



Accelerating entrepreneurial success.

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M&T Awards \$100,000 Grant to Launch NY to Promote Success of Upstate New York Startups

Buffalo, July 10, 2017 –The M&T Charitable Foundation has awarded Launch New York (Launch NY) a \$100,000 grant to fuel high-growth potential entrepreneurs in Upstate New York through pro bono business mentoring programs and seed funding.

“As Upstate New York’s leading bank for small business, we have first-hand experience with the entrepreneurial movement underway in Buffalo and across the region. Working on the ground every day, our team truly appreciates what it takes to make a difference at the local level,” said Shelley Drake, president of M&T Charitable Foundation. “M&T’s \$100,000 grant will help Launch NY provide equal access to best practices in business mentoring and seed capital for all high-growth entrepreneurs, and will build and expand on its successful track record of helping innovative startups grow into economically viable businesses that create jobs and economic vitality.”

Launch NY is unique in the region in providing tailored, one-on-one, pro bono business support to entrepreneurs before, during, and after they access investment capital from sources including the Launch NY Seed Fund. High growth potential companies receive coaching based on best practices from eighteen Launch NY Entrepreneurs-in-Residences (EIRs) located in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Ithaca, along with nearly 2000 experts available through its National Mentor Network. In 2016 Launch NY added its new Seed Fund, which has made 16 investments in 12 companies in just over a year since starting operations.

“Our experience working with many of Upstate New York’s most promising startups has allowed us to really hone in on specific obstacles they face in getting their businesses off the ground and on track for growth,” said Marnie LaVigne, PhD, President and CEO of Launch NY. “M&T Bank’s support will help us accelerate our game-changing support services and seed funding that remove these obstacles and give our startups competitive advantage.”

M&T Bank grant has already yielded support for Upstart NY, a new publication devoted exclusively to entrepreneurship and innovation in Western New York. Upstart NY is committed to covering the full entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region, from venture capital-backed, high-growth startups to grassroots, neighborhood small businesses--and everything in between. The goal of this unique publication is to promote awareness, interest, and participation in Western New York’s entrepreneurial movement

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About M&T Bank:

M&T is a financial holding company headquartered in Buffalo, New York. M&T's principal banking subsidiary, M&T Bank, operates banking offices in New York, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Connecticut, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. Trust-related services are provided by M&T's Wilmington Trust-affiliated companies and by M&T Bank. ©2017 M&T Bank. Member FDIC. For more information, see www.mtb.com.

About M&T Charitable Foundation:

As part of the M&T Bank, the M&T Charitable Foundation strives to strengthen communities by providing support for a diverse range of civic, cultural, health, and human service organizations.

They believe healthy communities are the foundation of successful businesses. Through grants and in-kind services, the M&T Charitable Foundation works in partnership with nonprofit organizations that focus on improving the quality of life in our regions. The M&T Charitable Foundation offers financial support and resources to many types of organizations, including, but not limited to, those that support arts/culture, civic affairs, healthcare, education and human services.

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 650 companies comprising more than 1,650 jobs since starting operations in 2012. For more information, see www.launchny.org.