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| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **BrightStar announces schedule for 2018 HATCH program**   MILWAUKEE, April 30, 2018 - BrightStar Wisconsin Foundation today announced the schedule for the 2018 HATCH entrepreneurial pitch program. BrightStar is expanding the program from one region in 2017 to three regions this year, with the assistance of an Entrepreneurship Support Grant from Wisconsin Economic Development Corp that will match BrightStar’s expenses up to $65,000.   “WEDC was impressed with the success that HATCH had last year in supporting entrepreneurs in central Wisconsin and we look forward to seeing the same results as this innovative program expands to other regions of the state,” said Mark R. Hogan, secretary and CEO of WEDC. “We are pleased to be able to provide additional funding to offer more resources to entrepreneurs through programs like HATCH.”   In addition to the four central Wisconsin communities that hosted events last year, including Marshfield, Stevens Point, Wausau and Wisconsin Rapids, the program will expand to two other regions. The northwestern Wisconsin region includes the greater Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls and Menomonie areas, while the southeastern Wisconsin region includes the greater Racine and Kenosha areas.  HATCH is a rotating, high-energy idea pitch program designed to facilitate connections between prospective entrepreneurs and those within a community who support them such as industry experts, professional service firms, banks, non-profits, business leaders and investors. All of the central Wisconsin local events drew up to 150 people, and the finale had more than 300 people in attendance. At each program, several individuals or teams of individuals have the opportunity to pitch their best business idea to a panel of judges while substantive connections and networking occurs between attendees. Dates and cities for all of the events have been set, but most of the venue locations have not been finalized. All of the events start at 6 pm and end at roughly 8:30 pm.   Central Wisconsin region schedule: May 16 - Stevens Point at Eron’s Event Barn, hosted by the Portage County Business Council June 20 - Wisconsin Rapids at Mid-State Technical College August 8 – Wausau (venue to be determined), hosted by the Entrepreneurial & Education Center September 26 – Marshfield (venue TBD), hosted by the Marshfield Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry November 7 – Regional finale in Stevens Point (venue TDB), hosted by Central Wisconsin HATCH   Northwest Wisconsin region schedule: June 21 – Eau Claire (venue TBD), hosted by the Eau Claire Area Economic Development Corp. August 9 – Menomonie (venue TBD), hosted by the Dunn County Economic Development Corp. September 27 – Chippewa Falls (venue TBD), hosted by the Chippewa County Economic Development Corp. November 8 – Regional finale in Eau Claire (venue TBD), hosted by Chippewa Valley HATCH   Southeastern Wisconsin region schedule: May 24 – Kenosha at Southport Beach House July 25 – Racine (venue TBD) September 20 – Kenosha (venue TBD) November 1 – Regional finale in Racine (venue TBD), hosted by Southeastern Wisconsin HATCH   As more details for these events become available, they will be posted at [http://newaukee.com/event/hatch/](https://brightstarwi.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=0188096e03aa01e59adf268d6&id=5a8f9b7716&e=3a9bb94834). Click on the “Events” link.   Brightstar is accepting applications from entrepreneurs who are interested in presenting their business ideas at upcoming HATCH events. Go to [http://newaukee.com/event/hatch/](https://brightstarwi.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=0188096e03aa01e59adf268d6&id=607f32410e&e=3a9bb94834) and click on “Submit an Idea” link.   For questions about HATCH, contact Fred Raasch at [fraasch@brightstarwi.org](mailto:fraasch@brightstarwi.org). | | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | About the BrightStar Wisconsin Foundation Inc. | | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **BrightStar Foundation** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit foundation created to facilitate job creation and increase Wisconsin’s economic activity by deploying donated funds into equity stakes in for-profit early-stage, rapid-growth companies. This unique approach enables the formation of new investment capital in Wisconsin through charitable donations to the foundation. For more information, please visit [www.brightstarwi.org](https://brightstarwi.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=0188096e03aa01e59adf268d6&id=184e9ab2a9&e=3a9bb94834) | | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | About the Wisconsin Economic Development Corp. | | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | WEDC leads economic development efforts for the state by providing resources, operational support and financial assistance to companies, partners and communities in Wisconsin. Working with more than 600 partners across the state, including regional economic development organizations, academic institutions and industry clusters, WEDC develops and delivers solutions that help businesses, communities and people maximize their potential In Wisconsin. | | | | |
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