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News Release

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GLOBAL VENTURING CONFERENCE BOOSTS POTENTIAL FOR PITTSBURGH-ISRAELI PARTNERSHIPS IN LIFE SCIENCES

The seed of future Pittsburgh-Israeli collaboration could be planted at the University Club of Pittsburgh this week. Thursday–Friday, March 26–27, Pittsburgh and Israeli experts in health information technology, medical devices and drug innovation will explore common interests at the Global Venturing Israel: MedTech and Inclusive Innovation Conference. The conference will highlight the demand for inclusivity in local and global enterprises.

Conference Chair, Professor Paul Harper, PhD, notes, “The conference is designed to appeal to the prevalent start-up cultures found in both Israel and Pittsburgh. ... The desired outcomes include broadened economic relations between the two regions.” Dr. Harper is the Clinical Assistant Professor of Organizations and Entrepreneurship at the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business, University of Pittsburgh.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh played a role in creating the conference by facilitating a planning trip to Israel that Dr. Harper made in January. Dr. Harper and the Federation’s Community Relations Council Director, Gregg Roman, visited sites throughout Israel to learn about incubators and accelerators involved in medical technology and market development.

Gregg Roman observes that the strengths of Israeli and Pittsburgh organizations are especially complementary in the life sciences. “Just as important,” he continues, “both regions have the capacity to turn start-up ventures into scale-up businesses. Both have the infrastructure — the incubators, accelerators and financial relationships — to bring sustainable benefits to our respective regions while delivering health-promoting products.”

A highlight of the conference will be discussion, by a panel of experts and practitioners, of the challenges of inclusivity in innovation-driven economies. The panel will include an Arab-Israeli entrepreneur from the Israeli town of Nazareth.

The International Business Center at the Katz Graduate School of Business is the conference host. The event results from the collaboration of the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, UPMC Enterprises, the Berg Center for Ethics and Leadership, Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh, Urban Innovation 21 and Innovation Works.

Keynote speakers at the conference include Israeli business leaders S. Morry Blumenfeld, Chairman of the Medical Advisory Board of OurCrowd, and D. Todd Dollinger, Chairman

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and CEO of The Trendlines Group. Among the presenters from Pittsburgh are C. Talbot Heppenstall, Jr., President, UPMC Enterprises; Karen Feinstein, President and CEO, Jewish Healthcare Foundation; and Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald.

The March 26–27 conference is one aspect of a new initiative of the International Business Center at the Katz Graduate School of Business. Under this initiative, called Global Venturing, the school will introduce new courses, research, student exchanges and events to highlight the importance of new ventures and innovation in the global economy.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh, a member agency of The Jewish Federations of North America, raises and allocates funds to build community locally, in Israel and around the world. With the vision of a thriving, vibrant and engaged Jewish community, the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh aims to carry out its work in the context of cooperation and inclusiveness. For more information, visit www.jfedpgh.org.

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