



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Victaulic and Follett Proudly Support Student Entrepreneurship and Strategic Thinking**

Inaugural intercollegiate competition offers Lehigh Valley students the opportunity to display their innovative thinking.

**EASTON, Pa. – April 26, 2017** – [Victaulic](#) and Follett are proud to support Lehigh Valley Tech (LVTech) and the Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania in the first-ever Collegiate Business Pitch Summit competition.

During the event, students will get the opportunity to showcase their ideas and strategic business plans to entrepreneurs, investors, business leaders and other students from the greater Lehigh Valley community. Business plan competitions are a key part of entrepreneurship education. They provide students with opportunities to develop and practice pitches. This year's judges include Michael Rice, Vice President of Marketing at Follett, Peter Lega, Director of Emerging Technology at Merck and Company and Eric Luftig, Vice President at Victaulic.

"Entrepreneurship is alive and well in the Lehigh Valley," comments Eric Luftig, Victaulic Vice President. "We are all proud to support the schools and students at this inaugural event as it aligns well with our collective companies – turning new ideas into viable business and customer solutions."

Encouraging college students to apply technology knowledge and business skills to solve complex open-ended problems in a real-world context is the goal of LVTech's intercollegiate entrepreneurial competition.

"We truly appreciate the judges and sponsors, without whose support we wouldn't be able to present the Lehigh Valley Collegiate Business Pitch Summit," said Wayne Barz, Manager of Entrepreneurial Services of the Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania, which is the venue sponsor of the event. "The event will encourage entrepreneurship and good-natured competition among the students."

Six colleges will compete in a pitch-off at the inaugural Lehigh Valley Collegiate Business Pitch Summit at Ben Franklin TechVentures® on Thursday, April 27, 6 – 9 p.m. Teams from Lafayette College, Lehigh Carbon Community College, Lehigh University, Muhlenberg College, Penn State Lehigh Valley, and Alvernia University, will participate in this Lehigh Valley event.

The event is open to the public and free-of-charge. Registration is required; go to <http://bit.ly/2oorenC>.

**About Victaulic**

Since 1919, Victaulic has been the originator and world's leading producer of mechanical pipe joining solutions. Used in the most demanding markets, Victaulic innovative piping technologies and services put people to work faster while increasing safety, ensuring reliability and maximizing efficiency.

The company has 13 manufacturing facilities and 30 branches worldwide with 3,600 employees who speak 43 languages across the globe. With over 1,900 global patents, Victaulic solutions are at work in more than 140 countries across diverse business lines including oil, gas and chemical, mining,

power generation, water and wastewater treatment, military and marine, as well as commercial building and fire protection.

For more information, visit [www.victaulic.com](http://www.victaulic.com).

**About Follett LLC**

Since 1948 Follett LLC has led the industry in designing and manufacturing high quality, innovative ice storage bins, ice storage and transport systems, ice machines, ice and water dispensers, and ice and beverage dispensers for the global foodservice industry, and medical-grade refrigerators and freezers for the healthcare industry.

For more information visit, [www.follettice.com](http://www.follettice.com)

**About the Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania**

The Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania (BFTP/NEP) creates and retains highly paid, sustainable jobs by linking early-stage technology-based firms and established manufacturers with experts, universities, funding, and other resources to help them prosper through innovation. It is part of an award-winning, four-center economic development initiative of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and is funded by the Ben Franklin Technology Development Authority.

For more information, visit [www.nep.benfranklin.org](http://www.nep.benfranklin.org)

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