

For Immediate Release

The Idea Village Announces its 2016 Entrepreneur Season Entrepreneurs-in-Residence

Advisory talent with over 50 years of combined startup experience to lead suite of accelerator programs during the 2016 Season



From left to right: The 2016 Idea Village Entrepreneurs-in-Residence J. Miguez, Megan Hargroder, and Hank Torbert

NEW ORLEANS (August 13, 2015) – Today, The Idea Village announces the Entrepreneurs-in-Residence (EIRs) managing the organization’s suite of entrepreneur accelerator programs during the 2016 Entrepreneur Season. They include serial entrepreneur **J. Anthony Miguez**, digital marketing expert **Megan Hargroder**, and private equity investor **Hank Torbert**. With over 50 years of combined experience in startup ventures, investment, and communications, J., Megan, and Hank will provide individualized coaching, intensive business consulting, and opportunities for peer learning for up to 15 founders through the following three accelerators:

- **IDEAx:** 12-week program for 5 New Orleans-based founders creating scalable businesses. [Learn more here.](#)
- **DIGITAL MEDIAx:** 12-week program for 5 New Orleans-based founders with innovative digital information sharing concepts readily accessible on a mobile platform, hosted in partnership with NOLA Media Group. [Learn more here.](#)
- **ENERGYx:** 12-week program for 5 Louisiana-based oil and gas startups, hosted in partnership with the Southeast Louisiana Energy Initiative. [Learn more here.](#)

In addition to intensive coaching from the EIRs, all accelerator participants will have access to a dedicated team of startup experts who will provide direct support in areas such as communications, copy editing, financial modeling, and product development. Experts confirmed to date include: Peter Bodenheimer of FlatStack and Launch Pad, Sally Forman and Maureen Huguley of Forman Huguley Consulting, Nikki Carter of Spirit Style & Scribe, and Sam Peake of If Financials.

Anyone interested in learning more about The Idea Village’s 2016 programs is invited attend the 2016 Season kickoff event, Entrepalooza, on Sunday, August 30th at noon at the NOLA Brewery Taproom, where Miguez, Hargroder, and Torbert – as well as the 2016 startup experts – will be available to answer questions and help potential applicants navigate this year’s offerings.

“The Idea Village supports entrepreneurs by engaging experienced mentors to support founders during the critical startup phase,” said Tim Williamson, Co-founder and CEO of The Idea Village. “The 2016 EIRs and startup experts all have unique backgrounds, unparalleled experience, and robust personal networks for entrepreneurs looking to start and scale a venture in New Orleans.”

The Idea Village’s accelerator programs are highly competitive in an effort to identify the most capable entrepreneurs. Of the 180 entrepreneurs that have gone through an accelerator since 2002, 83% are still in business and 91% are still located in New Orleans. Collectively, these entrepreneurs have raised over \$75 million in private capital, created over 1,300 jobs, and generate \$155 million in annual revenue. Alumni include: 4D Supplements, Advanced Polymer Monitoring Technologies, Audiosocket, BeneFit, Better Day Health, Be Well Nutrition, Bioceptive, Bluebag, Cajun Fire Brewing Company, ChapterSpot, Cordina, CultureConnect, Dinner Lab, Dukky, education everytime, eTax Credit Exchange, Federated Sample, Gustofy, IMOTO Photo, iSeatz, KREWE du optic, gotointerview.com, Huka Entertainment, Jack & Jake’s, Kickboard, LifeCity, Locally.com, Maritant, MobileQubes, mSchool, Munivestor, MyMix Nutrition, Naked Pizza, NOLA Brewing Company, NOLAcajun.com, NOLA Couture, NOvate Medical Technologies, NuMe Health, The Occasional Wife, The Remedy Room, Retail Goose, Spa Workshop, StaffInsight, Tutti Dynamics, Welcome to College, Your Nutrition Delivered, and zlien.

To learn more about each of The Idea Village’s 2016 accelerators and to RSVP for Entrepalooza, visit www.ideavillage.org.

ABOUT THE 2016 ENTREPRENEURS-IN-RESIDENCE:

A serial entrepreneur, **Miguez** has been working with early-stage companies for nearly two decades. He was head of strategy for Zurich Scudder’s venture capital group, where he led the development and implementation of the firm’s eFinancial Services investment approach. He works as both an advisor and member of numerous investment funds, angel investors, and promising startups. Back for



his second year as IDEAx EIR, his specialties include competitive assessment, business model development, customer development, investor segmentation and approach, and investor pitch prep.

Hargroder, Co-founder of Conversations, LLC, is dedicated to helping startups create digital and social media strategies that work. With a robust background in broadcast journalism, video production, and communications, she's worked with over 100 businesses and individuals including, local hero Steve Gleason, nonprofits like the Junior League and the League of Women Voters, New Orleans retailers like Earth Savers and Jean Therapy, and campaigns like Partners for Healthy Babies, and Tobacco Free Living.

Torbert, a partner at RLMcCall Capital Partners, has spent the last 20 years in private equity and corporate finance. He has deep industry experience in oil and gas, alternative energy, transportation and technology, and he has played a key role in the launch and expansion of numerous businesses in industrials and other sectors. His specialties include private equity, business development, operations management, corporate restructuring, investment selection and analysis, due diligence, and financial engineering. Over the last few years, he has supported and mentored startups and early-stage ventures through his EIR roles at Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business and The Idea Village.

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

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