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For Immediate Release

LINEUP FOR 6TH ANNUAL NEW ORLEANS ENTREPRENEUR WEEK UNVEILED

The Idea Village announces the entrepreneurs to be showcased, participating partners, and opens registration

New Orleans, LA (January 23, 2014) – Today, The Idea Village announced the lineup for the 6th *New Orleans Entrepreneur Week* (NOEW), which will take place **March 22-28, 2014** in downtown New Orleans.

NOEW, the culmination of The Idea Village's annual Entrepreneur Season, has become the premier showcase event for the New Orleans entrepreneurial ecosystem. Over 4,000 local individuals are registered for the 2014 Season's educational, consulting, and capital programs – and NOEW is expected to engage more than 5,000 entrepreneurs, businesses executives, prominent investors, and MBA students through over 56 events. This year, 15 local partners will have their own "stage" at Gallier Hall to showcase entrepreneurial talent across strategic initiatives in water, arts, education, food, women in business, and youth entrepreneurship.

"Entrepreneurship is now becoming part of what we do as a city," said Tim Williamson, Co-founder and CEO of The Idea Village, which hosts NOEW each year. "This year, we focused on scaling locally by creating useful programming for local entrepreneurs, engaging partners to encourage entrepreneurship in new industries, and providing an opportunity for the larger community to become part of the entrepreneurial movement."

The rhythm and rituals of the annual Entrepreneur Season strategically and efficiently engage the local ecosystem network around entrepreneurship in New Orleans. This year, the partners that are leveraging the NOEW platform to host events include: the *Water Challenge* with the **Greater New Orleans Foundation**, the **4.0 Schools Education Challenge**, the **Urban League of Greater New Orleans Women in Business Challenge**, the *Downtown NOLA Arts-Based Business Pitch* with the **Downtown Development District**, **Creative Alliance of New Orleans**, and **Louisiana Cultural Economy Foundation**, the **New Orleans Tourism Marketing Commission** *Tourism Hack-a-thon*, **Tulane University's Business Model Competition Semi-Final Pitch**, **JEDCO's Jefferson Parish Entrepreneur Challenge**, the **Salesforce-Silverline Challenge**, **Junior Achievement's Junior Idea**, **Google for Education and the Brees Dream Foundation Trust Your Crazy Ideas Challenge**, and the **inNOLAvation High School Entrepreneur Challenge**.

"The 2014 New Orleans Entrepreneur Week is a dynamic opportunity to bring fresh, innovative ideas from around world to our door step," said Mayor Mitch Landrieu. "The growing pro-entrepreneur climate in New Orleans is critical to our recovery and our priority of creating local jobs and opportunities for residents."

Seventy-five New Orleans-based startups will be showcased in 16 capital competitions for venture, angel, and seed funding during NOEW 2014, a 28% increase in featured ventures from NOEW 2013. A product of the local entrepreneurial ecosystem, these companies represent a number of diverse industries including food, water, digital media, technology, education, and arts. Those who have been selected to date include:

- *Dinner Lab*, *mSchool*, and *Zlien* (for the **Coulter IDEApitch** for venture capital)
- *APMT*, *SNAP Real Estate Photography*, *MobileQubes*, *Maritant*, *Education Everytime*, and *Your Nutrition Delivered* (for the **Power Pitch** for angel capital)
- *4D Supplements*, *Athletic Performance Testing (APT)*, *Bats on Tees*, *BitBike*, *Cajun Fire Brewing Company*, *Culture Connect*, *FundDat*, *Healthy Plant*, *iSEEChange*, *Joe Horn's Bayou 87 Sauce*, *KREWE du optic*, *Locally Preserved*, *MakerState*, *Threadix*, and *Where Y'Art* (for **The Big Idea** for seed capital)
- *EcoUrban*, *iSeeChange*, *ORA Estuaries*, and *Riverview Construction* (for the **Water Challenge** for seed capital)

- *Diva Dawg, LLC, I Spa a Deal, LLC, Ma Momma's House of Cornbread, Chicken & Waffles, LLC, and ZukaBaby* (for the Urban League of Greater New Orleans **Women in Business Challenge** for seed capital)

The remaining companies will be announced between now and NOEW.

Over 45 free seminars, workshops, keynotes, and social events will be open to the public this year on a first come, first served basis. These events range from one-on-one entrepreneur counseling sessions to specialized workshops on legal and marketing practices to networking happy hours. To attend, register at www.NOEW.org beginning today, January 23rd.

On Friday, March 28th, the final day of NOEW, 24 carefully selected entrepreneurs will pitch to some of the country's most notable investors and venture capitalists in three investment pitch competitions to win prizes ranging from \$100,000+ in seed capital to a personalized tour of Silicon Valley's investment community. At 5pm, the week will culminate with The Big Idea on Fulton Street. The Big Idea is a crowd sourced pitch extravaganza featuring 15 of New Orleans' most promising startup ventures and a celebrity judging panel. Over 5,000 people are expected to attend. Tickets are on sale now at www.NOEW.org.

Additional partners include *Blackstone Charitable Foundation, Kevin Clifford Family, Penny and Jim Coulter, Economic Development Administration, Greater New Orleans Foundation, Office of Community Development – Disaster Recovery Unit, Harrah's, IBERIABANK, Jones Walker, Chase, Coca-Cola Foundation, French Market Coffee, JP Morgan, Downtown Development District, Google, Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses, NOLA Media Group, New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation, Stone Pigman, Tulane University, Baldwin Haspel Burke & Mayer, Margaret and Ken Beer, Chaffe McCall, Ernst & Young, King, Krebs & Jurgens, Elly and Merritt Lane, Jordan Marye, Perkin Family Foundation, Rouses, Salesforce Foundation, TPG, Hugh Uhalt, UPS, and Wisner Foundation.*

ABOUT THE IDEA VILLAGE

In 2000, The Idea Village was formed by a group of New Orleans citizens who returned home energized by experiences in thriving communities across the United States. The founders determined that the key to creating positive economic and social change in New Orleans was to create a vibrant entrepreneurial community. The Idea Village formalized in 2002 as an independent 501(c) (3) non-profit organization with a mission to identify, support and retain entrepreneurial talent in New Orleans by providing business resources to high-impact ventures.

To date, The Idea Village has provided direct support to over 3,000 New Orleans entrepreneurs by engaging over 2,400 professionals to allocate 72,295 consulting hours and \$3.45 million in seed capital. Collectively, this portfolio generates over \$100 million in annual revenue and has created well over 2,000 jobs for the New Orleans community.

ABOUT NEW ORLEANS ENTREPRENEUR WEEK

New Orleans Entrepreneur Week is the culmination of The Idea Village's annual Entrepreneur Season. The weeklong festival of entrepreneurship lures nationally-renowned venture capitalists, regional investors and corporate volunteers, along with visiting MBA student teams from the nation's leading business programs, who come together and support select early-stage New Orleans ventures and expose emerging opportunities. NOEW 2014 is expected to engage 5,000+ of the nation's most innovative minds through over 50 events.

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