



ANGEL CAPITAL ASSOCIATION



**For Immediate Release**

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**James Geshwiler Honored as 2011 Hans Severiens Award Recipient**

***National Award Recognizes Individual Contributions to Angel Investing***

**Boston, MA, April 5, 2010** – The Angel Capital Association (ACA) and Angel Capital Education Foundation (ACEF) have named James Geshwiler—managing director of CommonAngels in Boston, MA, ACA co-founder and founding chair, and ACEF chair emeritus—as the recipient of the 2011 **Hans Severiens Award**.

The organizations presented Geshwiler with the award at the 2011 ACA Summit in Boston. The Hans Severiens Award was established in 2005 by ACEF and ACA to honor individuals whose actions demonstrate leadership in advancing the role of angel investing, in expanding entrepreneurship, and whose accomplishments influence and benefit the angel investment industry as a whole.

“Angel investors make a huge difference to entrepreneurs, but there are certain angels whose contributions stand out above the rest. James is one of those,” said Marianne Hudson, ACA and ACEF executive director.

“From the beginning, he has taken a leadership role. He is one of the people directly responsible for the creation of the Angel Capital Association. In 2002, James made a phone call to the Kauffman Foundation that led to about twenty-five angels coming together at MIT to talk about how the group might proceed. From that meeting, the ACA and later the ACEF were formed. Now more than 150 angel groups in North America belong to ACA, and more than 500 participants attended this year’s Summit.”

The Hans Severiens Award is named after a founder of angel investment movement and Band of Angels of Menlo Park, CA, the oldest and one of the most active investment groups in the United States. Dr. Severiens was also a founder of the Angel Capital Association.

Geshwiler’s initial exposure to the realm of startup investing was as a graduate student at MIT’s Sloan School of Management. There he joined the Venture Capital Club and became its co-president. On a semester break, he arranged a personal meeting with Hans Severiens, who was then leading the Band of Angels.

“I still have my handwritten notes from that meeting,” Geshwiler says. “Hans had already been through the learning curve. He talked about the formation, nuances, complexity, and, strength of this kind of investing, and gave me really good advice that still holds true today. I am honored and humbled to receive this award that is named for him. He is an icon in this field.”

Besides being a co-founder and chair of ACA and ACEF, Geshwiler has been instrumental in fostering the documenting and sharing of best practices through these organizations and informally with other angels and groups, always with a focus on the entrepreneur.

“The entrepreneur is our customer. When the entrepreneur succeeds, angels succeed. Providing better support for the entrepreneur is our motivation for professionalizing the ACA,” says Geshwiler.

A strong believer in syndication, Geshwiler helped organize rotating syndication events for the more than 20 angel groups in New England to increase shared due diligence and co-investing in shared deals.

“Angel investing is an activity that requires collaboration. Capital and skill sets, as good as they are, are finite. We don’t do this by ourselves. In my case, my partner Chris Sheehan, and the chairmen and board members of CommonAngels have encouraged me and the organization to do better. CommonAngels, and in some ways the ACA, would not be what they are today without the mentoring and support of these individuals,” he says.

“When Hans started his angel group, and even when James Geshwiler was leading the incipient ACA, the focus of media and research was on venture capital firms. Today's respect for angel investing's critical place in creating American jobs and helping entrepreneurs' dreams come true, is a testament to the contributions of these two men. Giving the award named for the one to the other is a fitting bookend on the birth of professional angel capital in America,” said Ian Sobieski, founder and managing director of Band of Angels Fund, L.P. of Palo Alto, CA.

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The **Angel Capital Association (ACA)** is a trade association that supports angel investment groups in North America. ACA was founded by angel investment groups located in the United States and Canada to help maximize the success of group based angel investors. ([www.angelcapitalassociation.org](http://www.angelcapitalassociation.org))

The **Angel Capital Education Foundation (ACEF)** is a charitable organization devoted to education and research in the field of angel investing, a growing driver of our entrepreneurial economy. ACEF was founded by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation and leaders of angel groups in the US and Canada. ([www.angelcapitaleducation.org](http://www.angelcapitaleducation.org))

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