

Meet the judges

2024 Southeast program

Founded and produced by



EY

Building a better
working world

Presented by



Entrepreneur Of The Year recognizes the most ambitious leaders who are building and sustaining successful, dynamic businesses around the world.

Entrepreneur Of The Year Award winners comprise a global network of visionaries, each on a transformational journey to create, innovate, grow, learn and build a better world.

About the judging panel

The success of the program relies on the efforts of our independent panel of judges. The panel comprises past Entrepreneur Of The Year Award recipients and civic and community leaders who devote significant effort to review and deliberate the merits of each nominee. We deeply appreciate their dedication to the program.

Click on the judges to learn more about them.

Meet the judges

The judges evaluate nominees on a variety of criteria, including, but not limited to:

Entrepreneurial spirit | Purpose | Growth | Impact | Financial performance



Ginger Aydogdu

CEO and Founder, Simply Southern Holdings LLC

Entrepreneur Of The Year 2022 Southeast winner

[+ view LinkedIn profile](#)

Ginger Aydogdu is the founder and CEO of Simply Southern Holdings, LLC. From the age of 14, Ginger began her career in the retail sector of business. Working in retail, learning how a business worked and fashion became a passion. After several years working in Corporate America, Ginger decided that it was time to try and take her passion and start a business and created Simply Southern.

Ginger believes “if you love what you do, it never seems like work.” In 2023, Simply Southern has been ranked the top T-shirt brand by GiftBeat for 6 years straight. Aydogdu and Simply Southern are passionate about helping those who are less fortunate and using their success for good. They donate to a variety of organizations but are best known for their efforts to help sea turtle conservation and ChildFund International. Ginger was recognized as a regional winner for the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2022 Southeast Region.



Gary Cooper

Executive Chairman, Palmetto Infusion Services

Entrepreneur Of The Year 2020 Southeast winner

[+ view LinkedIn profile](#)

Gary Cooper is the co-founder and Executive Chairman of Palmetto Infusion. Gary graduated from Wofford College with a B.S. in Economics and went on to acquire his Master of Health Care Administration from the University of South Carolina. He has dedicated more than twenty-five years of service and leadership to the health care industry as an entrepreneur across a number of different businesses. Gary's commitment to the industry and servant leadership has ensured that the employees, patients, and communities served by his companies have benefitted from his stewardship. Gary's business philosophy has created the foundation for the success of Palmetto Infusion, which was further enhanced with its partner, Carousel Capital. The partnership has brought sophisticated human and financial capital to the table, creating an ideal combination of resources for employees, patients, and the company. Gary was blessed to have learned his business philosophy from his late father, Charles F. Cooper, who had an indelible impact on his family and his community. Following in his father's footsteps, serving others has been, and continues to be, the cornerstone of Gary's personal and professional life. Gary and his wife Kelly reside in Pawleys Island, SC and are the parents of four beautiful children Gracyn, Clemons, Marshall, and Sutton.



Sherry Deutschmann

CEO and Founder, BrainTrust

EY Entrepreneurial Winning Women Class of 2009

Entrepreneur Of The Year 2016 Southeast finalist

[+ view LinkedIn profile](#)

Sherry Deutschmann is a serial entrepreneur, author, and passionate advocate for entrepreneurship. In 2019, Sherry founded BrainTrust, a company dedicated to helping women entrepreneurs grow their businesses to \$1Million in annual revenue...and beyond.

Prior to founding BrainTrust, Deutschmann was also a founder and CEO of LetterLogic, Inc., a company she grew to \$40 Million and sold in 2016. LetterLogic was named an INC 5000 company (fastest growing privately held businesses in the US) for eleven consecutive years.

Sherry attributes the success of LetterLogic to its unique culture in which the needs of the employees came before those of the customer or shareholder. That culture led Sherry to be recognized by EY as one of their 2009 Entrepreneurial Winning Women and LetterLogic was featured in the New York Times, Forbes Magazine, Business Leaders, INC, and Fast Company. Sherry was honored by President Barack Obama as a White House Champion of Change in 2016.

Sherry's book, Lunch with Lucy: Maximize Profits by Investing in your People, was released in March 2020 and received national awards in 2021.



Glenn Gonzales

Co-Founder & CEO, Jet It

Entrepreneur Of The Year 2021 Southeast winner

[+ view LinkedIn profile](#)

Prior to forming Jet It, Glenn Gonzales provided transportation solutions as the Regional Sales Manager for the Eastern United States for Honda Aircraft Company. In this role, Gonzales developed and executed a sales, communication and marketing business plan and strategy to sell Honda's first venture into aviation, the \$5m+ HondaJet. Preceding his efforts with Honda Aircraft Company, Gonzales performed a sales support role as an International Demonstration Captain for Gulfstream Aerospace Company. He began his career in the US Air Force (USAF) as a T-38A Instructor Pilot and his military career culminated as an F-15C Flight Commander and 4-Ship Flight Lead. He also participated as an active member of the US Embassy Kyrgyz Republic Country Team while deployed during Operation Enduring Freedom. Gonzales has an MBA from the Darla Moore School of Business at the University of South Carolina and a master's in Aeronautical Sciences from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He completed his undergraduate studies at the United States Air Force Academy earning a B.S. degree in Behavioral Sciences with a concentration in Human Factors Engineering. In the community, he has served as a spokesman for the Make-A-Wish Foundation; founded a military community outreach organization, The 71st Fighter Squadron Iron Foundation; and served as Program Coordinator for the Special Olympics Area 22 regional competition. He has spoken at countless universities, corporations, primary schools and community organizations sharing his career experiences and the business of private aviation. Glenn Gonzales still serves as a Lieutenant Colonel in the USAF Reserves and is married to his wife of 17 years.



Marc Gorlin

CEO, Roadie

Entrepreneur Of The Year 2021 National winner

[+ view LinkedIn profile](#)

Marc Gorlin is the founder and CEO of logistics management and crowdsourced delivery platform Roadie, which he launched in 2014. Roadie offers businesses fast, flexible and asset-light logistics solutions for last-mile delivery. The Atlanta-based company works with consumers and businesses across almost every industry to enable a faster, cheaper and more scalable solution for same-day and urgent delivery. Roadie became a wholly owned subsidiary of UPS in 2021. Before launching Roadie, Gorlin co-founded and served as chairman of Kabbage Inc., which provides working capital to small and medium-sized businesses. It was acquired by American Express in 2020. Prior to that, Gorlin co-founded VerticalOne Corporation, a content personalization service that was sold to S1 Corporation (Nasdaq: ACIW) for \$166 million. In 1996, Gorlin was a co-founder and original board member of Pretty Good Privacy (PGP), a company formed to commercialize one of the most prevalent security standards on the internet, popularized in the book *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*. Gorlin helped launch PGP and oversaw its financing, growth and eventual sale to Network Associates in December 1997. Gorlin is a UGA graduate and an active speaker on serial entrepreneurship, innovation and venture funding. In 2021, he received the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year® National Award. He was also the 2022 recipient of the John Imlay Leadership Award.



Rich Hagins

CEO, US&S, Inc.

Entrepreneur Of The Year 2019 Southeast winner

[+ view LinkedIn profile](#)

After serving his country for 23 years as a US Naval Officer and retiring as Commander, Richard Hagins founded US&S, Inc., which is a facility maintenance and support service provider specializing in operations and maintenance, repairs, renovation, janitorial, grounds maintenance and professional services.

Rich was named a participant in the St. Francis Forum, and one of the 50 Most Influential People of 2018, 2019 and 2020 by Greenville Business Magazine. He served as the 2020 Chairman of the Board for the Greenville Chamber. Previously, Rich was appointed by Governor Sanford as Chairman of the Commission of Minority Affairs and on the Board as Treasurer of the South Carolina State Port Authorities.

Rich served as Programs Committee Chair of the Greenville Metro YMCA Board, Board of Trustees and Chairman of the Board for The Blood Connection, and Chairman of the Hillcrest Hospital Advisory Board. He also served as a board member of the Mauldin and Simpsonville Chambers and Chairman of the American and Red Cross Armed Forces Committee. Rich is a Charter Member of 100 Black Men of The Upstate and a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. He also served as a Board Member of the Medical University of South Carolina Foundation Board. Rich now serves on the Board of Directors of Upstate Warrior Solution, as the Capital Campaign Chair for Habitat for Humanity of Greenville County and on the Board of Directors of PRISMA Health.

Rich was named the US Small Business Administration South Carolina District Office's nominee for "2012 National Minority Small Business Person of the Year" and the "SC Veteran Entrepreneur of the Year" in 2014. He was also named an Entrepreneur Of The Year 2019 Southeast Award winner.

Rich received a BS from Savannah State College in Electronic Engineering Technology and an MA from Webster University in Management, and completed the Executive Education Program at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth and the University of Washington.



Jonathan Hinton

Previous CEO & Founder, RavenVolt, Inc.

Entrepreneur Of The Year 2023 Southeast winner

[+ view LinkedIn profile](#)

Jonathan Hinton shares memories of when he began his entrepreneurial journey. He recalls being born with a passion to create.. His first business was in the 5th grade, when he was sent to the principal's office for reselling supplies from the school bookstore at a profit Hinton began his career in startups and continued his drive to build successful businesses. He has founded and co-founded four companies that have generated over \$1b in combined revenues and over \$600m in exits. The majority of his entrepreneurial endeavors have been in the energy/power systems and electrical controls space. Hinton earned his BBA in Accounting from Georgia State University, graduating with honors in the top 2% of his class, and then went on to earn an MBA from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Hinton recently retired from RavenVolt, one year after selling it to a Fortune 500 company. RavenVolt grew from zero sales to over \$100m in just three years. It was the fourth successful startup of which he was a founder/ co-founder. He shares feeling lucky to have been fortunate enough to work on such incredible projects with amazing team members.



Stephanie Nadi Olson

Executive Chair of the Board, We Are Rosie

Entrepreneur Of The Year 2022 Southeast winner

[+ view LinkedIn profile](#)

Stephanie Nadi Olson is an innovator and disruptor, aiming to change the world's perspective on the future of work and what it means to be inclusive in the workplace. Olson, a former advertising executive, founded We Are Rosie in 2018. She was the company's CEO from 2018-2022, overseeing its rapid growth and influence. In January 2023, Olson moved to Executive Chair of the Board of Directors to focus on propelling We Are Rosie's mission and forecasting what's next. During her advertising career, Olson worked with big brands, major tech companies and startups. She used her experiences and insights, as well, to create the foundation for We Are Rosie, the access point to the modern marketing workforce for companies and talent looking for a new way to work. We Are Rosie seamlessly provides on-demand marketing talent to brands and agencies nationwide. Olson was inducted into the American Advertising Federation's Advertising Hall of Achievement and was an Entrepreneur Of The Year Southeast Award winner. She was named to the Forbes Future of Work 50 list, one of Atlanta Magazine's Women Making a Mark, one of Atlanta Business Chronicle's Most Admired CEOs and an Aspen Ideas Festival Fellow. In 2021, she was named to the EY Entrepreneurial Winning Women class. In 2020, Olson was named AdAge Visionary of the Year, was recognized by Adweek in the Creative 100 and was named a World Changing Woman by Conscious Company. In 2019, she was awarded Global Entrepreneur of the Year by the Stevie Awards.



Joe Semsar

Regional Head of East Coast Capital Markets, New York Stock Exchange

[+ view LinkedIn profile](#)

Joe Semsar leads the East Coast capital markets portfolio at the New York Stock Exchange, working with private businesses that are interested in tapping public markets through IPO, direct listing or business combination. He has helped companies like CAVA, Warby Parker, Life Time, Sweetgreen and Black Rifle Coffee make the transition from private to public. Prior to joining the NYSE, Semsar served as the Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade, leading the International Trade Administration, a 2,300-person agency charged with export and foreign direct investment promotion, as well as enforcement of our nation's trade laws. Earlier, he served as the Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary of Commerce. Prior to his federal service, Semsar worked for Deloitte Consulting LLP. He is a Teach for America former staff member and corps member alumnus, and a Teacher of the Year recipient. Semsar holds an MPA from the University of Pennsylvania's Fels Institute of Government and a BA from Clemson University.

Entrepreneur Of The Year Southeast team

Chevy Arnold | Entrepreneur Of The Year Southeast Program Director

Kimberly Kicklighter | Entrepreneur Of The Year Southeast Program Director

Ryan Emerson | Entrepreneur Of The Year Southeast Program Manager

Alexis Levy | Entrepreneur Of The Year Southeast Program Coordinator

Jhez Ferriol | Entrepreneur Of The Year Southeast Program Coordinator

**For more information, visit ey.com/us/southeast_eoy
or contact us at eoysoutheast@ey.com.**

Join the conversation!

Follow us @EY_US and use #EOYSoutheast

Regionally sponsored by

Platinum sponsors



Gold exclusive



Silver sponsors



EY | Building a better working world

EY exists to build a better working world, helping to create long-term value for clients, people and society and build trust in the capital markets.

Enabled by data and technology, diverse EY teams in over 150 countries provide trust through assurance and help clients grow, transform and operate.

Working across assurance, consulting, law, strategy, tax and transactions, EY teams ask better questions to find new answers for the complex issues facing our world today.

EY refers to the global organization, and may refer to one or more, of the member firms of Ernst & Young Global Limited, each of which is a separate legal entity. Ernst & Young Global Limited, a UK company limited by guarantee, does not provide services to clients. Information about how EY collects and uses personal data and a description of the rights individuals have under data protection legislation are available via ey.com/privacy. EY member firms do not practice law where prohibited by local laws. For more information about our organization, please visit ey.com.

Ernst & Young LLP is a client-serving member firm of Ernst & Young Global Limited operating in the US.

About Entrepreneur Of The Year®

Entrepreneur Of The Year® is the world's most prestigious business awards program for unstoppable entrepreneurs. These visionary leaders deliver innovation, growth and prosperity that transform our world. The program engages entrepreneurs with insights and experiences that foster growth. It connects them with their peers to strengthen entrepreneurship around the world. Entrepreneur Of The Year is the first and only truly global awards program of its kind. It celebrates entrepreneurs through regional and national awards programs in more than 145 cities in over 60 countries. Winners go on to compete for the World Entrepreneur Of The Year® title. ey.com/us/eoy

© 2024 Ernst & Young LLP.

All Rights Reserved.

US SCORE no. 19110-231US

2310-4369460

ED None

ey.com