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St. Tammany Corporation Establishes Partnership with The Idea Village to Enhance Entrepreneurial Engagement on the Northshore

Dynamic Regional Partnership Increases Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in St. Tammany as Part of THRIVE2023 – St. Tammany’s Five-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan

MANDEVILLE, La – Today, Chris Masingill, CEO of St. Tammany Corporation, and Jon Atkinson, CEO of The Idea Village, are pleased to announce the establishment of a strategic partnership between the organizations, anchored by the launch of the *IDEAinstitute Northshore* program. This partnership represents a key step in St. Tammany Corporation’s strategic priority of engaging in dynamic relationships with respected thought leaders to enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem in St. Tammany and the broader region.

“This partnership with The Idea Village is a key component of our Startup Northshore initiative that strives to advance our strategic business formation and business retention efforts,” said Masingill. “The launch of the first *IDEAinstitute Northshore* cohort is a significant opportunity to begin shaping the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem on the Northshore. This partnership is designed to bring specific, technical business development support for entrepreneurs from a nationally recognized leader in the entrepreneurial space directly to our Northshore area businesses.”

"The momentum of regional entrepreneurship shows that good ideas don't know parish lines," said Atkinson. "Our new partnership with the St. Tammany Corporation will offer Northshore entrepreneurs an enhanced opportunity to benefit from The Idea Village's deep experience in helping to catalyze their startups, while also connecting them with other Northshore startups, business coaches, mentors, and investors that are closer to home," he said. "The launch of this partnership, along with the Startup Northshore initiative, is a key first step towards building a connected super-regional startup community that supports local founders in creating dynamic, innovative new businesses and allows for deep, local connections wherever they choose to call home.”

IDEAinstitute is an idea-stage accelerator program that introduces innovative entrepreneurs and potential startup founders to the tools they need to turn an idea into a scalable venture. Founders will walk away from the program with a plan to build a business following the Lean Startup

Methodology, and they will meet a community of like-minded founders along the way. This 10-week program is run in a hybrid format, with each week's session running virtually and opportunities to engage in person in the final week. *IDEAInstitute* is led by Dr. Felipe Massa, Professor of Management and Entrepreneurship at Loyola University New Orleans, and produced by The Idea Village in collaboration with local partners.

Since its inception, the program has served 261 founders across seven cohorts while continually fine-tuning the curriculum and surrounding acceleration model. Now a proven model with a consistent net promoter score of more than 70 (the industry standard for "world-class"), *IDEAInstitute* is looking to expand hands-on support and accessibility in surrounding communities by developing a network of local satellite programs that will be delivered through partner organizations to expand the program's footprint and reach across the region.

"The entrepreneurial ecosystem in southeastern Louisiana has evolved significantly in the past two decades, and we are excited to intentionally engage with well-respected regional partners to bring their expertise to the Northshore," said Marty Mayer, St. Tammany Corporation Board President. "The Idea Village has a strong track record of supporting regional entrepreneurs who have since experienced tremendous success in scaling their business endeavors, and in turn, garnering broad industry recognition. The Northshore is well-suited to maximize our strategic geographic location and talented people to foster innovation and creativity through business formation, and this partnership with The Idea Village is an excellent way to launch the Startup Northshore initiative."

Ultimately, The Idea Village envisions a hub-and-spoke network that brings world-class startup resources to all communities within our region and connects and provides value to all regional entrepreneurs. St. Tammany Corporation is the first "spoke" partner of this approach.

Applications are now open for *IDEAInstitute Northshore*, a 10-week program that begins the week of September 4th. This idea-stage accelerator is designed to give entrepreneurs the knowledge and expertise needed to turn an idea into a scalable business venture. The program is offered in a hybrid format of evening virtual classes, in-person networking events, and mentorship opportunities. To learn more, please visit <https://www.ideavillage.org/ideainstitute>. Applications are being accepted at <https://bit.ly/IDEAInstituteNorthshore>.

St. Tammany Corporation's Startup Northshore initiative is made possible through the financial support and partnership of Chevron and Citizens National Bank. This three-year entrepreneurial ecosystem pilot program is designed to deliver first-class programming and technical assistance to entrepreneurs, startups, and second stage companies on the Northshore through strategic partnerships with recognized entities in the entrepreneurship landscape.

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St. Tammany Corporation: As the lead economic development organization for St. Tammany, [St. Tammany Corporation](#) serves as the comprehensive resource center for business services

throughout the parish. St. Tammany Corporation's services include business retention, site selection, workforce development, research and data services, state and local incentives, business attraction, talent retention, certified site development, relocation support, and marketing St. Tammany. Since the organization's launch in 2018, St. Tammany Corporation facilitated business expansion and attraction announcements representing over \$60 million in capital investment and 1,520 new and retained jobs in St. Tammany Parish.

About The Idea Village

The Idea Village's core belief is that entrepreneurship is an agent of social and economic change. As an early champion of entrepreneurship in New Orleans, the organization has played an integral role in catalyzing the city's entrepreneurial movement. In addition to supporting nearly 15,000 entrepreneurs, The Idea Village has successfully elevated New Orleans's reputation as a hub of innovation, entrepreneurship, and business. By serving as a catalyst and developing programs that provide direct support and education to founders and early-stage companies, The Idea Village helps entrepreneurs build innovative and industry-leading companies that generate revenue and jobs and help create a more vibrant, inclusive, and resilient local economy.

www.ideavillage.org