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## SPOTLIGHT MICHIGAN PRESENTS

### EVOLVE: TALENT IN THE NEW ECONOMY - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

How can you create a more innovative and entrepreneurial culture in Michigan?

Entrepreneurial environments can serve as a springboard for economic revitalization and growth. Entrepreneurship breeds innovation, inspiring the evolution of products, services, and communities into more efficient forms. Promoting this kind of entrepreneurial development will play a crucial role in guaranteeing Michigan's future economic success.

More specifically, Michigan needs a strong human capital base that is innovative, risk-taking, and adaptive. Many Scholars posit that 18-30 year olds most closely exhibit these characteristics. It is this group of young, talented individuals that will be the springboard for new enterprises and thus economic growth.

Some cities are doing better at attracting young talent than others. The question is, why? Previous research like that of Richard Florida suggests that large metropolitan areas like Chicago and New York City are successfully attracting Generation Y, but not everyone wants to live in a large city. There has been no systematic research regarding those that chose not to move to large metropolitan areas. How are successful areas attracting this critical demographic, and what steps can they take to improve efforts?

Our research focuses on "micro-urban" communities, those cities with a population of 100,000-500,000 people.

Our research included 3 main areas of analysis:

- On site case study analysis in the following cities:
  - Madison, WI
  - Iowa City, IA
  - Kansas City, MO (Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation)
  - Urbana-Champaign, IL
  - South Bend, IN
- A comparative SWOT analysis of the following cities:
  - Santa Barbara, CA
  - Madison, WI
  - Columbus, OH
  - Columbia, SC
  - Burlington, VT
  - Lincoln, NE
  - State College, PA
  - Gothenburg, Sweden
  - London, Ontario, Canada
- Survey of Michigan students to determine which qualities of place they deem would impact their decision to locate in an area

Our findings from our analysis suggest that although physical properties of place do matter, they may not be the most important component behind the formation of entrepreneurial communities. Our research suggests, instead, that "cycles of support for innovation" a combination of more intangible factors may be more important. Once people make initial decisions based on jobs, opportunities, or family, the most important component may be a self-reinforcing support structure comprised of networks, highly integrated communities, and extensive cross-organizational collaboration. When these institutions work in tandem, the resulting culture is one that attracts entrepreneurs and encourages the entrepreneurial spirit that advances society.

Spotlight Michigan  
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CONNECTING PEOPLE AND POLICY FOR A NEW ECONOMY

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