



ANGEL CAPITAL ASSOCIATION

For Immediate Release

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ACA Silvertip Awards Connect Top Angel-backed Firms With Potential Acquirers and Strategic Partners

Students from leading universities participate in innovative selection process

Boston, MA, March 23, 2011 - The Angel Capital Association (ACA) announces the launch of the ACA Silvertip Awards, sponsored by HP and PwC US. The ACA Silvertip Awards is a new type of competition that brings North America's top angel-backed companies and their supporting angel groups into direct contact with potential acquirers and strategic partners

"Everything about this competition is different and fresh, from the name Silvertip, to how the companies will be evaluated, the awards they will receive, and the sponsorship from and participation of HP and PwC," says Marianne Hudson, executive director of ACA.

"This is not a business plan competition," she says. "Nominated companies have already received and are deploying angel investment capital. This contest emphasizes business development and exit relationships and engages many parts of the entrepreneurial ecosystem to recognize and honor companies that are shooting for the stars."

There will be three Silvertip Awards in 2011:

- **HP Startup Central Award** honors the technology company most likely to create large new markets or to disrupt large, existing markets.
- **PwC Entrepreneurship Award** recognizes the company most likely to generate the most revenue growth over the next five years.
- **Luis Villalobos Award** honors the most ingenious and innovative ACA member portfolio company in any sector.

The winners of the awards will receive great support, with examples including a technology makeover, three months financial mentorship, and national recognition, in addition to the potential for new strategic partnerships.

"PwC is dedicated to the support and encouragement of the development of new technologies, particularly from emerging companies," said Danny Wallace, PwC Emerging Company Services Co-leader. "The Angel Capital Association Silvertip Awards provides participants with an opportunity to showcase their capabilities and earn recognition from their peers in the marketplace. We are honored to help facilitate that process."

Each of the three company winners and their nominating angel will speak at the Silvertip Awards ceremony on April 5 in Boston as part of the 2011 ACA Summit. The event is a gathering of more than 450 angel investors and leaders from around the world.

Participation in the ACA Silvertip Awards has been strong from ACA member angel groups and their portfolio companies. Companies from more than one-third of ACA's 160 member angel groups have been nominated. These companies come from all parts of the United States and Canada, and from a variety of industries including consumer products, healthcare/life sciences, clean energy, mobile technology, materials, and computer hardware, among others.

ACA has created an innovative model for judging the competition that includes the participation of MBA students from Babson, Bentley, Boston College, Boston University, MIT, and University of Massachusetts.

Judging is currently underway with a combination of angel investors and the students using a crowdsourcing technology from Inkling, a company based in Chicago. The MBA students have been asked to choose five of the nominated companies that they believe are the best. They are given "Inkling" currency, which they use to "bet" on or against the success of those companies by purchasing stock.

Notes Paul Silva, manager of River Valley Investors and a leader in the judging process, "There are so many great early-stage companies in this competition that the judges will have some difficult decisions to make. This process with Inkling currency and the MBA students should be a help to the judges and also to the companies that are participating in the competition."

"The Silvertip Awards are a catalyst for the ecosystem," says Hudson. "We're bringing together business schools, high growth angel-backed companies, angel investors, and strategic investors to honor innovative companies."

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Angel Capital Association (ACA) is North America's professional alliance of angel groups, bringing together approximately 180 angel groups and organizations in the United States and Canada to share best practices and collaboration opportunities. More than 7,500 accredited investors belong to ACA member groups. (www.angelcapitalassociation.org)

Angel Catalyst is pioneering the use of crowdsourcing to dramatically increase the ability of angels to fully, and fairly, evaluate startups. Angel Catalyst gathers crowds of highly qualified talent and, through our platform, empowers evaluation at a speed and level of detail not previously possible. (www.angelcatalyst.com)

HP Startup Central is an online gateway that provides startups with business opportunities including HP partner and developer programs, patents, products and discounts, and access tools to facilitate their success. (<http://h71036.www7.hp.com/hpsub/us/en/startup/overview.html>)

Inkling offers collective intelligence solutions to help organizations decrease operational and strategic risk. Inkling's solutions, anchored by its collaborative predictions platform Inkling Markets, have been implemented by industry-leading corporations and government agencies worldwide. (www.inklingmarkets.com)

Luis Villalobos founded Tech Coast Angels, one of the largest and most respected angel organizations in the world, in 1997. Companies funded by Tech Coast Angels have raised more than \$1 billion to date. He was a true "leading light" in the angel field, making 57 personal investments, educating numerous angels, and particularly in educating and mentoring entrepreneurs before he passed away in late 2009.

About the PwC Network PwC firms provide industry-focused assurance, tax and advisory services to enhance value for their clients. More than 161,000 people in 154 countries in firms across the PwC network share their thinking, experience and solutions to develop fresh perspectives and practical advice. See www.pwc.com for more information. "PwC" and "PwC US" refer to PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, a Delaware limited liability partnership, which is a member firm of PricewaterhouseCoopers International Limited, each member firm of which is a separate and independent legal entity.

What is a "Silvertip"? Some of the best angel investors are "Guardian Angels" who are sophisticated in their search for innovative companies with great potential and also provide the mentoring and support their portfolio companies need to be successful. In the spiritual world of angels, different types of angels are denoted by the colors of their wing tips-and Guardian Angels have silver tips. The ACA Silvertip Awards recognize Guardian Angel Investors through the great portfolio companies they have helped nurture and the fact that they help select the winners of the competition.

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