Leading Milwaukee Businesses Contribute More than $5 Million to Form MKE Tech Hub Coalition

Cross-Industry Partnership will Pursue Bold Vision to Double Tech Talent in the Milwaukee Region by 2025

MILWAUKEE, Oct. 4, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- Top employers throughout Southeastern Wisconsin, including Accenture, Advocate Aurora Health, Johnson Controls, Kohl's, Northwestern Mutual and Rockwell Automation today announced the formation of the MKE Tech Hub Coalition, a not-for-profit coalition across industries focused on bolstering and growing the technology ecosystem in the Milwaukee region.

The founding companies will initially contribute more than $5 million in the coalition, which will serve as an accelerator for the Milwaukee tech ecosystem by supporting programs, organizations and initiatives that advance technology and innovation in the region. The goal of the coalition is to double the number of local tech workers by 2025. The coalition will focus on growing, attracting and retaining top tech talent in the following ways:

Increasing the number of tech startups in the region
Expanding the number of tech companies that relocate to or grow in Milwaukee
Cultivating a dynamic vision and image for the region that attracts tech workers
Creating resources and an environment that supports freelancers

Technology is accelerating the pace of change and the need for talent across all industries. By combining local leaders from the professional services, health care, retail, financial services and manufacturing industries, the coalition will work to position Milwaukee as an innovation hub and bring new talent and ideas to the region.

The coalition's board, in partnership with a CEO to be named later, will develop a strategic direction and identify opportunities to maintain a growing and thriving local economy in the digital age. As the coalition enlists new members, it also will engage the business community, academic institutions, local and state governments, organizations and individuals who share the same vision of advancing innovation and transforming Milwaukee.

The coalition's formation was formally announced to coincide with Milwaukee's Fall Experiment, a tech, art, gaming and music festival that convenes creators from across the Greater Midwest. To learn more about the MKE Tech Hub Coalition, including membership and other ways to get involved, please visit MKETech.org.

"We are excited to be a part of the coalition to build Milwaukee and Southeastern Wisconsin into a premier tech hub," said Jay Kraft, office managing director of Accenture's Milwaukee office. "The success of our region, across every industry, is increasingly dependent on leveraging new and emerging technologies to enable new capabilities and deliver new customer experiences. It is vital that we build a strong technology community to attract, grow and retain tech talent and we are honored to work alongside our partners to do so."

"Our investment in this coalition underscores our commitment to the innovation and transformation foundational to a strong technology economy and critical to the future of health care delivery," Advocate Aurora Health President and CEO Jim Skogsbergh said. "We're proud to collaborate with other Milwaukee leaders as part of our unwavering commitment to help the people of southeastern Wisconsin live well."

"The digitalization of traditional functions and processes in industry are changing the way companies do business, so it is vital to the sustainability of this region to have a strong tech presence and to attract the tech workforce of the future," said George Oliver, chairman and CEO, Johnson Controls. "I'm proud Johnson Controls will support the MKE Tech Hub Coalition."

"As a top workplace in the Milwaukee area, we have a significant interest in attracting and retaining great talent in our hometown," said Michelle Gass, Kohl's chief executive officer. "Technology and innovation are more important than ever to be successful in today's dynamic retail environment, and we will continue to benefit from the opportunity to collaborate across industries."

"We're proud to take part in this cross-industry collaboration to advance the work that's been done to date to transform Milwaukee into a tech hub," said John Schlifske, chairman, president and CEO of Northwestern Mutual. "Increasing tech talent in Milwaukee is critical for our region to remain vibrant and compete on a national scale."

"Rockwell Automation is thrilled to have joined this coalition, and I'm committed to working for its success – because this is truly an investment in all of our futures – an investment that will bring outstanding returns to Milwaukee and the Mid-west," said Blake Moret, CEO and chairman of Rockwell Automation. "Companies need the combination of a good strategy, technology and most importantly human expertise to compete – The Tech Hub will act as an accelerator for the Milwaukee tech ecosystem."

About Accenture
Accenture is a leading global professional services company, providing a broad range of services and solutions in strategy, consulting, digital, technology and operations. Combining unmatched experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries and all business functions — underpinned by the world's largest delivery network — Accenture works at the intersection of business and technology to help clients improve their performance and create sustainable value for their stakeholders. With 492,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, Accenture drives innovation to improve the way the world works and lives. Visit us at www.accenture.com.

About Advocate Aurora Health
Advocate Aurora Health is one of the 10 largest not-for-profit, integrated health systems inthe United States and a leading employer in the Midwest with more than 70,000 employees, including more than 22,000 nurses and the region's largest employed medical staff and home health organization. A national leader in clinical innovation, health outcomes, consumer experience and value-based care, the system serves nearly 3 million patients annually in Illinois and Wisconsin across more than 500 sites of care. Advocate Aurora is engaged in hundreds of clinical trials and research studies and is nationally recognized for its expertise in cardiology, neurosciences, oncology and pediatrics. The organization contributed $2.1 billion in charitable care and services to its communities in 2018. We help people live well.

About Johnson Controls
At Johnson Controls, we transform the environments where people live, work, learn and play. From optimizing building performance to improving safety and enhancing comfort, we drive the outcomes that matter most. We deliver our promise in industries such as healthcare, education, data centers and manufacturing. With a global team of 105,000 experts in more than 150 countries and over 130 years of innovation, we are the power behind our customers' mission. Our leading portfolio of building technology and solutions includes some of the most trusted names in the industry, such as Tyco®, York®, Metasys®, Ruskin®, Titus®, Frick®, Penn®, Sabroe®, Simplex®, Ansul® and Grinnell®. For more information, visit www.johnsoncontrols.com or follow us @johnsoncontrols on Twitter.

About Kohl's
Kohl's (NYSE: KSS) is a leading omnichannel retailer with more than 1,100 stores in 49 states. With a commitment to inspiring and empowering families to lead fulfilled lives, Kohl's offers amazing national and exclusive brands, incredible savings and an easy shopping experience in our stores, online at Kohls.com and on Kohl's mobile app. Since its founding, Kohl's has given more than $700 million to support communities nationwide, with a focus on family health and wellness. For a list of store locations or to shop online, visit Kohls.com. For more information about Kohl's impact in the community or how to join our winning team, visit Corporate.Kohls.com or follow @KohlsNews on Twitter.

About Northwestern Mutual
Northwestern Mutual has been helping families and businesses achieve financial security for more than 160 years. Through a distinctive, personalized planning approach, Northwestern Mutual combines the expertise of its financial advisors with a digital experience to help its clients navigate their financial lives every day. With $272.2 billion in assets, $28.5 billion in revenues, and $1.8 trillion worth of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual delivers financial security to more than 4.5 million people with life, disability income and long-term care insurance, annuities, and brokerage and advisory services. The company manages $128 billion of investments owned by its clients and held or managed through its wealth management and investment services businesses. Northwestern Mutual ranks 111 on the 2019 FORTUNE 500 and is recognized by FORTUNE® as one of the "World's Most Admired" life insurance companies in 2019.

Northwestern Mutual is the marketing name for The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company (NM),Milwaukee, WI (life and disability insurance, annuities, and life insurance with long-term care benefits) and its subsidiaries. Subsidiaries include **Northwestern Mutual Investment Services, LLC** (NMIS) (securities), broker-dealer, registered investment adviser, member FINRA and SIPC; the Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company® (NMWMC) (fiduciary and fee-based financial planning services), federal savings bank; and Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company (NLTC) (long-term care insurance).

About Rockwell Automation
Rockwell Automation Inc. (NYSE: ROK), the world's largest company dedicated to industrial automation and information, makes its customers more productive and the world more sustainable. Headquartered in Milwaukee, Wis., Rockwell Automation employs approximately 23,000 people serving customers in more than 80 countries.

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