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The Idea Village Kicks-Off the 2012 Entrepreneur Season™

From October-March, 500 New Orleans entrepreneurs to receive over \$1 million in resources from a global network of CEOs, corporations, universities and investors

New Orleans (October 19, 2012) – New Orleans knows how to celebrate seasons. Just look at football season, Carnival season and festival season. What if New Orleans engaged in an annual Entrepreneur Season™?

The 2012 Idea Village Entrepreneur Season kicks-off today with a full calendar of over 75 events and will provide over \$1 million in strategic consulting and capital to over 500 local entrepreneurs from October through March. In addition, The Idea Village is unveiling the 2012 IDEAxcelerator class featuring 21 New Orleans-based ventures poised for growth. These entrepreneurs will receive intensive business consulting from The Idea Village and a global network of professionals and strategic partners.

The 2012 Season culminates in the fourth annual *New Orleans Entrepreneur Week*, March 10-16, 2012, with seven days of seminars, workshops, investment pitches, and a final day that will engage over 1,000 people to allocate \$100,000 to the best startup in New Orleans. All activities during The Idea Village Entrepreneur Season will be hosted in Downtown New Orleans.

“Entrepreneurs solve critical challenges with innovative solutions and it is this ingenuity that keeps our city thriving. I encourage the entire New Orleans community to join us in supporting the 2012 Entrepreneur Season,” said Merritt Lane, President and CEO of Canal Barge, Idea Village Board member and “Commissioner” of the 2012 Entrepreneur Season.

New Orleans has developed a vibrant, interconnected entrepreneurial ecosystem that includes professionals, non-profits, universities, government, CEOs, investors, and entrepreneurs who collaborate to make New Orleans a place for people with big ideas, grand dreams, and the passion to build, grow, and execute. In just the past year *Forbes* named New Orleans the “Biggest Brain Magnet” of 2011 as well as the No. 2 “Best City for Jobs.” The *Brookings Institute* “Katrina After 5” report states that New Orleans entrepreneurial activity is 40% above the national average. And *Inc. Magazine* called New Orleans the “Coolest Startup City in America.”

“The Idea Village was founded in 2000 to identify, support and retain entrepreneurial talent in New Orleans,” said Tim Williamson, Co-Founder and CEO of The Idea Village. “With entrepreneurship becoming an increasingly vital piece of our nation’s economic development strategy, we believe an annual Entrepreneur Season provides the structure necessary to engage the community in sustaining the entrepreneurial movement in New Orleans.”

The Idea Village provides three unique ways for entrepreneurs and those who believe in them to engage in the Entrepreneur Season: *IDEAxcelerator*, *IDEAInstitute* and *New Orleans Entrepreneur Week*.

IDEAxcelerator, in partnership with IBERIABANK, supports high-impact entrepreneurs through an intensive six-month business accelerator program that provides access to strategic consulting, mentors, and capital. A team of experienced entrepreneurs called “Entrepreneurs-in-Residence” lead the cohort, managing the allocation of resources and The Idea Village’s network of professional mentors. The 2012 Entrepreneur Season IDEAxcelerator

focus areas include digital media, water, education, and university-based technologies. All startups are led by motivated, high-impact entrepreneurs who are committed to growing their business in New Orleans.

*IDEA*institute, hosted by The Downtown Development District of New Orleans, is The Idea Village's weekly entrepreneur education program that addresses issues critical to both startups and growing businesses through speaker series, roundtables, and workshops conducted by well-known business and thought leaders. All New Orleans-based entrepreneurs are invited to participate in the free education sessions once they register with The Idea Village. To register, please visit <http://www.ideavillage.org/login.php>

New Orleans Entrepreneur Week (NOEW) is the hallmark week-long event from March 10-16, 2012 that engages our nation's most accomplished entrepreneurs, investors, local business, and civic leaders as well as MBA students from top business schools to provide direct resources to New Orleans entrepreneurs. During NOEW 2011, over \$1 million in resources was provided to 475 entrepreneurs at 48 events. The lineup of speakers, workshops and events will be announced in January 2012.

Joining The Idea Village as partners for the 2012 Entrepreneur Season are the Brees Dream Foundation, Coleman Foundation, Greater New Orleans Foundation, Harrah's New Orleans, IBERIABANK, Jones Walker, Downtown Development District of New Orleans, Foundation for Louisiana, Hunt Foundation, JP Morgan Chase, RosaMary Foundation, Tulane University, 4.0 Schools, Archon Information Systems, Baker Donelson, Ernst & Young, Leslie and Scott Jacobs and the Mary Freeman Wisdom Foundation. Additionally, support is provided by the Economic Development Administration and the Office of Community Development, State of Louisiana.

"IBERIABANK is thrilled to be partnering with The Idea Village to support the 2012 IDEAxcelerator class. By investing early, we are positioning the next crop of New Orleans companies for great success," said Michael Brown, Vice-Chair and COO of IBERIABANK.

The 2012 Entrepreneur Season kicks off with a celebration hosted by 13 of New Orleans' most exciting entrepreneurial ventures: *Federated Sample, Cordina, Sucre, Schedulist, LRG, AudioSocket, Kickboard, The Occasional Wife, The Receivables Exchange, iSeatz, LaunchPad, Naked Pizza, and TurboSquid*. Collectively these companies have created 498 jobs and have plans to hire 165 more people this year. These innovators serve as role models to the New Orleans entrepreneurial community.

Since 2002, The Idea Village has provided direct assistance to 1,101 entrepreneurs by engaging a global network of 1,746 MBAs, professionals and investors to provide over 42,000 consulting hours and allocate over \$2.7 million in capital. Collectively, this portfolio has created 1,006 jobs and generates \$82M each year.

To learn more about the annual *Idea Village Entrepreneur Season, IDEAxcelerator, IDEA*institute and *New Orleans Entrepreneur Week*, and find out how to get involved, please visit www.ideavillage.org and follow us on Twitter @ideavillage.

ABOUT THE IDEA VILLAGE:

The Idea Village was founded in 2000 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. As of October 2011, The Idea Village has provided direct assistance to 1,101 entrepreneurs by engaged a global network of 1,746 MBAs, professionals & investors to provide over 42,000 consulting hours and allocate over \$2.7 million in capital. Collectively, this portfolio has created 1,006 jobs and generates \$82M each year.

MEET THE 2012 IDEAxcelerator ENTREPRENEURS:

BlueBag, LLC – Mehmet Ergelen

Bluebag specializes in everything IKEA. It's IKEA "delivered."

Chapter Spot – Joe McMenemon

ChapterSpot solves the problems of group management through its online application allowing groups to communicate efficiently, collect membership dues, share important files, maintain a member database and design a website all on one platform.

Designer Social – Francine Ballard

DesignerSocial is fashion's first global marketplace, connecting buyers and sellers of pre-owned designer merchandise via the Internet and social media.

Dukky – Shawn Burst

Dukky is a web-based marketing and analytics software platform used by companies of all sizes to get new customers, gather customer feedback and increase response rates of direct response marketing.

HUKA Productions – Bennett Drago

Huka produces live events for fans by fans. Hangout Fest is the signature event.

Inciteful, LLC – Trevor Tetzlaff

Inciteful LLC has developed software, web application, and an accompanying smartphone app for use on university campuses to enable quick, accurate and safe responses to emergency situations. The service is called 'Pocket Police'

Moxy – Billy Bosch

Moxy is a nutritionally conscious, all-natural, functional beverage with an emphasis on the health-conscience consumer and added focus on social activism.

NolaCajun.com – Lovey Wakefield

NolaCajun.com is the number one ecommerce site that provides Louisiana and New Orleans specialty food products to customers around the world.

RecoverEEZ – Miles Colley

RecoverEEZ is an Interactive Disaster Preparedness and Recovery System that uses software and subject matter experts to prepare, advise and assist customers with the Federal disaster recovery funding process.

Solarchitect Studio, LLC – Alex Landau

SOLarchitect Studio provides a free, web-based tool that enables users to assess the feasibility of installing solar panels on their homes.

TRUE-See Systems – Francis James

TRUE-See is a manufacturing and tech company dedicated to improving video image quality in telemedicine and video conferencing. The patent pending product is a self-contained portable lighting unit for use in point to point video conferencing and telemedicine.

VoiceHIT – Peter Ragusa

VoiceHIT leverages current and emerging technologies to streamline patient encounters and reclaim providers' time. VoiceHIT automates documentation during patient encounters - dramatically improving patients' experiences while virtually eliminating provider-based manual data entry as well as time wasted proofreading transcriptions.

Wire Fly Communications – Darin Veale

Wire Fly Communications specializes in servicing high density apartment complexes, condos and townhouses with affordable high speed internet service.

Aquaponic Modular Production Systems (AMPS) – Douglas Jacobs

Aquaponic Modular Production Systems design and build custom high yield, low-impact, soil-less farming systems that are easy to ship, set-up, and operate. Our farms recirculate organic nutrients in a

closed loop system; that does not leech harmful pollutants into the environment and water is not lost through evaporation and runoff.

Tierra Resources – Sarah Mack

Tierra Resource provides scientific, financial, regulatory, and eco-asset development advisory services for landowners, companies, nonprofits, and government entities managing, adapting, and mitigating the effects of climate change through water resource management.

Bayou Natives – Colleen Morgan

Bayou Natives is a native plant nursery that grows and sells native plant material for rain garden installations, new park developments, recreational corridors, wetlands plantings, and coastal forest restoration projects.

NanoFex, LLC – David Culpepper

NanoFex manufactures patented carbon microspheres with nanoscale iron. These microspheres are an affordable, effective product for remediating a common but extremely dangerous waste product.

NOvate Medical Technologies – William Kethman

NOvate Medical Technologies is a New Orleans-based medical device development company focused on commercializing low-cost medical products. NOvate's first product offering, SafeSnip, is aimed at decreasing healthcare costs and increasing standards of care while addressing global health issues. SafeSnip is a disposable obstetric device that simultaneously cuts, clamps, and shields the umbilical cord from infection.

Advanced Polymer Monitoring Technologies – Alex Reed

APMT seeks to provide monitoring and control solutions to polymer manufacturers around the world in order to eliminate rampant process inefficiencies and deliver value to manufacturers in the form of significant cost-savings and increased production yield.

Whetstone – Eric Seling

Whetstone gives school leaders a web based tool that records and sorts teacher observation data.

ZingBoard – James Blicht

ZingBoard connects parents, teachers, and schools around student achievements inside and out of school. This secure online platform promotes student achievement by allowing students to share their personal accomplishments, awards, community involvement and any of their proudest accomplishments with their peers, family and school.