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**Over 80 businesses will be honored May 3rd during National Small Business Week;
honorees recognized for role in growing Michigan's economy and creating jobs**

MICHIGAN – Small business owners and supporters are coming from all across the state to show their support for Michigan's growing companies on Thursday, May 3 that the Fourteenth Annual Michigan Celebrates Small Business awards dinner.

"These companies are drivers of our economy. In addition, they play a critical role in their communities as job creators," says Jennifer Deamud, Director of Michigan Celebrates Small Business and Associate State Director of the Michigan Small Business Development Center. "I have the opportunity to visit a significant number of states, and Michigan is well-known across the country for having a successful entrepreneurial ecosystem. Many of the companies awarded at Michigan Celebrates have accessed Michigan's business resources to help them grow."

Michigan Celebrates Small Business (MCSB) is the state's premier awards program celebrating small business excellence. Over 80 businesses, including the 2018 "Michigan 50 Companies to Watch" cohort will be honored during the awards dinner. Awardees, guests and small business supporters will gather for an evening to highlight the importance of small businesses in Michigan and to acknowledge over eighty companies that are creating jobs and growing. The awards gala will be held at the Lansing Center in Lansing, MI.

The awards program will occur during National Small Business Week, April 29 – May 5, drawing extra attention to Michigan's role in stimulating the national and global economy.

Companies nominated for the "Michigan 50 Companies to Watch" list must be second-stage companies, defined as having 6 to 99 full-time-equivalent employees and generating \$750,000 to \$50 million in annual revenue or working capital from investors or grants. In addition, the companies must be privately held and headquartered in Michigan.

Judges from the banking, economic development, entrepreneurship development and venture capital communities selected the winners. The judges evaluated the nominees' demonstration of intent and capacity to grow based on the following:

- Employee or sales growth
- Exceptional entrepreneurial leadership
- Sustainable competitive advantage
- Other notable factors that showcase the company's success

From 2014 through 2017 the Michigan 50 Companies generated \$888 million in revenue and added 727 employees (both in Michigan and out of state), reflecting a 58.7 percent increase in revenue and 83.3 percent increase in jobs for the four-year period. That translates into a 16.7 percent annual revenue growth and 22.6 percent annual growth in employees.



These companies project continued growth in 2018, with a 147.7 percent revenue increase and 29.7 percent growth in employees (both Michigan and out of state) compared to 2017. If their projections hold, these companies will have generated \$1.27 billion in revenue and added 1,202 employees over the last five years – a 122.7 percent increase in revenue and 137.7 percent increase in jobs since 2009.

The list of the Michigan 50 Companies to Watch Awardees and other Michigan Celebrates awardees can be found on the Michigan Celebrates website – www.michigancelebrates.biz

Michigan Celebrates Small Business is a partnership of the Michigan Small Business Development Center (Michigan SBDC), Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), the Edward Lowe Foundation, Small Business Association of Michigan, the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Michigan Business Network.

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