

## 1776 AND MONTGOMERY COUNTY ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP TO SPUR REGIONAL INNOVATION

*Partnership will help Maryland and DC strengthen regional innovation opportunities, expand opportunity for startups working to improve lives*

[1776](#), the global startup incubator and seed fund, and Maryland's Montgomery County today announced a partnership to transcend borders and strengthen the region's innovation economy. Through the partnership, 1776 and Montgomery County will open new opportunities for startups to implement their products in one of the region's fastest growing communities and offer the county frontline access to the most promising startups working in entrenched industries such as education, energy & sustainability, health, transportation and cities.

"Startups are key drivers of innovation and improvement at all levels of government, and we are thrilled to be working with Montgomery County as they embrace this entrepreneurial spirit," said **1776 co-founder Donna Harris**. "By fostering a larger regional innovation corridor, 1776 and Montgomery County are working together to help startups improve quality of life for residents, while also creating an innovation economy that transcends borders. Doing so ensures companies with the best ideas are able to harness all the resources—financial, social and intellectual—that this area has to offer."

As part of the partnership agreement, local companies will have access to the full range of resources and programs offered by 1776—including seminars, webinars, and office hours with experts—while the Montgomery County's Department of Economic Development will work with 1776 startups to help create opportunities to grow and scale throughout the County.

"Our agreement with startup incubator 1776 again shows our dedication to the start-up culture, which we see as a crucial element in the economic growth of Montgomery County," said **County Executive Isiah Leggett**. "The ideas, services and products that are developed as a result of the partnership will lead to the growth of small businesses and provide new workforce opportunities for our residents. It is important to note that our partnership with 1776 will bring new energy and thinking to our shared goal of tackling important challenges in areas like education, health, energy and sustainability, and smart cities. The solutions to those difficult issues will benefit us all."

The partnership was inspired in part by successful collaborations between 1776 member companies and Montgomery County. TransitScreen, a software platform to help users determine their most efficient public transportation options, has been working with Montgomery County to promote sustainability and public transit, and recently announced a partnership with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) to install TransitScreen displays on public buildings, including libraries and recreation centers.

"A product like ours relies heavily on fruitful and productive partnerships with local governments and transit agencies," said **TransitScreen CEO Matt Caywood**. "Montgomery

County has been a leader in recognizing the value that startups can bring to their existing services, and we're thrilled to see this partnership will expand opportunities for other startups in the Washington, DC, region."

In recent years, Montgomery County has been seeking out unique opportunities to bolster innovation and startup growth, as part of a larger effort to continue strengthening the county's economy. As part of that effort, At-Large Councilmember Hans Riemer was tasked with spearheading the county council's innovation efforts.

"When I first visited 1776, [I was inspired by the potential that I saw](#) for a 1776 – Montgomery County partnership to foster regional entrepreneurship networks," said **Riemer**. "Their focus on companies with "smart cities" solutions also aligns perfectly with our interest in applying innovations to the delivery of services to our citizens. I'm thrilled that County Executive Leggett and so many of my County Council colleagues are working together to forge this innovative partnership. It is a great step forward for our county's innovation program and the economic strength of the whole region."

"By working collaboratively with 1776, Montgomery County leverages its thriving entrepreneurial community and cements its reputation as a leader in public-private partnerships," said **Sally Sternbach, acting director of the Montgomery County Department of Economic Development**. "This partnership is just one more reason for the world to sit up and take notice of what's going on in Montgomery County."

In addition to working with Montgomery County's DED and Chief Innovation Officer, Daniel Hoffman, the partnership will connect 1776 startups with leading Montgomery County employers such as MedStar Health, NIH, GlaxoSmithKline and NIST to identify opportunities and help them scale. In addition to a rich environment of major corporate employers and federal agencies who can provide partnership opportunities with 1776 startups, Montgomery County is also home to the Thingstite, a county initiative to establish a living lab for startups working in the smart cities and Internet of Things (IoT) spaces.

"Given MedStar Health's deep interests in Montgomery County and our Founding Partnership with 1776, we're excited to see this relationship come to fruition in a way that will benefit our region's entrepreneurs and residents," said **Mark Smith, MD, MedStar Health's Chief Innovation Officer and director of MedStar Institute for Innovation**. "MedStar's partnership with 1776 has helped catalyze an entrepreneurial energy across our hospitals and ambulatory sites, bringing innovation that improves quality of care and makes our services more efficient. The opportunities that now exist for other metro area businesses will strengthen our region's economy, and we are proud to be part of this movement."

**About 1776**

1776 is a global incubator and seed fund that finds promising startups focused on solving the world's most fundamental challenges and helps engineer their success. 1776 focuses on startups in the most broken, entrenched industries and sectors that impact millions of lives every day – specifically education, energy, health and cities.

Because solving big challenges in entrenched industries requires a different approach, 1776 is revolutionizing the startup landscape. From its hub in Washington, D.C., it is sparking a global movement of “problem-solving” startups through its Challenge Cup and Startup Federation, the premiere network of incubators throughout the world.

1776 was founded in February 2013 by Donna Harris, a serial entrepreneur and the former Managing Director of the Startup America Partnership, and Evan Burfield, founder of netDecide, a provider of enterprise wealth management solutions, and the consulting firm Synteractive.

### **About the Montgomery County Department of Economic Development**

DED is charged with implementing the county's economic development vision of being a globally-competitive, highly-diversified, knowledge-based economy. Our focus is on the retention and growth of existing companies, new job creation and fostering a supportive environment for entrepreneurs. The department offers a broad range of programs, services, partnering opportunities and strategic financing resources to stimulate and expand the county's business, job and tax base. More information can be found at our website [www.choosemontgomerymd.com](http://www.choosemontgomerymd.com).

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