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Urban Entrepreneurship Symposium to Convene Business Innovators who wish to Serve Urban Communities

Hosted by the Urban Entrepreneurship Initiative and University of Michigan/Innovate Blue, the event will connect those interested in entrepreneurial solutions to urban problems.

Ann Arbor, MI – On **Friday, October 10th**, business, education, government, and community representatives will gather to discuss strategies for creating sustainable, scalable business solutions for urban communities as part of the inaugural **Urban Entrepreneurship Symposium**. This FREE event takes place 8AM - 2PM at the **Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library** located at 1000 Beal Avenue in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Space is limited. Visit www.urbanei.net for tickets.

The keynote speaker for the Symposium is Dr. Jeffrey Robinson from the Rutgers University Center for Urban Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (CUEED). Rutgers CUEED is one of the first academic programs in the nation focused on urban entrepreneurship and economic development.

The Urban Entrepreneurship Initiative (UEI) is producing the Symposium. UEI focuses entrepreneurs and the general public on the challenges, opportunities, and rewards of solving the problems that many urban communities face. UEI aims to encourage and empower the entrepreneurs and businesses that seek to solve such problems.

Thomas Zurbuchen, Senior Counselor for Entrepreneurial Education at the University of Michigan, expresses strong support for the Urban Entrepreneurship Initiative. “Our mission at U-M Innovate Blue is to support both individual creativity and multi-disciplinary teams in tackling the world’s most pressing challenges and opportunities. The Urban Entrepreneurship Initiative falls solidly within that mission, and that is why we are glad to support and host the Symposium.”

David Tarver, UEI founder and Symposium organizer, shares his motivation: “I felt frustration because on the one hand, we have all this entrepreneurial brainpower, and yet not enough of it is focused on the needs of urban communities. That’s a problem worth solving,” he says. Tarver elaborates on what he believes is the solution: “Entrepreneurs are problem-solvers. I believe that when we engage urban communities to determine their needs, entrepreneurs will innovate sustainable ways to address them. That’s what entrepreneurs *do*, and UEI is here to help make it happen.”

The key topics to be addressed at the Symposium are:

- Proven methods for engaging urban communities to determine needs, and for translating those needs into products and services

- Vivid examples of sustainable, scalable, and disruptive businesses that are solving important urban problems
- Students who are attempting to "change the game" via urban entrepreneurship
- Strategic, legal, and financial support systems available to urban entrepreneurs

One of the key outcomes of the Symposium will be an empowered network of individuals and organizations poised to bring more business innovation to cities. The long-term benefit will be a stronger set of enterprises that will make meaningful contributions to the health and wealth of urban communities in Michigan, the United States, and around the world.

ABOUT UEI

The Urban Entrepreneurship Initiative (UEI) facilitates community-driven entrepreneurial solutions to urban problems. David Tarver, a Flint, Michigan native, is the UEI founder. David is a successful engineer, tech entrepreneur, and author, and is currently a faculty member in the University of Michigan Center for Entrepreneurship and the College of Engineering. Learn more at www.urbanei.net



ABOUT U-M INNOVATE BLUE

Innovate Blue unifies the University of Michigan innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem, a web of experience-based curricula, mentorship, university units, and student-led organizations that enables Wolverines to turn their dreams into action. www.innovateblue.umich.edu.



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