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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2016 VVM Accelerator Participants Choose 12 Finalists

Twelve Teams to Compete for \$250,000

Springfield, MA- Thirty five teams have spent four months preparing for the ultimate opportunity: Pitching their businesses to a room full of investors. During last weekend's semi finals, each of the 35 teams pitched to a their fellow Accelerator participants. Twelve finalists were selected. On May 26, these 12 will make their cases for their share of \$250,000 in prize money.

According to Liz Roberts, Accelerator General Manager, "The performance of this year's cohort is nothing short of impressive. The scores of the top 21 teams in this year's semi-finals were as high as the top 12 in last year's finals. We hear from accelerator participants and investor judges alike, there are many accelerator projects but none quite like ours. We believe a key differentiator is the peer support that our teams provide one another during four months of intense work and throughout the semi-finals. It is truly awe-inspiring."

The finalists are (in alpha order):

- Anycafe
- Celia Grace
- DaVinci Arms
- Homebody Holistics
- iRollie
- Livingua
- Name Net Worth
- Need/Done Inc
- Prophit Insight
- Scout Curated Wears
- Sumu
- Treaty

According to Paul Silva, VVM co-founder and Executive Director, "This is year two of our Accelerator program. Last year's cohort has generated \$10 million and created 222 jobs.

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This year's cohort is destined to equal or exceeds these performance measures. Our purpose is to build, support and maintain an entrepreneurial ecosystem, starting in downtown Springfield and emanating out to the region. Consider the following facts about our top 12 Finalists 2016 Accelerator teams.”

- Four teams are led by university undergrad and graduate students.
Three of these teams are from local universities.
- Six are led or co-founded by women.
- Three are led by persons of color.
- Seven produce physical products.
- Five are technology companies
- Three identify as social impact companies
- Nine are from the Pioneer Valley
- Four are from Springfield. Many of the teams want to move here.

Silva goes on to say, “We are so proud of our 2016 Accelerator teams. The quality, depth and diversity of our participants and the industries they represent bodes well for the future of opportunity in Springfield and throughout the region.”

The Accelerator Award Ceremony will be held on Thursday, May 26 at the MassMutual Center in downtown Springfield. Attendees will have a chance to meet the 35 Accelerator teams, hear about their ventures, and find out how \$250,000 is distributed among the winning teams. It's not too late to register. Go to www.valleyventurementors.org to purchase tickets. It's a party that should not be missed.

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