28th Annual Michigan Growth Capital Symposium to Draw Heavyweight Investors and Record Number of Early Stage Companies

State Incentives Coupled with Research-Rich University Environment Create the “Perfect Storm” for Venture Investment and Innovation in the Midwest

Ann Arbor, Mich. – April 28, 2009 – Despite the economic challenges of the global recession and looming auto industry troubles, Michigan and the Midwest are poised to become an epicenter of innovation and success for emerging companies in the clean tech, life sciences and high tech arenas. Reflecting this enthusiasm and optimism, organizers of the Michigan Growth Capital Symposium (MGCS) noted increased interest from both leading investment and venture capital firms as well as from early stage companies in the Midwest’s premier annual equity conference which will be held May 12-13, 2009 at the Marriott Resort in Ypsilanti, Mich.

With the event less than two weeks away, MGCS has attracted more than 400 attendees including investors from about 65 venture capital and private equity firms or banks. The event also experienced a record number of applications from startups wishing to present at the conference. Of the 80 submissions, 32 have been selected to present. In addition, MGCS has expanded its program to foster greater cross border collaboration with investors and entrepreneurs in Canada, inking a partnership with the Canadian Venture Capital and Private Equity Association to feature presenting companies from Canada, as well as a panel discussion on cross border investing.

Pointing to a number of state, local and University-based initiatives that have stimulated interest from the investment community in Michigan, David J. Brophy, MGCS Founder and Director and Professor of Finance at the University of Michigan Ross School of Business, said “Michigan is starting to reach critical mass when it comes to growing new, innovative companies. We have been experiencing an increase in the total number of young companies that are being formed around fundamental technologies in the life science areas, information technology, and other related fields. This is the result of a lot of hard work by agencies like the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), Ann Arbor SPARK, and Automation Alley to name a few.”

Since its start in 1979, MGCS has served as a catalyst for innovative companies in the Midwest, and more recently the Symposium has emerged as a nexus for bringing together investors and innovative ideas to establish the foundation for our next generation economy in the Midwest. Thirty-three out of state financial firms are currently registered to attend, including such powerhouses as Globespan Capital Partners, Bay City Capital, Essex Woodlands Health Ventures, Apex Venture Partners, Domain Associates, Baird Venture Partners, and TD Capital. Together these firms represent over $12.5 billion under management.
Ned Staebler, Director of Capital Markets Development for MEDC notes that the State of Michigan is still standing by to fund and help grow businesses. “We try to build the infrastructure of venture capital, of alternative investors, of angel investors, so that there is more of a support network out there. Michigan doesn’t just need more venture capital, we need more people who know how to take early stage companies and grow them. MGCS is a fabulous event and every year they seem to get more investors with better companies.”

MGCS is the premier networking event for leaders in the venture capital investment world to connect with the entrepreneurs, startups and emerging growth companies that are actively searching for partners and funding. To register or for more information on MGCS, please visit [www.Michigangcs.com](http://www.Michigangcs.com).

**About the Michigan Growth Capital Symposium (MGCS)**

MGCS is the original university-based venture fair, which was first held in 1979. This nationally attended two-day event provides an opportunity for financiers to connect with up-and-coming Midwest businesses and learn about emerging technologies. The Symposium offers the opportunity to build relationships with an unparalleled business network of distinguished private equity industry leaders, leading university research faculty, and entrepreneurial business professionals. Entering its 28th year, MGCS continues to draw top investors from coast to coast. MGCS is hosted by the Stephen M. Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan and its Center for Venture Capital and Private Equity Finance of the [Samuel Zell & Robert H. Lurie Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies](http://samuelzell.org).

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