



June 8, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to provide this Statement of Support, on behalf of the City of Atlanta's Women's Entrepreneurship Initiative (WEI), for the 2017 InnovateHER: Innovating for Women Business Challenge.

It has been a privilege for WEI to consecutively serve as a partner to the SBA for the InnovateHER competition since 2015. As a national competition, InnovateHER affords us the ability to amplify access to opportunities for business empowerment, to our local community of women entrepreneurs.

Our initiative uses the backdrop of InnovateHER, to create a robust opportunity for community engagement and outreach throughout the Atlanta region. Our goal is to encourage engagement from a diverse range of entrepreneurs, in respect to business sectors and socioeconomic backgrounds, to curate a unique and talented pool of InnovateHER applicants. I am pleased to report we accomplished this goal, with the receipt of the **sixteen (16)** submissions we received for the 2017 competition.

To identify our local nominee, who has a business plan that most adequately aligns with the criteria of InnovateHER, we utilize a strategic process designed to provide a fair and accurate selection of our nominee. The process involved the following steps:

- promote the competition via our community network, partnership organizations and our social media outlets, to encourage and invite participation;
- launch an online application submission for a two week period of time (May 1-May 14, 2017), to accept submissions, based on the SBA's criteria;
- host a pitch practice workshop for all applicants, led by WEI's Executive Director, to refine and practice pitching tools, in preparation for the live pitch event;
- review and score the written submissions, for selection of the five finalists to advance to the live pitch event on June 1, 2017 at WEI;
- publicly announce the five finalists, and three judges, selected to participate in WEI's June 1 pitch event

and

- confirm the judge's nomination of the top-scoring finalist, to advance as WEI's local nominee.

On behalf of WEI, I am pleased to announce **Justina Davis/Omode'** as our nominee for the 2017 InnovateHER challenge. Justina's submission offers a strategically sound and compelling business plan for an innovative technology venture, solving a unique, yet common problem amongst many families. Omode' truly underscores the marriage of innovation and technology, to confront a market in need of a solution – busy families seeking education-driven supplemental childcare through an on-demand tool.

I am confident the InnovateHER leadership will find our local nominee to be a strong candidate to advance to the national round. On behalf of WEI, I appreciate the SBA's commitment to creating opportunities for women business owners to access their entrepreneurial dreams, with the support of a national effort dedicated to their success. We await the next steps of the competition and look forward to continuing to collaborate with you on future opportunities, in advance of women's entrepreneurship.

Please find our official press release, enclosed on page two (2), highlighting our nomination.

With gratitude,

A blue ink signature of Theia Smith, written in a cursive style.

Theia Smith
Founding Executive Director