Michigan Growth Capital Symposium Creates Investment and Growth Opportunities for Startups Across Midwest

*Midwest equity event marks 30 years at the center of innovation and growth capital investing in the region*

Ann Arbor, Mich. – April 4, 2011 – Every May for the past three decades, investors from across the country have travelled to the Michigan Growth Capital Symposium for a first look at the most promising start ups emerging from the greater Midwest. These “Best of the Midwest” companies represent the high growth industries, such as technology, life sciences, advanced manufacturing and alternative energy, that are driving economic development in the region and positioning it to become a hub for innovation and investment activity.

Although many of the Symposium’s most successful presenting companies hail from Michigan, such as HealthMedia and HandyLab, the event is also a vehicle to showcase the best and the brightest from surrounding states. Of the 300 companies that have presented at the Symposium in the past decade, over one-third come from the greater Midwest, including Ohio, Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin. With the help of the visibility and networking opportunities provided at the Symposium, the majority of these companies have gone on to receive investment dollars and nearly 20 percent have realized successful exits.

Popular retail health care center, MinuteClinic, was a small Minnesota-based startup known as QuickMedx when it presented at the Symposium in 2003. The company now operates over 500 locations in 26 states and was acquired by CVS Corporation in 2006. Other successful Symposium alumni companies include:

- **Zystor** (2010 presenter) – A Wisconsin-based developer of enzyme replacement therapies for treating lysosomal storage disorders that experienced a $115 exit in 2010 when it was acquired by BioMarin Pharmaceutical Inc
- **Orion Energy Systems** (2006 presenter) - A Wisconsin-based energy efficient technology company that completed its initial public offering (IPO) in April 2010
- **Arryx** (2003 presenter) - A Chicago-based provider of innovative blood management solutions that was purchased by Haemonetics Corporation in 2006 for $26 million

Dean Koch, president, CEO and member of the Board of Directors of Ohio-based CerviLenz, presented at the 2010 event and noted several positive outcomes resulting from the company’s participation. “I had an opportunity to talk to a number of venture funds from around the country and identify a few funds that would potentially play a role in our B Round,” he said. “That’s the purpose at this point: to get a widening group of funds that are aware of us, and see where there might be some
matches based on the size of their funds. By developing a relationship with them over time, they get an opportunity to see us as a management team hit our milestones.”

“When I started the Symposium, Ted Doan, who had been CEO of Dow Chemical and ran one of the first venture funds, said it would be a 30 year job to influence the direction of the Midwest toward knowledge-based industry,” said Symposium founder David Brophy. “This whole effort has been about that – and specifically to repair the deficiency we had in access to finance in here—by giving young companies the opportunity to present themselves to investors from around the country. That portal idea has taken hold, and it’s been emulated literally around the world. This program has resonated very well with anybody who is interested in building an entrepreneurial company and funding it.”

Presenting companies for the 2011 event will be unveiled in late April. Hosted by the Ross School of Business’ Zell Lurie Institute at the University of Michigan with support from the Michigan Venture Capital Association, The Michigan Growth Capital Symposium is taking place May 10-11 at the Marriott Resort in Ypsilanti. Visit www.michigangcs.com to register to attend, and track #MGCS on Twitter for up-to-the-minute event updates.

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 and entrepreneurial business professionals. Entering its 30th year, MGCS continues to draw top investors from coast to coast. MGCS is presented by the Center for Venture Capital & Private Equity Finance at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan with support from the Michigan Venture Capital Association.