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NEAR WEST SIDE PARTNERS ANNOUNCES 7TH REV-UP MKE

Applications are open for the “Shark Tank”-style small business competition that identifies next-generation entrepreneurs

MILWAUKEE – [Near West Side Partners, Inc.](#) (NWSP), along with representatives from Marquette University and banking partner Town Bank announced that applications are open for the seventh [Rev-Up MKE](#) competition – a “shark tank”-style small business competition with the goal of adding to the vibrancy of commercial corridors in the Near West Side. The program will again provide an opportunity for startup entrepreneurs to expand or start a business in the Near West Side and receive the support they need to make it a success.

“The Near West Side is thrilled to welcome a new generation of entrepreneurs to our neighborhood,” said Lindsey St Arnold Bell, Executive Director of NWSP. “We are excited to see what comes out of the continued interest from startups, organizations and businesses that are looking to invest in our Milwaukee area, and bring new jobs to our commercial corridors.”

NWSP remains committed to enhancing the key commercial corridors in its neighborhoods. Rev-Up MKE meets a critical need by helping identify and support local businesses that can relocate or open in the Near West Side and bring new services to area residents and employees.

Since the launch of Rev-Up MKE in 2016, a number of competition finalists have officially opened – and expanded – their businesses:

- **Celani Skin and Wellness** provides healing and holistic modality at an affordable rate for working-class individuals in the Near West Side and is opening a space at Concordia 27;
- **Pete's Pops** manufactures and sells popsicles out of its flagship location on Vliet Street, with additional seasonal locations in Bay View, West Allis and Whitefish Bay; and
- **Lisa Kaye Catering** continues to expand operations and is opening up a new location on Vliet St. in the Near West Side later this year.

“We are so excited to support Near West Side Partners and our local entrepreneurs in this iconic competition,” said Jay Mack President & CEO, Town Bank and Wintrust Wisconsin Market Head. “Having two of our offices in the Near West Side, we see the new life that entrepreneurship brings to our growing neighborhood. We see firsthand the positive impact that Rev-Up MKE has had on our community so far, and can’t wait to see what this year’s competition will bring.”

Town Bank will provide seed funds for the winning venture and is sponsoring the Rev-Up MKE reception. Similar to previous years, the program will culminate with a “Live Pitch Event” on September 10, hosted at the Rave/Eagles Ballroom where each finalist will present before a panel of judges.

“The Near West Side has been home to some of Milwaukee’s greatest entrepreneurs – from William Harley and Arthur Davidson to Fredrick Miller,” said Kelsey Otero, Senior Director of Community

Engagement at Marquette University and project lead for the Rev-Up MKE competition. “Marquette is proud to collaborate with Near West Side Partners, Town Bank and many others to help startups bring their business into the neighborhood.”

The winner, who will be announced at the Live Pitch Event, will receive significant resources to support their new venture, which will be located in a Near West Side storefront, including:

- \$10,000 cash gift;
- \$25,000 in in-kind services (architectural renderings, ongoing small business mentoring, free legal audit and communication support); and
- Advertising, recognition, and support from Near West Side Partners and anchor institutions.

Applications are available on the Near West Side [website](#), as well as at the Near West Side Partners’ office, located in Concordia 27 at 801 N. 27th Street.

Applications are due by July 21 at 11:59 p.m. Upon review by a panel of judges, finalists will be informed and announced in the first week of August.

ABOUT NEAR WEST SIDE PARTNERS, INC.

Near West Side Partners (NWSP) is a non-profit organization that works to revitalize the Near West Side of Milwaukee in four key focus areas: safety, housing, attracting and retaining businesses, and promoting the well-being of our neighbors. NWSP was founded through the support of business and civic leaders, including the organization’s five anchor institutions – Aurora Health Care, Harley-Davidson, Marquette University, Molson Coors and Potawatomi Ventures.

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