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**StartUp Worcester Announces 2020 Cohort**

*Chamber, Venture Forum supports local entrepreneurs launching  
new businesses during COVID recession*

**Worcester, Massachusetts**—Recessions are a time for change and innovation and Worcester’s start-up community is no exception. Popular brands that launched during the last recession include Dropbox, FitBit, Airbnb, Uber, Venmo, Slack, and Beyond Meat. The Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, WorcLab, and the Venture Forum recognize the importance of supporting entrepreneurs who will create the next groundbreaking innovation. Valued at more than $3,500, StartUp Worcester memberships provide the resources they need to get off the ground.

This year’s StartUp Worcester winners are:

* **Doughboyz  –** Pancake Delivery Service
* **handi co.  –** Professional handyman, carpentry, and painting services
* **Integrated Vision –** manufacturer of apparatus to help mobility, vision, and hearing-impaired people connect and live independently
* **Multiscale Systems, Inc.**  – Design and manufacture advanced materials that are lighter, stronger, and better than conventional counterparts
* **Pineapple Girl Productions  –** A freelance collective talent pool for multimedia marketing
* **Sanrel –** 3D printing nozzles that add metal printing capability to household 3D printers
* **TechnoFrame –** An open 3D printable metric aluminum extrusion construction system for prototyping machinery, robotics, and static structures.
* **World Youth Opportunity Inc. –** Provider of education and training of skills for IT and entrepreneurship to empower youth

Each company will receive year-long memberships to the Worcester Regional Chamber, WorcLab – an incubator space for entrepreneurs and innovators, and the Venture Forum – a not-for-profit community for entrepreneurs at any stage. Memberships are effective September 2020 through August 2021along with a two-month membership to Technocopia – a non-profit makerspace. Participants also have access to mentors from SCORE, a service of the Small Business Administration, from whom they will receive support and guidance.

“StartUp Worcester has helped launch some innovative ideas that have gone on to great success,” stated Timothy P. Murray, president and CEO of the Chamber. “We are pleased to offer this program and grateful for the support of our sponsors and partners.”

Startup Worcester’s 2020 cohort represents a significant increase in additive manufacturing and material science startups. Top industries represented in this year’s cohort include: 50 percent high-tech, 37 percent service, and 13 percent social impact.

“BBB believes our organization has an obligation to take an active role in our local marketplace and to give early-stage businesses access to simple, profound behaviors that instill consumer confidence. Trust is a critical factor in a startup’s ultimate success or failure,” says repeat sponsor, Nancy B. Cahalen

President/CEO of Better Business Bureau Serving Central & Western MA and Northeastern CT

“Berkshire Bank has been a proud sponsor of StartUp Worcester for the past six years,” said Paul Kelly, Regional President at Berkshire Bank. “We are delighted to have the opportunity to work with the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, The Venture Forum, and WorcLab in providing support as well as space for these new entrepreneurs.”

StartUp Worcester is an initiative of the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, The Venture Forum, and WorcLab to launch and to provide support as well as space for the region’s young entrepreneurs. The program helps incubate new businesses and retain graduates of the area’s college and universities. StartUp Worcester encourages these individuals to grow their business here – where they have access to everything they need to succeed.

When asked a what StartUp Worcester would mean for their business, Aedine Brennan, founder of Pineapple Girl Productions and a 2019 Becker College graduate replied, “Being a StartUp Worcester member …would give us the chance to network with so many businesses and create lasting professional relationships. We would be able to get our name out there as a resource to Worcester businesses. We would hopefully be able to gain some guidance and get some questions answered via finding valuable business connections.”

Asked the same question, Michael Alexander Perrone, founder Admet and a 2017 WPI graduates answered, “It would provide me with the workspace, tools, connections and business mentorship I need to navigate the aspects of business I have less experience with at present.”

Startup Worcester alumni include Petricore Games ’16 which is now operating out of the Colleen C. Barrett Center for Global Innovation and Entrepreneurship and employs five people; Slydde ’16 which was acquired by New York-based company Hooch; Aaron Birt ’15 who was named a Top 30 Under 30 by Forbes in 2017; and HydroGlyde Coatings ’17 which received more than $500,000 in funding from the Gates Foundation, NIH and the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center. The Learning Hub ’16 was named HulaFrog’s most loved STEM program in 2017 and its founder, Giselle Rivera-Flores, was named one of WBJ’s 40 Under 40 in 2017.

This year-long program is generously sponsored by Berkshire Bank, BBB of Central Mass, and MassTech Collaborative.

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ABOUT THE WORCESTER REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce is the largest Chamber in New England representing more than 2,000 members from all industries and of all sizes located in a service area of 35 cities and towns and other communities in Central Mass. and beyond. Worcester’s affiliate Chamber partners are Auburn, Blackstone Valley, Central Mass. South, Wachusett Area, and Webster Dudley Oxford. For more information, visit [www.worcesterchamber.org](http://www.worcesterchamber.org).