



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

For more information, contact:

Brooke Foster or Nina Kult

636-530-1235

BFoster@commongroundpr.com

NKult@commongroundpr.com

Brown Smith Wallace Offers Free Mentoring to Local Start-Ups

Company Partners with Innovate VMS; Donates Consulting Services to Entrepreneurs

St. Louis (December 21, 2009) – Brown Smith Wallace is partnering with Innovate Venture Mentoring Service (*Innovate VMS*), a non-profit organization established to advance entrepreneurship and innovation in the St. Louis region, to donate business consulting services to area entrepreneurs. *Innovate VMS* connects teams of professionals with innovative start-up and early-stage ventures throughout the metro region.

Brown Smith Wallace will provide 30 free hours of accounting, tax, or consulting services, followed by 12 months of such services at reduced rates, to entrepreneurs who have been selected for the prestigious mentoring program.

“We are excited to team up with *Innovate VMS* on this important new venture assistance program. The development of sustainable new businesses will make St. Louis more successful by generating new jobs and strengthening our local economy,” said Robin Bell, member in the tax services group at Brown Smith Wallace. Also on the Brown Smith Wallace team are managers, Steve Ronquest, Anne Ritter, and Nauman Mian, and supervisor, Cindy Murphy.

“Brown Smith Wallace’s involvement in our program is in keeping with the firm’s reputation as a community-minded, forward-thinking company. We welcome the initiative shown by Brown Smith Wallace to provide assistance to our ventures,” said Pete Peters, executive director of *Innovate VMS*. In addition to providing support services, the Brown Smith Wallace team will also conduct educational seminars on topics ranging from understanding financial statements to utilizing tax-savings tips.

“Given the firm’s entrepreneurial spirit, the members of the Brown Smith Wallace team can bring important insights to our start-ups and early-stage companies,” added Peters. The firm’s commitment to excellence has earned it national recognition by *Accounting Today* as a “Firm to Watch” and as one of the “Best Accounting

Firms to Work For,” among other honors. Most recently, the Missouri Society for Certified Public Accountants gave Brown Smith Wallace the inaugural Impact Award for Work/Life Balance.

About Brown Smith Wallace

Brown Smith Wallace is the second-largest locally owned full-service CPA and business advisory firm in Missouri, with 200 employees. The firm has been nationally recognized as a “Firm to Watch” and a “Best Accounting Firm to Work For.” Brown Smith Wallace is the only CPA and business advisory firm that makes A Measurable Difference to its clients by delivering six measurable differences, which include providing a guarantee in writing. For more information, visit www.bsullc.com or call 314-983-1200.

About Innovate Venture Mentoring Service

*Innovate Venture Mentoring Service promotes entrepreneurship education and support through team-based mentoring of innovative new ventures **at no cost** by experienced serial entrepreneurs and business persons within the metropolitan St. Louis area. Innovate **VMS** is part of Innovate St. Louis, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, which encourages entrepreneurship and innovation in the St. Louis area. For information about Innovate **VMS**, please visit www.innovatevms.org or call 314.862.IVMS or for information about Innovate St. Louis visit www.innovatestl.org*

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