



Organic Probiotic Technology for a Sustainable Future

K-State's Innovation Campus event aims to showcase region's ingenuity

Direct link to source: <http://www.bizjournals.com/kansascity/blog/bizventures-kc/2015/04/ksu-innovation-campus-ingenuity-central.html>

by Leslie Collins
Web Producer - Kansas City Business Journal

Ingenuity Central will bring together the Kansas City-area's top innovative companies with entrepreneurs, executives, venture capitalists and state and local leaders Thursday.

The invite-only event is the first of its kind for the [Kansas State University's](#) Olathe Innovation Campus, the host and creator of Ingenuity Central.

"This event is really trying to support the whole region in innovation and entrepreneurship," said [Prema Arasu](#), CEO of the K-State Olathe Innovation Campus. "We looked around the country and we don't think anybody has done anything like this. It's different because it's not a trade show. It's not just come and see what we have to sell and look how innovative we are. It's not a passive event – it's very active and interactive."

NEWSMAKER: K-State's Arasu sees plentiful opportunity at Olathe campus

With the help of community leaders and area chambers of commerce, the university identified the top 200 innovative companies in the area and whittled down the list to 22 companies, which will attend Thursday's event. The 22 companies come from a diverse mix of industries and range in size. Companies include Aratana Therapeutics Inc., Garmin Ltd., Black & Veatch, Bloom Inc., FitBark Inc. and Shatto Milk Co., to name a few.

The goal of the event is to not only spotlight the innovations of the 22 companies but to also spark new ideas and collaborations among companies from a variety of sectors, Arasu said. Garmin, for example, is hosting "speed ideation" sessions as a means to generate ideas about the future of wearable health devices and future products it could create.

The university also will glean information from the event to identify gaps in its services and better ways to serve businesses.

"We want to be solution finders for businesses and we want to be nimble," she said.

New ideas have already been generated, thanks to the upcoming event. One panelist mentioned to Arasu that there needs to be a Digital Sandbox concept for the biosciences industry. Arasu said she plans to follow-up on the idea.

Ingenuity Central will give companies an opportunity to network, and Arasu hopes the networking will extend beyond the event. "We're hoping to get a lot of business and civic leaders who come who will be able to help them connect with people who may not be at the event," she said.

Other components of Ingenuity Central will include interactive demonstrations, updates on K-State's innovative research, presentations on reacting to cyber security threats and the metrics driving urban prosperity, as well as a panel discussion on "What's keeping Greater Kansas City from being the Silicon Valley of the Midwest?"

Through its business connections, K-State Olathe is hoping to garner national and international coverage of the event. "(We want) to showcase to the rest of the U.S. and internationally that there's a lot happening in Kansas City," she said.