



Accelerating entrepreneurial success.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **LAUNCH NY ANNOUNCES \$75,000 INVESTMENT WITH PARTNERS**

*Upstate New York, March 21, 2017* – Launch New York, Upstate New York’s first and only venture development organization (VDO) focused on transforming the economy of the 27 westernmost counties of New York State, today announced it will invest in Rochester based, MotionSavvy. The three way co-investment totaling \$75,000 is a partnership between Launch NY, SOS Ventures, and the RIT Venture Fund.

“Collaborative funding opportunities like this one involving diverse partners from within and outside our ecosystem increase our ability to invest efficiently in Upstate New York’s most promising companies, while paving the way for future funding,” said Marnie LaVigne, President and CEO of Launch NY. “Our team will continue our mentoring work with MotionSavvy on key milestones to drive the next stage of their growth and attract investment capital from others.”

MotionSavvy ([motionsavvy.com](http://motionsavvy.com)) uses motion capture technology to improve accessibility for the deaf and hard of hearing. Their product UNI, is a tablet case that translates American Sign Language into English and vice versa. Half of the 6-person team is deaf. Founders Ryan Hait-Campbell, Wade Kellard, Jordan Stemper, and Alex Opalka met at the Rochester Institute of Technology, which includes the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID), a 1,300-student college dedicated to career-oriented technical education for deaf and hard of hearing students.

“This will give deaf people the power over their lives, the power to lead the lifestyle they want to have,” stated Ryan Hait-Campbell.

The Launch NY Seed Fund is a nonprofit fund, fueled by grants and donations, with all returns coming back to the fund to support investments in future startups in what is known as an “evergreen cycle”. The Fund is built upon successful models of other venture development organizations in comparable areas of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and other states around the country who have used this approach for as much as two decades to drive their economy through entrepreneurship. Due to the nonprofit structure of its fund, Launch NY is able to support entrepreneurs like MotionSavvy, while it continues to seek capital toward its \$5M fundraising goal.

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**About Launch New York:**

The mission of Launch New York, Inc. (Launch NY) is to identify, support, and invest in high-growth, high-impact companies and catalyze the entrepreneurial culture in the 27 counties comprising the western half of Upstate NY. Launch NY is a 501(c)(3) non-profit venture development organization that promotes economic development through best practices, proven activities of experienced business mentoring, and seed capital investing in order to create investment-ready companies which have the promise to create significant economic impact and jobs for our region.

Launch NY uniquely fills the gap in connecting all of Upstate's entrepreneurship education and programs to a pathway to success via unique proof-of-concept capital and high-quality mentoring support through eighteen experienced local entrepreneurs-in-residence and a national mentor network of 2000 industry, business and investment experts. Launch NY was formed as a result of a collaboration between private and public stakeholders in Upstate New York to create successful, sustainable strategies that would foster a robust self-sustaining entrepreneurial ecosystem built on regional collaboration. Launch NY is headquartered in Buffalo and has regional co-location with partner organizations in Binghamton, Ithaca, Rochester and Syracuse. It has served over 600 companies comprising more than 1,500 jobs since starting operations in 2012. For more information, see [www.launchny.org](http://www.launchny.org).

**About SOS Ventures:**

SOSV has funded over 500 startups and currently funds more than 150 startups per year through its accelerator programs. Areas of focus include: HAX (hardware and connected devices), IndieBio (synthetic biology), Chinaccelerator (software) and Food-X (food business). The funds net IRR over the last 20 years puts them in the top 5% of all venture funds worldwide. To learn more visit [www.sosv.com](http://www.sosv.com).

**About the RIT Venture Fund:**

The RIT Venture Fund was capitalized with \$3.5 Million and strives to build a diversified portfolio of early and later stage companies highlighting the intellectual property and talents of RIT's faculty, staff, students and alumni. Investments range between \$100K to \$300K and are typically made in multiple tranches upon achievement of certain milestones or as appropriate, at the discretion of an Advisory Board made up of RIT Trustees. To learn more visit [www.rit.edu/venturefund](http://www.rit.edu/venturefund).