28TH Annual Michigan Growth Capital Symposium to Feature Cross-Border Venture Investment Opportunities with Canada

Unveils Collaboration with Canadian Venture Capital and Private Equity Association to Bring Panel Discussions and Presenting Companies to Midwest’s Premier Equity Event

Ann Arbor, Mich. – March 10, 2009 – Recognizing the unique investment opportunities that exist through closer collaboration between Michigan and Canadian VCs and entrepreneurs, the Michigan Growth Capital Symposium (MGCS) today unveiled a cross-border venture investment theme for its 28th annual event, which will be held May 12-13, 2009 at the Marriott Resort in Ypsilanti, Mich. Partnering for the first time with the Canadian Venture Capital and Private Equity Association (CVCA), MGCS will feature a cross-border investment panel discussion and profile eight Canadian companies as part of its conference agenda.

“Cross-border deals between U.S.-based entrepreneurs and investors and their Canadian counterparts are heating up,” stated David J. Brophy, MGCS Founder and Director and Professor of Finance at the University of Michigan Ross School of Business. “While MGCS has had Canadian companies present in the past, I have not sensed the institutional interest that exists now. The integration of these technology and investment vectors is growing – expanding networks, building bridges to additional capital pools, and in general heightening potential for investors and entrepreneurs.”

Over the past several years the number of U.S./Canadian cross border deals has been rising. Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.C. Principal Jeff Labine said “Smaller early-stage deals have great potential in Canada, and the VC community should find a more agile market up north. Canada has a wealth of IP. While their tax structure can be sometimes problematic from a U.S. perspective in putting your money over there, their tax structure can also be extremely advantageous at the startup point for their domestic companies.”

In addition to spotlighting eight innovative Canadian startups, increased VC activity between U.S. and Canadian interests will be reflected at MGCS through a panel discussion on cross-border deals. Moderated by Sunil Sharma, Director of International Relations for the CVCA and Senior Trade Commissioner for Venture Capital, Canada’s Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the panel will feature John Albright of the Blackberry Partners Fund; Peter van der Velden of Lumira Capital and Ian Carew from TD Capital Private Equity.

Sharma said the Canadian venture community is very interested in broadening the dialogue with Michigan. “We're very good as a country at seeding early stage companies, but we have to engage U.S. and international capital providers more aggressively to provide some later-stage funding. At the
same time, we have very active Canadian VC’s and other investors who are interested in sourcing deals from outside Canada.”

Commenting on the breadth of cross-border investment opportunities with Canada, Tom Anderson, director of Troy-based Automation Alley, which will take a delegation of small companies on a trade mission to Canada this May, said “Canada is our biggest trading partner, and for technology companies there are also some pretty attractive R&D tax credits available in Canada.”

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.

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.

About Canada’s Venture Capital & Private Equity Association (CVCA)
The CVCA was founded in 1974 and is the association that represents Canada’s venture capital and private equity industry. Its over 1600 members are firms and organizations which manage the majority of Canada’s pools of capital designated to be committed to venture capital and private equity investments. The CVCA fosters professional development, networking, communication, research and education within the venture capital and private equity sector and represents the industry in public policy matters.

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