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For Immediate Release

BrightStar Wisconsin Foundation announces new flexibility for donor's to direct contributions into UW-Madison related companies.

The foundation also will provide grants to UW's Discovery to Products (D2P) Initiative

MADISON, Wis., July 30, 2014 – BrightStar Wisconsin Foundation, a non-profit statewide venture philanthropy fund attracting deductible donations to help business growth and job creation in the state, today announced that contributions to the foundation now can be earmarked for investment exclusively in companies with ties to the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Additionally, donors may direct part of their donation to UW's new Discovery to Products or D2P program, which is designed to help launch new businesses from UW entrepreneurs.

BrightStar will create a fund within its investment portfolio to accommodate those donors who wish to target their BrightStar dollars for deployment to companies that its investment committee determines have a direct tie to the UW-Madison through a range of criteria.

"BrightStar is a state-wide organization with a mission to have our foundation's general funds invested in companies all over Wisconsin," said BrightStar co-founder and Madison area attorney Mark Burish. "The new flexibility we're announcing today allows a BrightStar donor to fine tune their philanthropy to UW-related entrepreneurs and ideas."

"UW's Discovery to Product (D2P) initiative, formed and funded in partnership with WARF, was created to increase the transfer and commercialization of intellectual property and technologies developed at UW," said UW-Madison Chancellor Rebecca Blank. "BrightStar and its donors are our natural partners. D2P helps an entrepreneur prepare a product for launch, while BrightStar can help provide the first seed round of funding that will turn these ideas into companies. I am excited by this collaboration and look forward to seeing positive results for UW, the entrepreneurs and ideas that are developed here, and the state's economy."

"BrightStar can help get our ideas ready for commercialization by aiding the D2P program itself and then assisting in the investment round to help launch the companies emerging from the incubator," said Paul Shain, a D2P advisory board member and UW Foundation board member. "We look forward to working with BrightStar to maximize the impact of its donors on job creation and economic growth through the D2P program."

About the BrightStar Wisconsin Foundation Inc.

The non-profit BrightStar Wisconsin Foundation is using a groundbreaking philanthropic approach to support job creation and economic growth across Wisconsin through investment in early-stage companies. This new approach will enable the formation of new investment capital in Wisconsin through charitable donations to the foundation. Contributions to BrightStar are tax deductible.

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