



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## MEDIA ADVISORY

### **Mayor Faulconer to award \$50k to San Diego companies at MetroConnect PitchFest**

*Prize will aid companies in further expanding global strategies*

SAN DIEGO – San Diego Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer, San Diego Regional EDC and JPMorgan Chase & Co. will host a PitchFest in an effort to help local businesses access new markets in order to bolster the region’s global competitiveness. Four San Diego companies – Applied Membranes, Aventyn, Cypher Genomics and IriSys – will compete for the MetroConnect Grand Prize, a **\$50,000 grant** to further aid these companies in foreign market expansion.

In March 2015, Mayor Faulconer and more than 30 regional partners launched [Go Global San Diego](#) to help San Diego companies increase their global reach and incubate relationships with other metro markets. As a call to action, the [MetroConnect Prize](#), funded by JPMorgan Chase, was announced to incentivize small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to pursue foreign markets. Out of 64 applicants, **15 San Diego companies** were awarded the initial \$10,000 Prize. Of the 15 winners, four were selected as finalists to compete for the Grand Prize. Through an interactive voting system, the attendees will decide the winner and runner-up – based on which company has the best export capacity and potential – in real time.

**WHAT:** Check presentation and media availability with Mayor Faulconer and grand prize winner

**WHO:** **Mayor Kevin Faulconer**, City of San Diego  
**Nikia Clarke**, Director, World Trade Center San Diego  
**Brennon Crist**, Managing Director of Commercial Banking, San Diego, Chase  
**Houman Haghighi**, Staff Manager, Operations, Qualcomm Ventures  
*Company Finalist Presenters*  
**Gil Dhawan**, President & CEO, Applied Membranes  
**Navin Govind**, Founder & CEO, Aventyn  
**Ashley Van Zeeland**, Co-Founder & CEO, Cypher Genomics

**Gerald J. Yakatan, Chairman, CEO & Founder, IriSys**

**WHEN:** Tuesday, November 17 at 3:30-4:00 pm (Check presentation ceremony)  
*Please note, the four companies will be pitching to the audience beginning at 2:45.*

**WHERE:** The Alexandria at Torrey Pines  
10996 Torreyana Road  
San Diego, CA 92121

**VISUALS:** Presentation checks and showcase of company products  
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