



For Immediate Release
August 1, 2017

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Mayor Faulconer, World Trade Center San Diego unveils 2017 MetroConnect cohort
Annual program to help 15 local companies with international expansion plans

San Diego – San Diego Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer and World Trade Center San Diego (WTC San Diego), JPMorgan Chase & Co. and business and civic leaders unveiled the 15 companies selected to participate in the [MetroConnect program](#), a comprehensive export assistance program to help local companies accelerate their global growth.

“Helping startups and businesses expand into foreign markets is one of the most effective ways to grow our economy and create jobs here at home,” said **San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer**. “By taking San Diego innovation internationally, the MetroConnect program is establishing San Diego as a global city that produces life changing products and technologies.”

From language translation software platform Urban Translations, to cleantech company Envision Solar, to veteran-owned brewer Julian Hard Cider, the 2017 MetroConnect companies represent a diverse cross-section of San Diego’s innovation economy.

Now in its third year, the MetroConnect program equips small- and medium-sized companies (SMEs) with a suite of financial and programmatic resources to support their efforts in bringing their products and services global. Powered by JPMorgan Chase, MetroConnect resources include:

- \$10,000 in matching grants to cover up to 50 percent of the costs associated with international expansion
- Dedicated WTC San Diego staff manager to support company participants in deploying overseas strategies during the grant period
- Access to workshops that address export compliance, financing and fundraising and more
- Reduced airfare on the Japan Airlines direct flight from San Diego to Tokyo, and on Air Canada direct flights from San Diego to Canada
- Free access to SYSTRAN software for website translation and customer service needs
- Consideration to compete for an additional \$35,000 during the MetroConnect Grand Prize Pitchfest in May 2018

“JPMorgan Chase is pleased to support the next wave of San Diego businesses ready to expand internationally,” said **Tim West, Executive Director and head of JPMorgan Chase’s Middle Market Banking practice in San Diego**. “Representing a diversity of industries across the San Diego region, MetroConnect will enable local firms to explore target international markets, attend trade shows and participate in export training workshops. Given the success of the program since 2015, we are excited to see MetroConnect’s continued impact on helping companies tap international markets and drive the broader San Diego economy.”

Since the program’s debut in 2015, the 30 companies that have gone through the MetroConnect program have collectively generated \$10.5 million in new export sales, signed more than 70 new contracts, added 50 new jobs to the region, set up nine new overseas facilities and seen three successful

company exits. Past participants include Calbiotech (now ERBA Diagnostics), Rough Draft Brewing, Deering Banjo Company, Cypher Genomics (now Human Longevity Inc.), ROBO 3D and more.

“It has become increasingly important for companies to engage in foreign markets. With SMEs at the helm, San Diego must leverage international exports and foreign direct investment to create jobs, increase competitiveness and boost the region’s global identity,” said **Nikia Clarke, executive director of World Trade Center San Diego**. “Thanks to JPMorgan Chase, the MetroConnect program serves to help local companies share their innovation with the rest of the world, all to the betterment of San Diego’s economy.”

In 2015 alone, San Diego exported more than \$17 billion in goods overseas, as well as billions more in services like software, cybersecurity, engineering and research. SMEs produce 92 percent of those goods – driving home the point of programs like MetroConnect. According to the Brookings Institution, companies that are global pay higher wages, are less likely to go out of business and increase productivity of the domestic market.

As part of his commitment to expanding San Diego’s global reach, Mayor Faulconer has led trade missions to Mexico City and Vancouver this year, and will lead a delegation to London and Cambridge this fall.

For more information about MetroConnect, please go to MetroConnectSD.org.

The 2017 MetroConnect companies are as follows:

1. Coronado Brewing Co.
2. CP Global Manufacturing
3. CureMatch
4. Del Mar Oceanographic
5. Dermala
6. Envision Solar International
7. FoxFury
8. Guru
9. Julian Hard Cider
10. Optimized Fuel Technologies
11. Performa Learning
12. Planck Aerosystems
13. Tioga Research
14. Tunnel Vision
15. Urban Translations

About World Trade Center San Diego

World Trade Center San Diego operates as an affiliate of San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation. WTC San Diego works to further San Diego’s global competitiveness by building an export pipeline, attracting and retaining foreign investment and increasing San Diego’s global profile abroad. sandiegobusiness.org/wtcsd