U-M's Frankel Fund announces new investment

ANN ARBOR, Mich.---The Frankel Commercialization Fund, a student-managed venture capital seed fund at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business, has announced its second investment.

The fund will provide $71,000 to BeholzTech Inc., a company founded in Flint, Mich., by Lars Beholz, a visiting associate professor of chemistry at Kettering University. BeholzTech's technology effectively coats polyolefin plastics, making them easier to modify and adhere to other materials. Polyolefins are tiny plastic pellets that are used to make thousands of products we use everyday.

Prior to Beholz's innovation, the coating, bonding and chemical modification of polyolefin plastics was generally prohibitive due to the significant financial investment required and the potentially dangerous chemical byproducts created. BeholzTech's safer, cheaper and more effective technology to treat polyolefin plastics will enable the further use of polyolefins by the $110 billion plastics industry.

"We are really pleased to have been able to partner with the Frankel Fund," Beholz said. "The money provided will be absolutely critical to enable BeholzTech to produce sample products with which to begin discussions with potential customers and future investors. Working with the Frankel Fund has been a great learning experience as I navigate the company through its startup phase."

BeholzTech intends to use the seed money for prototype development, customer identification, marketing plan development and the recruitment of key management personnel.

The team of Frankel Fund students responsible for the investment, all of whom are Ross School of Business MBAs, includes Jason Dishlip, Laura Bruce, Jessica Goldberg and Michael Edison.

"Our students have learned a great deal about technology commercialization and investment due diligence by working with BeholzTech," said Tom Porter, executive-in-residence at the Zell Lurie Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies and director of the Frankel Commercialization Fund. "They will remain actively involved in monitoring BeholzTech's progress, providing guidance and ensuring BeholzTech is adhering to milestones to advance the growth of company."

The Frankel Commercialization Fund is continually seeking opportunities to help jumpstart new companies in Michigan. Established in 2005, the fund is believed to be the only student venture capital fund of its kind with a focus on the commercialization of
ideas and development of new companies. Investments are focused on early-stage companies, and are often known as "seed" or "pre-seed" investments.

The Fund is organized into student teams that function as independently financed venture capital firms providing capital to very early-stage companies generally considered to be in the seed stage of development.

Companies and individuals interested in obtaining funding from the Frankel Fund can submit applications at any time. Additional information about the Frankel Fund and the fund's application process may be found on the Frankel Fund Web site at www.frankelfund.com or by contacting Porter at tporter@umich.edu.

BeholzTech Inc. is a developer of a new generation of environmentally aware performance coatings and materials for use in advanced manufacturing and beyond. For more information about the company, visit www.beholztech.com.