

INVESTMIDWEST PANEL SELECTS 44 FIRMS TO PRESENT AT PREMIER VENTURE CAPITAL FORUM IN APRIL

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St. Louis, Mo., March 2, 2012...Forty-four entrepreneurial growth companies developing products and services that address many of the global issues making recent headlines have been selected to participate in the 13th Annual InvestMidwest Venture Capital Forum in St. Louis. Set for April 4-5 at the Hilton St. Louis at the Ballpark, the event will showcase some of the most promising emerging companies in the life sciences, technology and clean energy/sustainability fields. The chosen teams, which come from 10 states, are busy working with the coaches from InvestMidwest in preparation for the unique opportunity to present their business plans to an audience of the nation's top venture capitalists, corporate and private investors, and investment bankers.

This year's selected presenters include companies from Colorado, Kansas, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, Ohio, Utah and Wisconsin. The applicants were reviewed by a panel of experts, and the companies were selected based on their value, proposition, products/services, financial summaries, management teams and marketing strategies and opportunities. The early registration deadline for investors who want to attend the forum and see these presenting companies is March 16. Details regarding the registration process and fees are available at www.investmidwestforum.com.

"We are very pleased with the response we received for the 2012 forum, and we are eager to give these 44 promising companies the chance to present their ideas before

potential investors," said Chris Walsh, executive director of InvestMidwest. "We are confident that the 44 companies we've chosen for this year's forum will provide regional and national investors with excellent and diverse investment opportunities."

Since its first forum in St. Louis in May 2000, InvestMidwest has helped generate over \$850 million in investments and acquisitions for innovative growth companies. InvestMidwest's mission is to provide access to equity capital for emerging, privately held companies seeking venture funds from \$1 million to \$20 million. Because InvestMidwest is such a concentrated opportunity to meet with venture investors, many consider it the Midwest's premier annual venture capital forum.

More than 350 entrepreneurial companies have presented at InvestMidwest over the past 12 years. This year, the clean energy/sustainability track will showcase presenters whose ultimate goal is to enhance energy efficiency and promote sustainability, whether it be by developing ways to expand electric car use, reducing water usage, recycling industrial waste or by utilizing technology that converts waste into biofuels. Presenters in the technology track include companies that have developed software to help better protect identities and further connect businesses, and companies that are making advancements in mobile phone technology, including one company that has developed a touch screen technology that creates the sense of real touch. The life sciences track will feature several innovative medical device firms that have developed devices to help treat aneurysms, upper extremity paralysis and complex spinal problems, among others. The track will also include biopharmaceutical companies focused on enhanced diagnostics and the development of drugs that could potentially treat and cure human diseases and disorders.

As an additional highlight, the 2012 forum will feature presentations by two renowned speakers on Thursday, April 5. Dr. James Bullard, President and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, is serving as the breakfast speaker. Dr. Bullard was named one of the 100 Most Influential People in Finance in 2011 by Treasury and Risk magazine. Jim McKelvey, a successful entrepreneur and co-founder of the mobile payment company Square will kick off the luncheon program. Recognized for his work in creating Square and for his role as co-founder of Third Degree Glass Factory, the largest glass art education center in St. Louis, and founder of Mira, a digital publishing company, McKelvey will share insight on his experiences with these flourishing enterprises.

The 13th annual InvestMidwest Venture Capital Forum is supported by a diverse group of public and corporate sponsors. Organizational sponsors include the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association (RCGA), Missouri Venture Forum, KCSourceLink and The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce.

For more information about the InvestMidwest Venture Capital Forum or registration information, visit www.investmidwestforum.com or call 314.444.1151.