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**ACTiVATE® WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM RECEIVES  
NATIONAL AWARD FOR IMPROVING REGIONAL ECONOMIES THROUGH  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

**BALTIMORE – November 8, 2011** – ACTiVATE®, the flagship program of the Path Forward Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, garnered national recognition from the State Science and Technology Institute (SSTI) as the 2011 winner of the Excellence in Tech-based Economic Development (TBED) for commercializing research and increasing the number of technology-based startups founded by women.

“ACTiVATE® is a compelling program achieving impressive results from a modest investment,” said Dan Berglund, SSTI president and CEO. “ACTiVATE® provides a replicable model for commercializing research by enabling underrepresented but motivated groups to become engaged in the creation of tech-based startups.”

Since its creation in 2005 at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) through a grant from the National Science Foundation's Partnerships for Innovation program, over 130 women have been ACTiVATE'D creating over 40 companies and hundreds of jobs. An independent economic impact study conducted in 2010 found the cost of job creation through ACTiVATE to be significantly lower than most economic development programs, and less than 20% of the cost of jobs projected by the federal stimulus package. The Path Forward Center licensed ACTiVATE from UMBC in 2010 in order to expand the program. Thanks in part to a recent grant from the Kauffman Foundation, ACTiVATE is poised for replication and is currently seeking expansion partners in regions wanting to spur job creation and/or technology commercialization.

“The process has been proven to be a catalyst for women interested in starting growth-oriented companies, and this award provides further affirmation that we're on the right track,” states Julie Lenzer Kirk, co-founder and CEO of the Path Forward Center. “While we are proud to act as a catalyst for economic creation, the real credit must go to the entrepreneurs – our ACTiVATE'D women - who are driving the positive outcomes against all odds.”

*About the Path Forward Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship:*

*The Path Forward Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship is a catalyst for economic change by activating women to build their Business Beyond One™. Its inaugural program, ACTiVATE®, helps women start technology-enabled businesses from a variety of sources including technology transfer and then brings together complimentary programs to help women build capacity as they grow and scale their businesses.*

<http://www.PathForwardCenter.org>, <http://www.ActivateProgram.org>

*About SSTI*

*The State Science and Technology Institute is a national nonprofit organization that leads, supports and strengthens efforts to improve state and regional economies through science, technology and innovation.*

[www.ssti.org](http://www.ssti.org)

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