



INFORMATION FOR RELEASE

CONTACT: Jeff Bradford/Caitlin Varley
615.515.4888
jeff@bradfordgroup.com
caitlin@bradfordgroup.com

LAUNCH TENNESSEE ANNOUNCES THE TENN PROGRAM, SPONSORED BY THE BLACKSTONE FOUNDATION

*Accelerated Startups Can Apply By August 2nd To Pitch At First Statewide Demo
Day – Where The TENN Will Be Chosen*

NASHVILLE, Tenn., July 11, 2013 – Launch Tennessee (LaunchTN) today announced The TENN program to identify and assist the top 10 startup companies graduating from the state's regional accelerators. The program kicks off with a statewide demo day on Tuesday, Aug. 27, at the Bridge Building in Nashville, during which The TENN will be chosen. The TENN is sponsored by the Blackstone Foundation.

"Focusing on innovation and attracting and encouraging entrepreneurs are key economic development strategies in Tennessee," Gov. Bill Haslam said. "Launch Tennessee's initiative to coordinate a statewide network of startup accelerators is an important part of our ongoing efforts and isn't being done anywhere else in the country. The TENN program, which is one of the most exciting projects to come out of this effort, recognizes the best and brightest of Tennessee's entrepreneurs. I look forward to the new ideas, partnerships and investments that will result from the program."

Companies that have graduated from one of Tennessee's nine regional business accelerators in the last year (9/1/12 – 8/30/13) can apply to be one of The TENN by Aug. 2. A panel of regional and national venture capitalists and angel fund leaders will select The TENN to participate in the inaugural program. The application, a full listing of the

panelists and other program information may be accessed online at <https://app.pitchburner.com//s1/site/thetenn>.

Shortly after demo day, The TENN will leave for a statewide bus tour, where they will meet with leaders of Tennessee's top corporations. Additionally, during the master accelerator program, The TENN companies will fly to California and the East Coast to network with venture capitalists and angel investors.

Other benefits of the TENN program include office space in the nearest regional accelerator or a subsidy for the company's existing office space; events that connect the companies to industry-specific mentors; and high-level access to major corporations based in Tennessee.

Governor Haslam will announce The TENN at the statewide demo day, which will also include a keynote speech from John Greathouse, partner at Santa Barbara, Calif.-based Rincon Venture Partners and co-founder of RevUpNet.

"I am looking forward to participating in the upcoming TENN program, Tennessee's statewide demo day in which the top companies from Tennessee's accelerators join forces to network and compete," said Greathouse. "The TENN program is an outstanding opportunity for startups that are past the initial incubator stage, but are seeking mentors, funding and other critical resources to help them achieve the next stage of success. My hope is that this unique platform spawns similar regional and statewide events targeted at assisting companies that have graduated from accelerators but have yet to reach critical mass."

Launch Tennessee (LaunchTN) is a public-private partnership focused on supporting the development of high-growth companies in the state of Tennessee with the ultimate goal of fostering job creation and economic growth. LaunchTN focuses on four key areas: entrepreneurship, commercialization, capital and outreach. LaunchTN is in part funded by a grant from the State of Tennessee. Please friend LaunchTN on Facebook (www.Facebook.com/LaunchTN), Twitter (www.Twitter.com/LaunchTN), YouTube (www.YouTube.com/LaunchTN) and Flickr (www.Flickr.com/LaunchTN).

###