

EXECUTIVE'S DESK

What do you think of when you hear the word startup?

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When startups grow and succeed everybody wins. Our communities are strengthened when a robust business ecosystem with cooperation and competition creates jobs and informs our educational systems. Many of our local startups collaborate with community colleges, universities and business incubators, often creating homegrown inventors, founders and entrepreneurs. These companies also bring revenue to our state, as well as return on



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investment to your portfolio.

A vibrant business ecosystem also draws energetic and impactful folks to our communities. They see what we have to offer in addition to our natural assets of culture, beauty and recreation. Imagine more of the population understanding how all these economic development pieces interconnect, that a true work-life balance can be achieved if we all pitch in — the business version of New Mexico True. It all starts with asking, “how can I be a meaningful part of this?” And then becoming.

Have you ever thought about being an angel investor? “Angel investors are high net-worth individuals who invest on their own or together as a group in seed- or early-stage businesses” according to Finance New Mexico. There are ample

opportunities to invest in startup and high-growth companies right here in New Mexico. And they are not related to the big ones you see constantly on the news.

While it’s nice to have some giants here in our state, we also are home to some great scrappy startups, many of which do not fall into one succinct category. It takes all kinds, right? However, I’ve noticed most startups have one thing in common: They are doing what they are doing to make things better. Whether that’s to create something new and groundbreaking, make cleaner or more efficient, provide or inspire, New Mexico entrepreneurs take our big open skies to heart as larger vision.

For those of you who appreciate these entrepreneurs and their vista vision but are not one yourself, there are many ways

you can learn about their companies and even become an important part of helping them grow and succeed. One of those ways is to become an angel investor. The New Mexico Angels is a great place to start.

For those of you interested in startups in other capacities, there are many resources like New Mexico Economic Development Department’s Business and Community Resource Directory to find what’s happening in your area of the state, and the New Mexico Inno newsletter to see what’s up and coming in New Mexico and neighboring states. I’m a big fan of community colleges and their ability to be nimble, like Central New Mexico’s Ingenuity with its current technology trends and bootcamp offerings. Boomerang New Mexico is a science, technology, engineering

and mathematics, or STEM, jobs connector for those wanting to find work and remain in the New Mexico or for those desiring to return to the state.

Working with startups isn’t always easy, but it is rewarding to be an integral part of something innovative with fast growth and inevitable change in status quo — and happens to be supported by our own community. There is a unique perspective that these types of companies bring. It’s alive, visceral and inherently growth-oriented. When I hear “startup,” I’m curious. Are you?

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