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DENVER STARTUP WEEK SHOWCASES THRIVING ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITY IN FIFTH YEAR

13,334 people registered to attend 306 programs at the fifth annual event

DENVER (Sept. 20, 2016) – Denver Startup Week, the largest free entrepreneurial event of its kind in North America, wrapped up on Sept. 16 following five days of events that showcased Downtown Denver’s thriving culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. 13,334 people registered to attend 306 programs focused on highlighting Denver as an entrepreneurial center on the local, regional and national stage, while enhancing community and providing resources for the startup community. Denver Startup Week was made possible by Title Sponsors Chase for Business, Comcast NBCUniversal and the Downtown Denver Partnership, in addition to more than 50 other community sponsors and Denver entrepreneurs.

Organized by the Denver Startup Week Organizing Committee and co-led by Tami Door, president and CEO of the Downtown Denver Partnership, Erik Mitsek, executive director of Project X-ITE at the University of Denver, and Ben Deda, chief operating officer at Galvanize, Denver Startup Week grew attendance at the fifth annual event by nearly 25 percent.

“Denver Startup Week continues to make a powerful statement that our entrepreneurial ecosystem is one of the best in the country,” said Ben Deda, chief operating officer at Galvanize. “Growing by nearly 25 percent in our fifth year highlights the significant value our local community provides to those looking to start and grow their business.”

Highlights from the week include:

- **Governor John Hickenlooper** and **Mayor Michael B. Hancock** joined Denver Startup Week organizers and sponsors to celebrate surpassing 12,500 attendees with a toast on Sept. 14. Mayor Hancock also spoke at the event’s kick-off breakfast with encouragement for those who start a business in Denver to access the resources and top talent to stay in Denver. Both Governor Hickenlooper and Mayor Hancock also participated in several panels throughout the week.
- Several organizations **received funding support** through Denver Startup Week programs, including \$240,000 in philanthropic grant funding awarded to four organizations who provide assistance to underserved entrepreneurs. Accion, The Commons on Champa, Mi Casa Resource Center and the Path to Entrepreneurship (P2E) Program for Underserved Entrepreneurs in Boulder County by JPMorgan Chase each received \$60,000 grants at the Kick-off Breakfast on Sept. 12. The Commons on Champa also received a \$25,000 grant from Wells Fargo to support year-round programming.
- The first-of-its-kind **Denver Startup Week Pitch Challenge**, sponsored by Project X-ITE, saw more than 150 applicants vie for the title of Champion of Denver Startup Week. The Soccer Sidekick, presented by Santiago Valez, won more than \$25,000 worth of prizes from the Denver entrepreneurial community. Other finalists included SYNEK, Givella, Prima-Temp, Orderly Health, mcSquares, edn and AdKiosk.

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- The inaugural **Maker Wall**, constructed by the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, showcased products from Colorado's diverse maker community including Revolar, Topo Designs, Icelantic Skis, Novo Coffee and more. The Maker Wall will soon take up residence at The Commons on Champa.
- Denver's reputation as one of the best places to start and grow a business once again attracted **notable speakers and founders** including Bryan Leach, CEO of Ibotta; Joshua Reeves, CEO and Co-Founder and Eddie Kim, CTO and co-founder of Gusto; Dan Caruso, CEO and Chairman of Zayo Group; Lee Mayer, co-founder and CEO of Havenly; Chris Terill, CEO Of HomeAdvisory; [Mel Robbins](#), a well-known and inspirational TEDx Talk speaker, and Ryan Wood, founder of Sweetwood Cattle Company and co-founder of Under Armour.

"Denver Startup Week showcases the bleeding edge in technology innovation in Downtown Denver and across the State, and it's been exciting to watch this event grow so successfully over the last several years" said Scott Heimes, CMO of SendGrid. "SendGrid is proud to play a role in Denver Startup Week by providing support, mentorship and knowledge sharing for younger startups so we can collectively foster a growing local startup ecosystem."

"Denver Startup Week is an amazing way to connect with other entrepreneurs, even ones at very different stages from you, and really get plugged back in to the whole community," said Lee Mayer, co-founder and CEO of Havenly and speaker at the Kick-off Breakfast. "The local ecosystem is clearly thriving and as it continues to grow, will continue to be such a vital source of support to those of us who take a leap of faith to give starting something new a try."

Denver Startup Week 2016 By the Numbers also includes:

- More than 300 volunteers
- Nearly 1,500 people attended the Denver Startup Week Job Fair to meet with 65 companies
- More than 6,000 people visited Basecamp, launched by Chase for Business
- More than 5,000 companies represented
- 664 center city tech startups employ 4,508 people, according to the [Downtown Denver Startup Report](#) released Monday, Sept. 12
- More than 1,000 people attended the Kick-off Breakfast, which sold out in 26 minutes
- 3,094 cups of coffee, provided by DripJoy
- 30 Biz Dev and 30 Financial Fitness sessions at Basecamp
- 47 mentors contributed 94 hours of volunteer time

"Our growing number of sponsors, volunteers, participants and companies proves Denver Startup Week is by the community and for the community, and we continue to welcome people who want to be part of driving the best in technology and innovation," said Erik Mitisek, executive director of Project X-ITE at the University of Denver.

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Basecamp, *launched by Chase for Business*, returned as the hub and epicenter of Denver Startup Week. Basecamp featured an exciting line-up of entrepreneurs and innovators through keynote speakers, panels and mentoring sessions throughout the week. Chase for Business also held 30 individual Financial Fitness sessions for the community this year to help enable financially strong startups.

“From the beginning, we’ve supported Denver Startup Week to help provide an authentic platform to cultivate startups and innovation, and create the connectivity that will grow this ecosystem,” said Chris Jensen, middle market manager for Chase in Colorado. “As we wrap up our fifth year’s sponsorship, we’re extremely proud that Denver’s startup scene is booming and registration is breaking records. This year we put a spotlight on nonprofit organizations such as the Commons on Champa that provide infrastructure that entrepreneurs - particularly women and minorities - need that will open doors and create more opportunities for startups to thrive.”

New resources were also made available to Denver’s entrepreneurs through Denver Startup Week, including the Denver Office of Economic Development releasing the fifth edition of the Denver Capital Matrix, a resource [directory of funding sources for Denver small business and entrepreneurs](#).

“Denver Startup Week showcases Downtown Denver as an epicenter of culture of innovation and entrepreneurship and helps inject additional momentum into our year-round programs and resources for the startup community,” said Tami Door, president and CEO of the Downtown Denver Partnership.

Dates for the sixth annual Denver Startup Week will be announced later this year.

**[Click here](#) for photos from Denver Startup Week.*

About Denver Startup Week:

Denver Startup Week, founded in 2012, is a celebration of everything entrepreneurial in Denver. The weeklong event is intended to unite the entrepreneurial community in Denver and celebrate the great companies, innovation and ideas happening in the city and the people and inspiration behind them. The core programming is centered on the entrepreneurial community with an emphasis in technology, design, social entrepreneurship, manufacturing and business. Events throughout the week are organized by both the Denver Startup Week Organizing Committee and the community at-large and include sessions, presentations, panels, workshops, happy hours, social events, job fairs and more. Denver Startup Week is sponsored by the Downtown Denver Partnership, Comcast NBCUniversal, Chase for Business and several community sponsors and Denver entrepreneurs. For more information, visit www.DenverStartupWeek.org.

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