

CONTACT:

Molly Horton
Marketing Coordinator, The Idea Village
203.550.4902
molly@ideavillage.org

Patricia M. Murret
Associate Director of Public Affairs, Loyola University
504.861.5448 (desk) 504.352.8775 (cell)
pmurret@loyno.edu | publaff@loyno.edu

For Immediate Release

The Idea Village and Loyola University New Orleans Host IDEAcorns Challenge

Call for applications: Teams of MBA students will advance startups during 4 days of New Orleans Entrepreneur Week

NEW ORLEANS (November 12, 2015) – Today, The [Idea Village](#), in partnership with [Loyola University New Orleans](#), announces that applications are now open for MBA students aspiring to be team leaders during the immersive [IDEAcorns consulting challenge](#). The IDEAcorns consulting challenge is an exclusive MBA student experience through which teams of students will help founders of New Orleans-based startups to advance their companies in four days during New Orleans Entrepreneur Week, presented by Iberia Bank, from **March 10-13, 2016**.

MBA students interested in being IDEAcorns team leaders are invited to apply at bit.ly/IDEAcornsApp before **Saturday, Dec. 5 at 11:59 p.m. CST**. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, and those selected to be leaders will then recruit six students for their teams.

“IDEAcorns is more than a competition,” said Tim Williamson, co-founder of The Idea Village. “It’s an uncommonly transformative experience that plugs MBA students directly into the local entrepreneurial network.”

Founded in 2006 by The Idea Village, IDEAcorns has engaged more than 500 MBAs from across the country to work one-on-one with New Orleans entrepreneurs. Past teams have hailed from business schools at Stanford University, Harvard, Dartmouth College, Northwestern University, and Cornell University.

This year, the IDEAcorns consulting challenge will be hosted for the first time by Loyola University New Orleans, where the College of Business has a new and invigorated focus on entrepreneurship and newly established Center for Entrepreneurship and Community Development (CEDC). The challenge will focus on local immersion and deeper integration from local stakeholders by recruiting MBA student team leaders from Loyola University, LSU, Tulane University, UNO, and other universities in the region. In this way, the challenge will help to spotlight and boost entrepreneurship and local start-ups based in New Orleans.

“IDEAcorns opened opportunities for me in the entrepreneurship space that I wouldn’t have otherwise been able to access,” said Jon Atkinson, founding director of Loyola’s CEDC, established in September 2014. “It’s a foundation of the program at Loyola and something we want to make sustainable and maintain as a pillar for New Orleans Entrepreneur Week.”

An IDEAcorns alumnus, Atkinson was part of the [winning student team in 2010](#) and credits his career success to his IDEAcorns experience. Atkinson has been named a part of both the Silicon Bayou 100 and New Orleans CityBusiness’ 2015 Money Makers. In addition to founding Loyola’s CEDC, he has acted as guest judge for Startup Weekend, NOLA Tech Week, and other events in the city’s entrepreneurial community.

For more information about the program or its application process, contact Jon Atkinson at jatkinson@loyno.edu

ABOUT THE IDEA VILLAGE:

Founded in 2000, The Idea Village is an independent 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization based in New Orleans that provides direct service to high impact entrepreneurs, convenes the ecosystem through New Orleans Entrepreneur Week, and supports



initiatives that strengthen our entrepreneurial infrastructure. The Idea Village received a Gold Excellence award from the International Economic Development Council for our Entrepreneur Season model in 2012, and we were recognized as a top-three entrepreneurship ecosystem developer in 2014 by the Global Innovation Summit.

For more information: www.ideavillage.org

ABOUT LOYOLA CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Center for Entrepreneurship and Community Development at Loyola University New Orleans combines experiential and academic learning to train college graduates in business, startup, and technology skills. The Center aims for these Loyola graduates, who tend to stay in New Orleans after college, to become the “innovation-ready workforce” needed to help businesses in the area start and scale successfully. The Center, along with Loyola’s College of Business, supports an academic entrepreneurship minor, as well as fall and spring internship placements to give students real-world experience in working with local startups, incubators, and accelerators.

For more information: www.business.loyno.edu/cecd

ABOUT NEW ORLEANS ENTREPRENEUR WEEK

New Orleans Entrepreneur Week (NOEW), presented by IBERIABANK, is an annual festival celebrating innovation, entrepreneurship, and forward thinking in New Orleans. Produced by The Idea Village, NOEW engages a dynamic global network of entrepreneurs, investors, corporations, and professionals to support growing companies and elevate entrepreneurial successes. NOEW 2015 was record breaking, engaging 10,585 people through 86 unique events hosted in conjunction with over 40 local and national partners.

For more information: www.noew.org

###