



September 23, 2015

University to co-host second annual Urban Entrepreneurship Symposium

DETROIT - The Urban Entrepreneurship Initiative (urbanei.org) will hold its annual Urban Entrepreneurship Symposium on Oct. 23 in Detroit. The University of Michigan will be joined by academic co-sponsors, Michigan State University and Wayne State University, along with business innovators, academics, students and community and government leaders to inspire and ignite for-profit business solutions to urban challenges. The three sponsor universities make up Michigan's University Research Corridor (URC), one of the nation's top academic research clusters and the leading engine for innovation in Michigan and the Great Lakes region.

The University of Michigan held the inaugural Urban Entrepreneurship Symposium in 2014, which drew over 300 attendees. The second Symposium has been moved to Detroit, to be held at a larger venue, with hopes of attracting an even larger audience.

The Symposium connects entrepreneurial leaders with students and members of the community to share their skills and expertise to provide information and tools for aspiring entrepreneurs who wish to create innovative and profitable businesses that benefit the urban community.

"So many of our students, faculty and alumni are dedicated to working with Detroit communities, nonprofits and businesses to create a better tomorrow and a better world," said University of Michigan vice president for government relations Cynthia H. Wilbanks, who will be joining the event to talk about the role of higher education in urban entrepreneurship, along with Michigan State University president LouAnna K. Simon.

"We were pleased to support the first Urban Entrepreneurship Symposium last year, and look forward to bringing together our higher education partners, businesses, students and community this year to raise our collective impact on Detroit's future through entrepreneurship," she said.

The all-day event will feature keynote speaker Miguel McKelvey, the co-founder and creative chief officer at WeWork, Inc., which establishes innovative and collaborative working spaces, and has 17 venues across major cities in the U.S.

After the keynote address, various experts will introduce community engagement strategies that have worked for them and will discuss how they created businesses that solve important urban problems.

During the luncheon program, the Universities will break down their important role in urban innovation, including initiatives they are taking to advance urban quality of life and where these efforts have both succeeded and failed.

The third and final learning session will take place after the luncheon. The topic of this session will be business models for entry-level employment—how certain businesses (for example, Uber) have employed significant levels of low to medium level urban workers.

Afterward, the Symposium attendees will be able to take part in several interactive problem-solving sessions that address various topics including financing urban startups, technology, community engagement and more.

“Detroit is fertile ground for implementing urban business solutions, whether through new app-based technologies that allow for rapid change or a twist on traditional service that meet urban needs in transportation, health care, fresh food or other aspects of day-to-day living and quality of life enhancements,” says W. David Tarver, founder and president of the UEI. Tarver is a graduate from the University of Michigan, holding both undergraduate and graduate degrees in electrical engineering.

The event will conclude with a networking reception from 5-8 PM.

Details:

- **When:** Friday, Oct. 23, 2015; 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (with reception and networking immediately following until 8 p.m.). **Open to the public.**
- **Where:** College for Creative Studies, A. Alfred Taubman Center for Design Education; 6400 Cass Avenue, Detroit 48202
- **Cost: FREE for students.** Tickets are \$50 (\$75 after 10/16) and include a continental breakfast and lunch
- **Transportation.** FREE transportation is available for students traveling from Ann Arbor: <https://docs.google.com/a/umich.edu/forms/d/1f02tWDIY2bRqUrDcagtuovMLbVZXLniSE2j6ms2329o/viewform>
- **Registration;** advance registration is required; purchase tickets online at www.urbanei.org
- **Sponsors:** For sponsorship information, please call Urban Entrepreneurship Initiative at (313) 457-2050 or email info@urbanei.org.
- **Event questions:** for general questions about the event, please email info@urbanei.org.