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Tampa Bay Wave announces new cybersecurity accelerator to grow Tampa Bay reputation for cybersecurity and generate new jobs

A \$100,000 gift from Bellini Better World, with additional support from A-LIGN, KnowBe4, EY and others, will help Tampa Bay Wave expand tech accelerator programming for cybersecurity startups and promote the region for cybersecurity talent and innovation.

Tampa, Fla. (September 23, 2020) – Tampa Bay Wave, Inc., a nonprofit dedicated to driving opportunity and prosperity in Tampa Bay through the growth of high-scale technology companies, has announced its newest accelerator program, CyberTech|X Accelerator, with the vision of growing Tampa Bay into a nationally-recognized hub for cybersecurity talent and innovation.

This new program was formed with help from a \$100,000 gift from local entrepreneur and ConnectWise founder, Arnie Bellini and his wife, Lauren Bellini, through their foundation, Bellini Better World. Other key funding partners include A-LIGN, KnowBe4 and EY; plus strategic partners: Cyber Florida, USF Muma, Jabil, SYKES, and Aditum.

“The new CyberTech|X Accelerator is yet more evidence of Tampa Bay’s potential as a significant hub for technology startups and is another game-changer for the Tampa Bay tech community,” said Tampa Bay Wave CEO Linda Olson. “By coalescing around the cybersecurity industry sector at a time when Tampa Bay’s cyber giants are experiencing exponential growth and demand for cybersecurity talent is growing at record pace, the

region can better attract new talent and capital, ultimately creating many new high-wage jobs in the area.”

The CyberTech|X Accelerator will promote greater startup density in Tampa Bay and high-wage job creation, while also addressing the region’s persistent low wages and early stage capital gaps.

Companies selected for the accelerator will receive a dedicated and experienced mentor, one-on-one feedback with notable tech founders, pitch coaching, investment readiness programs and strategic introductions to investors and prospective customers. These companies will also participate in Tampa Bay Wave’s Demo Day at the conclusion of the program.

The CyberTech|X Accelerator aims to also connect the region’s tech startup community and other cybersecurity workforce development efforts including the cybersecurity degree programs now offered at the University of South Florida. The Florida Center for Cybersecurity (Cyber Florida), will also lend their expertise and networks to the cybersecurity startups within the accelerator.

Beyond the 90-day accelerator, cybersecurity companies selected for the accelerator will also receive ongoing support through Tampa Bay Wave’s CORE membership program, which provides year-round critical mentorship, strategic introductions to investors and customers, and other valuable services to further accelerate the development of these companies.

“The CyberTech|X Accelerator idea was created to address the essential need to cultivate and develop tech and cybersecurity talent here in Tampa Bay,” said A-LIGN CEO Scott Price. “We realized that to attract and retain this highly sought after workforce, we needed to expand our tech and cybersecurity ecosystem to one that welcomes and attracts innovative startups and provides them with the resources they need to be successful to reach the summit of their full potential.”

“The Tampa Bay tech ecosystem is one of the fastest-growing, and we are proud to support Tampa Bay Wave’s new CyberTech|X Accelerator program by bringing new tech startups to the area and providing them with the resources they need to be successful, scalable businesses,” said Stu Sjouwerman, Founder & CEO, KnowBe4.

Accelerator applications are open now through November 30, 2020, and the program will launch in January 2021. To learn more or apply, visit: <https://www.tampabaywave.org/cybertech/>

ABOUT TAMPA BAY WAVE:

Tampa Bay Wave, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit providing entrepreneurs with facilitated access to the resources, expertise, and capital they need to grow vibrant technology-based companies in Tampa Bay. Since March 2013, Tampa Bay Wave has supported more than 300 tech startups thanks to grant funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), plus support from its economic development partners Hillsborough County and the City of Tampa. Tampa Bay Wave also receives support from corporate partners such as the Nielsen Foundation, JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, Florida Blue, Foley & Lardner, SYKES Enterprises, Tampa Bay Rays, Tampa Electric, Trenam Law, and Valley Bank. For more information, visit www.tampabaywave.org. Tampa Bay Wave is also a member of the GAN network of accelerators.

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