, "What Next?" As the founder of Canvas Creek Team Building and Coaching, Karen brings a unique expertise in the art of "Figure It Out" and commands a sizable social media following with her invigorating Monday videos. Beyond entrepreneurship, she mentors various non-profits, including her initiative I'll Help-Communities and Luccock Park. Karen's clientele spans from retail giants like Walmart and Sams Club to local entities such as Newman Restoration and the Williston, ND School District. Celebrating 40 years of marriage to Paul, Karen shares her life with a cat, a dog, a grandson, and an impressive collection of 12,487 paintbrushes. Her journey reflects a blend of determination, entrepreneurship, and a deep commitment to community enrichment.

9. Has the business received SBA assistance (e.g. SBA loan, U.S. Export Assistance Center, Veteran's Business Outreach Center, Boots to Business, Procurement Technical Assistance Center, government contracting, SCORE counseling, Small Business Development Center (SBDC) assistance, Women's Business Center (WBC) assistance, disaster assistance, or Emerging Leaders Initiative)? Please explain (include the amount and date of financial assistance received if applicable):

Karen's commitment to business development is evident in her proactive engagement with various resources. Throughout her entrepreneurial journey, she sought guidance by consulting with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), participating in consultations, and attending multiple classes. In the early stages of her business, Karen also benefited from valuable support through SCORE services.

Notably, Karen's confidence in the SBDC is underscored by her referrals of numerous entrepreneurs to their expert team. She recognizes the wealth of guidance offered by the Billings center, emphasizing its importance for business growth. She understands the significance of accessing specialized support to further enhance her business endeavors.

Karen's strategic approach to utilizing diverse business development resources reflects her dedication to continuous learning and improvement, showcasing a mindset geared towards sustained success.

10. Describe the nominee's business, including areas served and the products or services provided.

Canvas Creek Team Building specializes in using collaborative art to foster communication, collaboration, and change management within business teams. Workshops involve teams of four engaging in silent art creations, capturing their collective identity and aspirations through a structured three-stage process: Begin, Become, and Believe, designed for enhanced effectiveness.

While primarily serving business-to-business clients, Canvas Creek extends its collaborative art approach to families, nurturing connectivity. Founder Karen offers coaching services to entrepreneurs and businesses, focusing on goal-setting and strategic planning, drawing from insights shared in her books, "What Next" and "Quiet Leadership."

Beyond workshops and coaching, Canvas Creek organizes retreats and delivers motivational keynote addresses, inspiring participants to embrace leadership roles and pursue goals with determination and purpose.

11. Has the business expanded to additional locations, grown in square footage or increased web traffic since its founding? If yes, please explain.

Canvas Creek has set income records in both 2022 and 2023, marking a remarkable achievement. The upcoming launch of a new website on December 1, 2023, is an exciting development that will further boost the business's online presence. The introduction of a membership portal underscores the commitment to delivering valuable and interactive content to the audience.

Operating as a mobile art studio, Canvas Creek has effectively addressed the lack of physical space by gauging success through social media engagement. The strategic move to employ or contract four individuals for creating videos and posts not only aligns with current trends but also positions Canvas Creek as a dynamic and socially connected entity in the collaborative art and team-building sphere.

12. Explain the business's year to year changes in financial health (e.g. sales, net profit, net worth) and number of employees.

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic on March 12th, 2020, posed an unexpected challenge as every event on the Canvas Creek calendar faced cancellations due to client responses to the threat. Rather than signaling the end of the road, this adversity served as a catalyst for resilience and growth. Karen responded by initiating a webinar titled "By Damn" and facilitating a Women's Entrepreneur Series in partnership with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). These endeavors were designed to support businesses in adapting and navigating unprecedented times.

Remarkably, these strategic moves not only elevated Canvas Creek's reputation but also significantly broadened its audience. The results exceeded expectations, leading to a surge in sales that surpassed any previous year in 2022 and continued into 2023. The positive trajectory is evident in the team's expansion, with the addition of two part-time employees and four subcontractors. Looking forward, Canvas Creek aims to strengthen its team further by hiring four additional coaches in 2024. Moreover, the business has evolved to offer training programs, empowering individuals to leverage the Canvas Creek process. This transformative journey underscores Canvas Creek's knack for turning adversity into opportunities for growth and success.

13. Does the nominee contribute money, time or resources to his or her community or charitable causes? If yes, please explain.

Karen, the founder of I'll Help Billings, a Facebook community with 8000 members dedicated to neighbor-to-neighbor assistance, particularly for children, is not only a compassionate community leader but also a generous contributor to various causes. In both 2022 and 2023, she demonstrated her commitment by donating over \$20,000 in services to Big Sky EDA. Additionally, as a co-founder of 100-Strong, a giving network, Karen actively cultivates a culture of philanthropy.

Her generosity extends beyond financial contributions, as Karen willingly donates substantial amounts of her time and services to various local non-profits, showcasing her dedication to community well-being. As an active member of the Rock31, she serves as a coach, sharing effective practices with other members. Moreover, Karen devotes over 300 hours annually to RYLA, a Rotarian-led leadership program for teenagers.

The Boys and Girls Club of Yellowstone County is a direct beneficiary of Karen's philanthropic efforts, receiving food and program assistance. In August 2022, under Karen's leadership, Canvas Creek facilitated a group mural as part of a Space2Place grant, contributing to the enhancement of community spaces. Karen's multifaceted involvement reflects a profound commitment to social responsibility and active engagement in the community.

14. Is the nominee a member of a council, board or club providing support and services to his or her community? If yes, please explain.

Karen's commitment to community service is further exemplified through her involvement with Billings Rotary, where she focuses primarily on youth development initiatives. Her dedication to nurturing the next generation is apparent in her active participation in various youth-focused programs and projects supported by the Rotary.

Beyond her Rotary involvement, Karen extends her expertise to the non-profit sector by providing coaching to numerous non-profit boards. Her guidance is aimed at instilling effective practices within these organizations, enhancing their ability to make a positive impact and operate efficiently. By sharing her knowledge and experience, Karen contributes significantly to the success and sustainability of various non-profits, amplifying their capacity to serve the community.

15. Describe why the nominee should receive this award.

Karen Grosz undeniably stands out as a role model for both aspiring and established small business owners, distinguished by her commitment to innovation and customer satisfaction. Her entrepreneurial journey is marked by an exceptional ability to adapt and thrive in a dynamic business landscape. Confronting challenges with resilience and creativity, Karen not only navigated her business through difficult times but enabled it to flourish.

Canvas Creek Team Building has garnered acclaim for its exceptional services and outstanding customer care, a clear testament to Karen's dedication to quality and her team's commitment to exceeding customer expectations. The loyalty and expansion of their customer base underscore the tangible impact of these efforts.

Beyond her business achievements, Karen actively contributes to the community through involvement in local initiatives, support for charitable causes, and mentorship of fellow small business owners. Her sense of social responsibility and community engagement is evident in every facet of her work.

The team at Big Sky Economic Development wholeheartedly nominates Karen Grosz for the Small Business Champion Award. Her accomplishments not only benefit her business but also have a positive ripple effect on the broader community, serving as an inspiration for others pursuing their small business dreams. I am confident that Karen is a deserving candidate for this prestigious award and would be an excellent representative of the small business community.