Entrepreneurs pitch for $50,000 investment

PUNTA GORDA, Fla. (Jan. 12, 2017) — Five Southwest Florida entrepreneurs will compete for $50,000 from investors at a Shark Tank-style event in Punta Gorda on March 30.

Entrepreneurs from Charlotte, DeSoto, Lee and Sarasota counties can submit their startup business plans to VenturePitch SWFL at www.tamiami-e.co. The deadline to submit a plan is February 15 and the event will be held on March 30 from 5:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. at Isles Yacht Club, 1780 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda.

“Thanks to generous sponsors, VenturePitch SWFL will offer the winning startups $50,000 in equity investments for the first time since the quarterly events began in 2015,” says Timothy Cartwright, chairman of Naples-based Tamiami Angel Funds.

The VenturePitch SWFL series is part of the Tamiami Angel Funds’ e.co initiative to build a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem from Sarasota to Naples. Modeled after the popular Shark Tank television show, entrepreneurs make a brief pitch to seasoned investors on stage in front of an audience.

Sponsors of the fast-paced event in March include Sun Newspapers, The Hatchery at Babcock Ranch, North Port Economic Development Corp., Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce, SCORE, Tamiami Angel Funds and Adrenaline Venture Fund.

“The reason our newspaper decided to bring this event to our area of Florida is because we wanted our young people to hear the message that they don’t need to leave town to start their dream business,” says David Dunn-Rankin, president of Sun Coast Media Group, publisher of the Sun newspapers in Charlotte and Sarasota counties.
This is also the first time that VenturePitch SWFL will take place in Charlotte County. Previous VenturePitch events have taken place in Naples and Fort Myers. “We plan to grow the reach and scope of VenturePitch events to more locations and with greater equity investments as we connect entrepreneurs and investors in this lively forum,” says Cartwright.

SCORE will serve as the screening committee and select the finalists to pitch on March 30 from Charlotte County, DeSoto County, Lee County, North Port and Sarasota County. SCORE is a nonprofit association dedicated to helping small businesses get off the ground, grow and achieve their goals through education and mentorship.

To be considered, companies must be in the pre-revenue stage or within the first few months of producing revenues; must be in business less than two years; have a scalable business model; and have not already raised more than $1 million. For more information, visit the Tamiami e.co website www.tamiami-e.co.

About Tamiami Angel Funds
Tamiami Angel Fund I, Tamiami Angel Fund II, and Tamiami Angel Fund III are member-managed funds that allow high-net-worth individuals and families to invest in promising early stage and expansion-stage companies located in the U.S., with a preference for those in Florida. The funds are members of the Angel Capital Association and the Florida Venture Forum. For more information, visit www.tamiamiangels.com.