



GREATER MADISON
CHAMBER of COMMERCE

NEWS

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Chamber Accepting Applications for Fifth Annual Pressure Chamber Competition

Region's premier pitch event returns Aug. 16 to kick off eight-day Forward Fest

MADISON – The Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce announced today it is accepting applications for this year's Pressure Chamber startup program, which returns Aug. 16 to kick off Forward Festival, an eight-day celebration of entrepreneurship and innovation in Madison. The popular initiative includes participation and support from active regional investment firms, as well as the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.

"Since its beginning four years ago, Pressure Chamber has provided an impactful platform for dozens of growing companies to tell their story and connect with new opportunities," said Chamber Vice President Kevin Little. "We look forward to another year showcasing the very best of Greater Madison's startup scene."

Applicants for Pressure Chamber go through a screening process that may include presentations with prominent Wisconsin investors. From there, a select number of companies will be chosen to pitch in front of a panel of out-of-state investors, business executives and a live audience during Forward Fest. The winning company is decided based on a combination of judges scoring and audience votes. In addition to receiving the coveted "golden suitcase," the winning company will also receive an all-expenses paid spot on the Chamber's exclusive Madison-area startup delegation to San Francisco this October for meetings with top Silicon Valley investment firms.

Little noted the recent launch of new, daily non-stop service connecting Dane County Regional Airport and San Francisco International Airport as an additional proof point of Greater Madison's economic momentum.

"In our first few community trips west, our primary objective was getting Silicon Valley's attention to the talent and innovation here. We are excited to return this year and let them know it's more convenient and quicker than ever to see it in person," he added.

Past Pressure Chamber winners have credited the initiative for helping their company close successful funding rounds. Additionally, Pressure Chamber has been recognized by both the International Economic Development Council and Steve Case's Rise of the Rest Summit as an entrepreneurship and economic development best practice. Participating companies have included EatStreet, Propeller Health, Redox, Datica, Fetch Rewards, HealthMyne, Cardigan, AkitaBox, Moxe, DotCom Therapy, Fishidy, bluDiagnostics, POLCO and more.

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Pressure Chamber is open to any industry, as long as the company meets the following requirements:

- ✓ Must be a member of the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce or support entrepreneurial partner organizations Capital Entrepreneurs and/or Doyenne Group
- ✓ Must be located in Dane County or plan to locate to Dane County by Aug. 16, 2018
- ✓ Must have raised at least \$25,000, excluding personal investment by company founders
- ✓ Application must be received by 5 p.m. on Monday, July 9, 2018

The full application can be accessed at bit.ly/Pressure2018

Pressure Chamber is presented by Michael Best & Friedrich, with support from the State of Wisconsin Investment Board, Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, American Family Ventures, Baird Capital, 4490 Ventures, HealthX Ventures, Lindsay Stone & Briggs and Rock River Capital Partners.

For more information about Forward Fest, please visit <http://www.forwardfest.org/>

About the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce:

The Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business with nearly 1,300 organizations – ranging from one-person shops to corporations with more than 10,000 employees – working to bring the Greater Madison area to its full potential. The Greater Madison region is a leader in innovation. From cutting-edge technologies to distinctive retail shops to inventive services and products, our members vary greatly but are united by the region's entrepreneurial spirit. More information can be found at greatermadisonchamber.com.

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