University of Michigan Zell Lurie Institute Catapults Students to Success

Expanded Programs in 2008 Maximize Educational Impact on Developing Entrepreneurial Skill Set within Each Student to Create and Finance New Ventures

Ann Arbor, Mich. – Nov. 11, 2008 – The Samuel Zell & Robert H. Lurie Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies / Center for Venture Capital & Private Equity Finance, today unveiled significant milestones in the development of world-leading post-graduate entrepreneurial education that have prepared students to harness the power of the entrepreneurial skill set no matter their career path – whether it is in an entrepreneurial enterprise, an established corporation launching a new subsidiary or a private equity firm turning around a struggling business.

During the 2008-2009 academic year expanded programs are giving students the tools they need to succeed post-graduation.

Student-led Venture Funds Provide a Living Lab to Experience Venture Capital Investing from the Ground Up

For students looking to refine their investment skills and position themselves for opportunities in the venture capital industry, the Frankel Commercialization Fund and the Wolverine Venture Fund provide a host of financing opportunities to ensure promising ideas receive the critical financial backing necessary to launch and develop.

The Frankel Commercialization Fund, launched in early 2006, focuses on pre-seed and early stage venture capital investing for the commercialization of ideas of U-M spinouts. The Fund currently has investments in three companies, including Surgimatix Inc., a developer of a new suturing approach for the health care market, Arbor Photonics, an optical fiber technology innovator and Beholz Technology, an advanced plastics provider.

The Frankel Fund, organized into student teams that function as independently financed venture capital companies providing early stage investing, challenges students to research the commercialization potential of scientific discoveries and inventions arising from the University of Michigan’s College of Engineering and School of Medicine. Through rigorous due diligence and active involvement in guiding the progress of companies in which they invest, this year’s student teams are gaining invaluable experience by receiving real-world exposure to the venture capital investment process.

The $3.5 million Wolverine Venture Fund this fall celebrated the tenth anniversary from the time of its first investment in 1998 in IntraLase. In 2004, the fund realized its first IPO with IntraLase, which returned over $1 million to the fund. This fund is the first student led venture fund of its kind in the U.S. Since it’s inception in 1997, the Fund has served as a model for other University-based student-led funds.

This year the fund made five new investments: Accord Biomaterials, Quantum Learning Technologies, IntelePeer, Environmental Operating Solutions, and Lycera Corporation, providing
thirty two MBA students, who manage the fund, invaluable experience in the due diligence process in preparing for an investment decision and learning from a host of seasoned venture capitalists that serve on the Fund’s Advisory Board.

Said Munish Gandhi, MBA 2007 student: “My participation in the Wolverine Venture Fund has been the highlight of my action-based learning experience at the Ross School of Business. The WVF has helped me develop judgment by analyzing deals in a rigorous and structured manner and making decisions that result in real investments.”

**Dare to Dream Grant Funding: Supporting Student CEOs Vision for New Venture Creation**

Students who wish to develop their own entrepreneurial business concepts and work toward the launch of their business, have the advantage of access to funding awarded to students through the Institute’s Dare to Dream program. The program annually provides up to $100,000 in grant funding to students to support the development of nascent business ideas into companies ready for launch.

This fall over 30 student teams received funding. Additional funding opportunities will be made available by combining the Michigan Business Plan and Intercollegiate Business Plan competitions, which typically host over 30 teams with prize money awarded to student companies whose business models are deemed most likely to succeed. Teams representing the University of Michigan were awarded a total of $103,250 in prize money during the 2007-2008 academic year.

**Michigan Growth Capital Symposium and Entrepalooza: Connecting Entrepreneurs and Investors**

This year the Institute will continue its role as a liaison for entrepreneurs and investment partners through the Michigan Growth Capital Symposium. The upcoming 28th symposium will feature a carefully screened group of 30 companies representing high-growth industries such as information technology, life sciences and alternative energy, all of whom presented their business ideas to an audience of venture capitalists, angel investors and institutional investors.

The Institute’s role in helping students conceive of and build new ventures was on full display during the 2008 Entrepalooza symposium. This annual event kicked-off the academic year bringing together leading entrepreneurs, venture capitalists and business executives who offered advice on the full spectrum of entrepreneurial activity.

“This is an exciting time for our students and faculty alike, with expanded programs that continue to foster the critical entrepreneurial skill set in our students while providing unmatched opportunities to network, secure necessary funding to start a venture and establish lasting relationships with leaders in the business community,” said Tom Kinnear, director of the Samuel Zell & Robert H. Lurie Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies/Center for Venture Capital & Private Equity Finance. “We look forward to continuing to deliver the world-class program that our students have come to expect.”

**About the Samuel Zell & Robert H. Lurie Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies / Center for Venture Capital & Private Equity Finance**

The Institute and its Center for Venture Capital and Private Equity Finance bring together a potent mix of knowledge, experience and opportunities from the front lines of entrepreneurship and alternative investments. The student learning experience is further enhanced through internships, entrepreneurial clubs and organization and events that serve to provide viable networks and engage the business community. The School’s two student-led investment funds, with over $3M in management, immerse students in the business assessment and investment process. Members of the Advisory Board include Samuel Zell, Chairman of Equity Group Investments; Michael Hallman, former COO of Microsoft Corporation; and Eugene Applebaum, Founder of Arbor Drugs, Inc. For more information, visit the Institute at [www.zli.bus.umich.edu](http://www.zli.bus.umich.edu).

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