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## Detroit-Cleveland-Pittsburgh Welcome Immigrant Talent

Midwest's economic future pinned on the economic benefits that flow from attracting immigrants who innovate, create jobs/industries, and revitalize distressed urban neighborhoods

DEARBORN, Mich., Oct. 27 /PRNewswire/ -- The Midwest's economic future increasingly is being hinged upon attracting immigrants who innovate, create businesses and revitalize distressed urban neighborhoods.

After months of behind-the-scenes collaboration, leaders of immigrant attraction and retention efforts in Detroit, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh are scheduled to appear together in their first-ever joint appearance. Armed with economic and statistical data demonstrating that immigrants to these Midwestern metros *create*, rather than take, jobs, the leaders are scheduled for a panel discussion entitled "Global Midwest" at the TiECon Midwest Conference, the Midwest's largest conference on entrepreneurship, this Thursday.

"I am eager for Detroit to join Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Boston, New York, and so many other great cities that are laying out the red carpet to global talent, innovation, energy, and entrepreneurship represented by the immigrant community," **Steve Tobocman** said. The former Majority Floor Leader of the Michigan House of Representatives, Tobocman has been spearheading Global Detroit, an initiative to grow southeast Michigan's economy by attracting and retaining global talent and investment. "We must get beyond the hysteria surrounding immigration and onto the facts — immigrants are having an indisputably and enormously powerful and positive impact on Michigan's economic future!"

Chairing the Pittsburgh Technology Council, **Audrey Russo** witnesses the unfulfilled demand for global talent everyday in Pittsburgh's high technology growth industries. "We cannot sit idly by while our tech entrepreneurs, the Henry Ford's of the 21st Century, leave our universities for Silicon Valley and the coasts. We must attract and retain the fuel that feeds the New Economy right here in the industrial and manufacturing heartland," Russo noted. "Pittsburgh's recent success cannot be sustained without this vital international talent."

Detroit, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh have each begun to build their own individual on-the-ground efforts to retain and attract immigrants. Global Detroit released a comprehensive study in May, helped secure Ford Foundation funding for the Welcoming Michigan initiative and is set to request multi-year funding in December for 11 strategic programs. Global Cleveland, whose Board of Directors includes the Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson and major business leaders of Cleveland, has secured the designation of a new regional investor visa center to enable foreign investors to invest in Cleveland businesses that hire local residents, while securing legal residency for the investor. Pittsburgh has been supporting a Welcome Mat to insure new international residents have access to services and has been refining its pitch to global tech workers and engineers as a great place to live, work, and play.

Thursday's appearance represents the first time efforts in Detroit, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh will be brought together and showcased.

**Richard Herman**, author of *Immigrant, Inc.* and co-chair of the TiE Cleveland chapter, noted that "This new conversation about immigrants' enormous contributions to our economic prosperity, innovation, and growth is beginning to gain traction both within and outside of the rust belt." Pointing to the policy agenda of the Great Lakes Metropolitan Chambers of Commerce that calls for a high-skilled immigrant visa for struggling industrial cities, Herman also cited the New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Rupert Murdoch's new initiative, the Partnership for a New American Economy, as evidence of the growing call for national and regional strategies that embrace immigrant talent and ingenuity. Partnership for a New American Economy is a national coalition of CEOs and mayors who will be sharing this pro-immigration message to the American people over the coming months and years.

Tobocman, Herman, and Russo are slated to appear on a panel on Thursday, October 28, 2010 at 1:00 p.m. at The Henry (formerly the Ritz Carlton)

in Dearborn, Michigan — home to Ford Motor Company, The Henry Ford museum, and the cradle of 20th century industrial innovation.

A press call following the panel discussion will be held at 3:00 p.m. EDT. The media call will be hosted by John Austin, who currently serves as the Vice President of the Michigan Board of Education, as well as a non-resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution.

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