

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

Mankato

DISTINCTIVE DIFFERENCE 2019

The Coffee Hag

For the past 11 years, Jenn Melby-Kelley has worked tirelessly to grow her business, The Coffee Hag, into the successful coffee shop and cultural force that it is today. Against challenging economic tides, Jenn's leadership has grown the Coffee Hag from a struggling independent to a thriving, popular, fast-paced establishment that remains true to its roots, exemplifies social responsibility and provides, in her words, "a place where people can find community and feel good about who they are the moment they walk through the door."

Jenn Melby-Kelley is a Mankato native, a graduate of the Minnesota State University - Mankato, a second-generation entrepreneur, lead singer/songwriter for the band Sister Gin, one of the area's most visible LGBTQ leaders, and a well-known local advocate for arts, music, small business, entrepreneurship and positive social change.

Jenn's work at the Coffee Hag has earned her many awards and accolades, including a Martin Luther King, Jr. Pathfinder Business Award (a recognition for businesses that strive for equal treatment, human rights and nonviolence), several Best of Mankato awards from the MNSU Reporter and the Free Press in Mankato, the 2012 Mankato Pridefest Dedication, a Lavender Community Award, the 2016 SBA Woman-owned Small Business of the Year for Minnesota and, most recently, the 2016 Greater Mankato Distinguished Business Award. Jenn participates regularly in entrepreneurial panels and is a popular a keynote speaker, commentator and performer at community and business events.

Jenn lives with her wife Anna, and their two yorkies, Patterson and Emmet.