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New Orleans Entrepreneur Week Celebrates 10th Anniversary Built on Citywide Footprint

\$330,000 awarded to entrepreneurs in funds and services

NEW ORLEANS (April 5, 2018)— Today, The Idea Village announced that during 10th annual New Orleans Entrepreneur Week (NOEW), presented by JPMorgan Chase & Co., \$330,000 in funding and services was awarded to entrepreneurs over six days with 60 events happening across New Orleans. Over the last decade of NOEW, over \$4.3M in cash and prizes have been awarded to entrepreneurs and 760 entrepreneurs have been featured as part of the event.

This year saw the launch of “NOEW in Your Neighborhood,” with events hosted by partners in Broadmoor, Bywater, Central City, Central Business District, Lakeview, Treme, Uptown, and St. Bernard Parish, culminating in a two-day summit at NOEW HQ located at the Contemporary Arts Center and The Shop at the CAC.

“Entrepreneurship doesn’t just happen downtown, it happens in every day in every neighborhood in our city. By working with incredible partner organizations across the region, we were able to host pitch competitions, workshops, and networking events throughout New Orleans, deepening our engagement with local communities and expanding our impact in a meaningful way,” said Victoria Adams Phipps, NOEW’s Executive Producer at The Idea Village. “NOEW 2018 provided a platform to connect in a city like no other, to invest in a city like no other, and to learn, pitch, and network in a city like no other.”

NOEW culminated in a keynote by Founding Partner of TPG Capital, Jim Coulter, sponsored by IBERIABANK. Coulter highlighted the upward trajectory of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in New Orleans before presenting emerging technology and trends in the industries of sports, retail, and cryptocurrency. Immediately following, the Coulter IDEApitch, sponsored by Pan-American Life Insurance Group, began and featured pitches from three finalists: AxoSim, Dig, and ExemptMeNow.

An audience vote awarded AxoSim the IDEApitch winner and access to a \$100,000 investment toward its next round of funding. Founded by Lowry Curley, PhD, Michael J. Moore, PhD, Ben Capiello, and Drew Mouton, AxoSim’s Nerve-on-a-Chip platform is changing the way new drugs are tested using engineered human nerve tissue that looks and functions like real human nerves. This allows pharmaceutical companies to develop safer and more effective drugs before they ever do a clinical trial, helping to solve for the roughly 94 percent of drugs intended to treat neurodegenerative diseases that fail in clinical trials.

Key Highlights from NOEW 2018

- **23 strategic partners** hosted citywide events affiliated with NOEW.
- Events were hosted in **8 different neighbors**, including: Broadmoor, Bywater, Central City, Central Business District, Lakeview, Treme, Uptown, and St. Bernard Parish.
- **47% of the companies that participated in NOEW 2018 are women-owned businesses.**
- People gathered from over **100 zip codes** to attend the festivities throughout the week.
- **Vizzit and Tulane University** won the IDEAcorns MBA Consulting Challenge hosted by Loyola University New Orleans.
- The **18th Annual Tulane Business Model Competition** finalists are **Assistent** (Johns Hopkins University), **Boost Linguistics** (Drexel University), and **Uchoose Lunchbox** (University of Arkansas). The competition's final round will be held on April 19 at Tulane University.
- **Salt and Light Pastry Co.** took first place at **Launch NOLA's pitch competition** for graduates of its Business Academy with \$6,500 in cash and in-kind prizes.
- **Clean Course Meals** won the **Startup St. Bernard pitch competition** with a prize package of over \$100,000. They will locate their base of operations to St. Bernard Parish to help improve the Parish image and become part of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- Prior to their Economic Inclusion & Capital Strategies for Small Businesses panel at NOEW, **JPMorgan Chase & Co. announced its \$700,000 investment in the New Orleans entrepreneurial ecosystem** to support women and minority-owned businesses specifically through Propeller, Good Work Network, and Camelback Ventures' Good Jobs Initiative.
- The **2018 Women Entrepreneur Fellowship** awarded a fellowship with Junior League of New Orleans and a \$7,500 grant to **Greek Girls Rice Pudding**.
- **The winner of the inaugural NOLA Health Innovators Challenge is Alertgy.** Awarded \$36,000, Alertgy will also have the opportunity to participate in a pilot study with both Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana and Ochsner Health System.
- The Downtown Development District, Creative Alliance of New Orleans, and Louisiana Cultural Economy Foundation held the 6th annual **Downtown NOLA Arts-based Business Pitch** and awarded **HaberdaSHE** with a \$40,000 prize package.
- Four finalists of the Urban League of Louisiana's **Women-In-Business Challenge** competed for prizes and resources to support their growth plans. **Cake Face Soaping**, an all-natural vegan soap brand, received first place and \$10,000.
- The **2018 Water Challenge** hosted by Propeller and presented by the Greater New Orleans Foundation awarded \$10,000 in startup funding to **Water Block** for ideas improving urban water, coastal environments, and the local water economy.
- National thought leaders traveled to New Orleans to deliver keynote addresses with topics ranging from startup success stories to lessons learned in the workplace by powerhouse women. The 2018 headliners included **Jim Coulter, Founding Partner and Co-CEO at TPG Capital; Kevin Dawson, Vice President of GE Digital New Orleans; Kevin**

Lin, Co-founder of Twitch; Robbie Montgomery, Owner of Sweetie Pie's; and Gabrielle Toledano, Chief People Officer of Tesla Inc.

- Eleven of fourteen early-stage New Orleans startups currently participating in The Idea Village's IDEAx accelerator program pitched and showcased their companies at **Demo Day**. Participants included **Brass City Shrub & Soda, Fanalysis, Free Your Tea, Lily Reign, Maverick VR, Navé, Pang Wangle, Pet Krewe, ProductMatchr, Stop & Block, and Vizzit.**
- **AxoSim, Dig, and ExemptMeNow** participated in the Coulter IDEApitch competition. AxoSim received first place and access to a \$100,000 investment toward its next round of funding.

ABOUT THE IDEA VILLAGE: The Idea Village was formed in 2000 by a group of New Orleans citizens who saw entrepreneurship as a catalyst for change. The Idea Village is an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that provides direct service to high impact entrepreneurs, convenes the ecosystem through NOEW, and supports initiatives that strengthen our entrepreneurial infrastructure. The Idea Village received the Gold Excellence award from the International Economic Development Council for our Entrepreneur Season model in 2012 and was recognized as a top-three entrepreneurship ecosystem developer in 2014 by the Global Innovation Summit. For more information: www.ideavillage.org.

ABOUT NEW ORLEANS ENTREPRENEUR WEEK: New Orleans Entrepreneur Week (NOEW), presented by JPMorgan Chase & Co., is the leading platform for celebrating business, innovation, and entrepreneurial thinking in New Orleans. Produced by The Idea Village in partnership with Solomon Group, NOEW elevates entrepreneurship through discussion, debate, education, competition, and celebration. For more information: www.NOEW.org.

ABOUT JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.: JPMORGAN CHASE and its bank predecessors have been doing business in New Orleans for more than 180 years. The bank has more than 2,500 employees in Louisiana and more than 2 million customers statewide. Chase has been ranked the State's #1 SBA lender for five consecutive years. Since Hurricane Katrina in 2005, JPMorgan Chase has invested \$40 million to nonprofits working in Louisiana, including \$6.5 million statewide in support of Workforce Readiness and \$2 million in support of Small Business Development.

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CONTACT: Ali Carlisle, ali@ideavillage.org + 502.445.3265
Kelsey Petry, kpetry@bondmoroch.com + 504.323.8134