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President  
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Melissa Gladden established Carolina Recruitment (CR) in 2001 to bring innovative staffing solutions to the local business community. With an honest reputation and a firm belief in personalized customer service, CR earned accolades from its clients and is now recognized as a leader in staff development for companies with a national and international presence.

CR is a WBE minority provider, which offers services such as contingent staffing, human resource duties, payroll services, and permanent placements. Our mission is to create an environment that embraces the diversity of our staff, our employees, and the communities we serve, for the greater good of all.

We value: human connection, people as individuals, and our communities by being courageous, pursuing excellence, and having fun. It is this mission and these values that deliver dynamic workforce solutions, which improve a company's talent pool, reduce costs, and increase efficiency.



*“Melissa, is that the best you can do?”*

It was a routinely asked question around my home growing up. You would think, being raised by an educator who came from a lineage of educators, that a sophisticated, well-articulated lecture was to follow such a question, but it never did. What followed was silent acceptance. I do not know if my Mom and Dad doubted my efforts or if they were just seeking confirmation. However, what they did with that question, and silent acceptance of my answers, was to instill in me a seed of self-questioning that took root and has undoubtedly shaped everything I've done.

“Melissa is that the best you can do? “ I was student body president for 5 straight years, because it was the best I could do. In college, I applied and received two prized internships related to my degree, because it was the best I could do. Not only do I work

at a staffing company, but I own it, because it's the best that I can do.

Now, I don't want to mislead you. Along the way I have had my fair share of embarrassment and challenges, but I'll accept those moments in order to answer the question asked so many times...

I'm Melissa Gladden, a South Carolina native. I have owned and operated a staffing service, Carolina Recruitment (CR) for the past 13 years. My in-house staff and I provide a full range of Human Resource services such as: staffing, professional recruitment, risk management, safety, manage service provider, assessment, and payroll services. What once was a hopeful dream of mine is now a real, in-house, operational team of 11 with a contingent “temp” staff reaching 300+.

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After graduating Winthrop University with a BA in Business Administration, I sought out employment as most students do. My first job, right out of school, was a staffing specialist for Mega Force Staffing in Rock Hill, SC. A staffing specialist was an entry-level position and therefore quite humbling for someone with a four-year degree. However, it was the only livable employment I could find without direct industry work experience. I worked diligently, exceeding all employer requirements and going on to receive the company's prized Shinning Star award. Shortly after winning the award, the company underwent a restructuring of pay which removed my performance incentives and, as a result, reduced my wages by half.

The timing was perfect for me to move into the next phase of my career- Greystone Staffing. The VP of Operations for Mega Force Staffing resigned from the company and approached me to work for her as a recruiter, promising the wages I had become comfortable making. She opened Greystone Staffing in Charlotte, NC. Greystone Staffing had everything; literally everything. We had embroidered shirts and bags, leave behinds, collateral pieces, a new building, desks, everything... except business. After 6 months of plenty, she called us in one by one, laying us off in order to close this famine of an operation. I was devastated!

How could I go from the shinning star to standing in the unemployment line with the people I temporarily employed? Valuing **people as individuals** was the lesson I was learning! Getting to know the people standing in the unemployment line with ME as individuals, not as "temps", was one of the best life and career lessons I have learned. It was purposeful for me to stand there!

Drawing my weekly \$150 unemployment check, I took my first step toward **being courageous**, and started CR, knowing the odds were that it would result in failure. CR's first office happened to share the same address as my Mom and Dad's residence, Suite A- spare bedroom. With a one-line phone, call waiting, family com-



puter, dot matrix printer, and carbon paper fax machine- CR was created! Call after call, I begged business; I'll never forget the first time the phone rang. I proudly answered, "Thank you for calling CR, this is Melissa speaking, how may I help you."

It was Grace Lutheran Church- Rock Hill; they needed a grounds cleaner- I was in business!

From my one order to two, then five. I would hand deliver every check and speak to every employee, each week. These weekly client engagements and simple questions; "How are you and how are my people?" created a **human connection** and loyalty to Melissa that no competitor could match! Finally I was able to move out of Suite A- spare bedroom to a one-

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room office and hire a part time employee. At this point, I began to feel the pressure of operating a small business. How could I be everything to everyone and do it better than the national competitor? I had to understand employment law on a federal, state, and local level, workers compensation, payroll and the related taxes and garnishments, marketing, accounting, sales, legal, operations, management, safety, IT helpdesk support to myself... Need I write more? How could I EVER gain peace from that pestering question? I continued to do the only thing I knew to do, which was to sell the only thing the national competitor did not have- ME!

Even though selling my personal approach was a successful model in the beginning, I now recognize it as a model for survival. I still felt immovable and had grown a company which was still very dependent upon my daily attention. I had not developed a long range business plan. Carolina Recruitment grew to millions in revenue within the first 5 years, and then came to a plateau for the next 5. I was stuck and needed to se-

riously get the company moving forward again.

There were many events, programs and organizations which I supported and I knew being involved in **our community** was important. CR sponsored Come See Me events, ChristmasVille city events. I ran in charity races and sponsored my employee's church softball, bowling, and cheerleading leagues. I supported the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, Early Learning Partnership, Autism Speaks, and gave to a charity every Christmas in lieu of corporate gifts. CR joined and participated in the American Staffing Association, South Carolina Staffing Association- board member, Society of Human Resource Managers, and York County Chamber- board member. I became a Certified Staffing Professional, received a Workers Compensations Risk Certification, and received my minority WBE (Women's Business owned- Enterprise) certification. I even hosted an employment segment on our local news station, CN2. This level of involvement forced me to self-educate and learn more about the staffing industry.



However, I still find it hard to detach myself from the day-to-day struggles of running a small business in order to lead it to continued growth; I will not give up on **pursuing excellence!** Through my community resources such as SBA, client colleagues after whom to model internal procedure and protocols, association education, and advising staffing owners, I have managed to run a more profitable organization even during the struggles of an industry recession.

During the 2008-2010 recession, hiring through a temp agency was the smart choice for most companies. It allowed them to staff up according to production and fall right back down to the recession floor. Staffing was popular. However in 2011-2012, as the market confidence began to return the need for contingent staffing began to decline. It was at the end of 2012 that I realized CR needed to grow outside of one community and we needed to offer horizontal services related to contingent staffing.

I am grateful to write that after 13 years of business we are opening our third office in Hartsville, SC. We have seen a 37.5% sales growth from 2012 to 2013. We are forecasting additional 2.5 million in renew growth for 2014. CR has added a VP of Executive Search and IT Placements, VP of Sales and Marketing, and an Operations Manager. This now allows me to take ME out the company's daily operations and infrastructure, and create a grow-able business model centered on providing direction for the company.

What started as a seed of self-questioning has grown into an evergreen business- CR. After 13 years of innovation, self-discovery, self-education, and determination, this is still NOT the best I can do! However, it is



the seed of self-questioning that produces CR's innovation, expansion of services, employment opportunities, contributions to the community, continued increase in growth, and what makes my small business a successful, engaging part of our business community, and the... ME has changed to WE and we are **having fun** doing it!

As you can see our values are not just a poster on the wall:





Melissa Gladden is the founder and President of the award winning and WBE Certified staffing company, Carolina Recruitment (CR). Her company's vision is to be the human resource partner recognized for connecting the right people with the right organization every time by placing an over-the-top emphasis on the relationships they build with both their employees and clients.

CR's specializes in servicing the warehouse and manufacturing industries. CR provides a full range of Human Resource services such as: staffing, professional recruitment, risk management, safety programs, manage service provider, assessments and payroll services.

With 13 years of experience, Melissa is an established leader in showing businesses how to strategically leverage

their hiring systems to maximize ROI from their customized staffing solutions.

Melissa strongly believes in giving back to her community and dedicates her free time to supporting local initiatives. She is a devoted mentor to HR students at Winthrop University, a guest speaker at York Technical College, serves on The Government Relations Task Force for York County, Rock Hill's Area Business Council, and South Carolina Staffing Association Board Member. She is also an active member in The Society of Human Resource Managers, American Staffing Association as well as a host for an employment segment on Rock Hill's local cable station CN2.

Melissa enjoys running and weight lifting to ease her stress. She is the proud mom of two, Briggs and Hayes Gladden and a beloved wife of Bryan Gladden.





## ABOUT US...

Melissa Gladden established Carolina Recruitment (CR) in 2001 to bring innovative staffing solutions to the local business community. With an honest reputation and a firm belief in personalized customer service, CR earned accolades from its clients and is now recognized as a leader in staff development for companies with a national and international presence. Our core philosophy is built on **customer choice**, **flexibility**, and **experience**. These principles deliver dynamic workforce solutions that improve a company's talent pool, reduce costs, and increase efficiency.

We invite you to experience the CR difference with a customized staffing and manage service provider (MSP) solution to give your account the attention it deserves. Our competition tends to be mired in levels of corporate bureaucracy and jargon while we get results by delivering customer service where it counts... in the field and in person. Our team listens to client needs and project goals to construct a strategic staffing program that builds capacity allowing our clients to make significant gains in personnel development, productivity and profitability.

Many companies trust us every day to consistently place qualified employees into open opportunities and so should you.

## WE ARE CR AND WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

## SERVICES WE OFFER...

CR offers a full range of professional services, all customized to our client's needs and business objectives.

MANAGED SERVICES PROVIDER	STAFFING	HUMAN RESOURCES	PAYROLL SERVICES	LEGAL
Standard Labor Agreement	Temporary	Employee Screening & Skills Testing	Payroll Outsourcing	Payroll Taxes, Deductions and Mandatory Payroll Cost
Continuity among locations	Temp-to-Perm	Criminal & Sex Offender Background Check	Paperless Pay & Invoicing	Risk Management & Compliance
Standard on-boarding & off-boarding process	Permanent Placement	Social Security & Education Verification	Customized Payroll Availability & Reporting	Safety Programs
	Executive Search	Reference Checks	Direct Deposit / Pay Card	Management of Workers Compensation
	On-Site Managed Service	Motor Vehicle Report & Employer Credit Check	Weekly Pay / Customized Payroll Availability	
		Drug Testing & Physicals	Accept Electronic Payments	

## JOB CATEGORIES...

Accounting / Finance	Engineering	Logistics / Distribution
Administrative / Clerical	Health Care / Medical Office	Mortgage
Assembly	Information Technology	Professional
Call Center / Customer Care	Legal	Telecommunications