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IOWA'S TOP INNOVATORS PREP FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL EVENT OF THE YEAR: INNOVATION EXPO 2012

Second annual event provides opportunities for Iowa business community to connect, learn and celebrate

August 14, 2012 | Coralville, Iowa – Hundreds of Iowans will get EXPOsed to some of the state's fast-growing, Iowa-based companies and innovators at Innovation EXPO 2012, to be held at the Coralville Marriott on Tuesday, September 18.

Representing a partnership between the Technology Association of Iowa (TAI), the Iowa Capital Investment Corporation (ICIC), the Entrepreneurial Development Center, Inc. (EDC), and the University of Iowa John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center, Innovation EXPO 2012 is comprised of three state-wide events to enable fruitful connections between resources and entrepreneurs. Last year's EXPO was the first combined event and drew a crowd of nearly 450 entrepreneurs, inventors, investors, community and business leaders.

"The EXPO was one of the best entrepreneurial events that I have attended. It was a great opportunity for entrepreneurs to connect with each other as well as potential partners. I was impressed by the energy throughout the entire day. This event is an important step forward in fostering the entrepreneurial climate that is so vital to Iowa's future," said Adam Claypool, Managing Principal at Bridgepoint Merchant Banking.

The organizing groups plan to leverage the momentum of last year's event and make this year's EXPO even larger. "Innovation EXPO 2012 will be a true showcase of the innovation that is occurring in Iowa," said Curt Nelson, EDC President and CEO. "Attendees will have an unprecedented opportunity to experience the synergies created by assembling and integrating some of the state's leading entrepreneurs together with resources, business, community and state leaders in one venue. If you have an interest or stake in Iowa's economic future, this event is not to be missed."

Innovation EXPO 2012 will kick off at 10 am with TAI's all-day Pitch and Grow, during which 16 Iowa entrepreneurs at virtually any stage of the business life cycle practice their pitches before a supportive "think tank" of industry experts.

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The momentum will build with ICIC's afternoon Seed and Venture Forum, where pre-screened companies will pitch their more-developed business ideas to a panel of seed and venture-stage company experts from across the state and country.

The EXPO will culminate with a celebration of Iowa's entrepreneurial risk-takers. EDC's evening Entrepreneur Showcase, Inventor's Garage and Ventures@UI pavilion will feature up to 60 entrepreneurs and inventors in a convention-like setting.

For more information about Innovation EXPO 2012, visit <http://innovationexpo2012.eventbrite.com>.

About the Technology Association of Iowa (TAI)

TAI is a member-based, not-for-profit organization accelerating the success of Iowa's technology industry. TAI works to create and sustain a positive environment for technology-based economic growth and job creation through innovation, advocacy, and leadership. TAI members include organizations of every size – involved in virtually every aspect of technology creation, production, application and education in Iowa. More information about the TAI can be found at its website, located at www.technologyiowa.org.

About the Iowa Capital Investment Corporation (ICIC)

ICIC builds Iowa's entrepreneurial ecosystem through an evergreen, self-sustaining fund of funds and partner venture funds. ICIC and the Iowa Fund of Funds empower promising Iowa entrepreneurs and local investors by stimulating the growth of Iowa's professional venture capital and private equity industry. www.investiowa.com

About the Entrepreneurial Development Center, Inc. (EDC)

EDC was incorporated in 2003 as a community-sponsored, non-profit business accelerator. The company provides economic growth through the development and expansion of entrepreneurial enterprises and has successfully assisted over 500 Iowa-headquartered businesses. Its focus is on creating local wealth for area re-investment by growing and cultivating regional, national, and international businesses. www.edcinc.org

About University of Iowa's John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center (JPEC)

JPEC is a unique, cross-campus collaboration among the Colleges of Business, Engineering, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Medicine. The academic program combines coursework with experiential learning, and is open to all UI students through a certificate program and a major. JPEC provides advanced entrepreneurial education, technology commercialization, and business consulting services to start-up and high-growth companies across the state and region; as well as innovative training for high school teachers and youth. www.iowajpec.org

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