

State Treasurer to match Oregon entrepreneurs with venture capitalists at “Big Idea Bash”™ on April 2

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

“Speed Pitching” Event will Introduce Oregonians to Venture Capitalist Fund Managers who Help Finance Oregon Startups

SALEM, Ore. -“ Oregon loves dreamers, and it invests millions to help them turn promising ideas into profitable businesses.

So how do dreamers tap into those existing programs?

State Treasurer Ben Westlund will host in Portland on April 29 the “Big Idea Bash,” a social event that will introduce entrepreneurs to professional fund managers who invest on behalf of Oregon.

The Big Idea Bash will give entrepreneurs a chance to meet those decision-makers in a "speed pitching" format that will foster quick discussions about investment proposals. The event is geared toward startup and emerging companies who are seeking or intend to seek venture capital in the next two years.

The event is free but space is limited.

The Oregon Investment Fund and Oregon Growth Account are Oregon's primary vehicles for investing in the state, and have jointly steered more than \$150 million into Oregon companies since 1996.

"We are constantly on the lookout for Oregon's next success stories," said Treasurer Westlund. "All Oregon startup ventures have the opportunity to seek investments from these funds."

The Office of the State Treasurer does not invest directly into individual companies. Instead, applicants for investment funds are solicited and vetted by professional fund managers who have contracts with the state.

The money is invested into companies with the best plans for financial success. The dollars are an investment, and are expected to yield superior market returns for beneficiaries. Treasurer Westlund said the Big Idea Bash presents an exciting opportunity for entrepreneurs, for potential financiers “ and ultimately, for Oregon.

“There are many venture capital funds that are looking for the next big opportunity in Oregon, and there are Oregonians with profitable ideas who are looking for capital,” Treasurer Westlund said. “At the end of the day, those successful partnerships will pay dividends in terms of jobs, investment returns and a more vibrant business climate.” Credit Suisse is co-sponsoring the Big Idea Bash with the Oregon Entrepreneur Network and K&L Gates.

The Oregon Investment Fund was created by Credit Suisse and is part of a state strategy launched in 2003 in which certain managers look first in Oregon when investing \$100 million in emerging growth businesses “ while also being subject to fiduciary concerns. The Oregon Growth Account was authorized by the Legislature in 1995 to spur more investment in Oregon, but also included provisions that allow professional managers to be selective and make only investments that are likely to succeed. The goal of the Oregon Growth Account is to earn returns for the Education Stability Fund. In March, Treasurer Westlund declared \$18 million in earnings from successful prior investments.

Information about the Big Idea Bash and how Oregon is investing in Oregon -- including a signup and RSVP form -- can be found on the web site of the Office of the State Treasurer at www.ost.state.or.us.

A full roster of event sponsors and participating funds and managers will be available on the site on April 14.

The web site also includes links to other resources for Oregon entrepreneurs.

The event will start at 5 p.m. on April 29 at the Olympic Mills Building, 107 SE Washington St. in Portland, Oregon.

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