



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Meghan Jensen
VP Marketing & Communications
mjensen@thewatercouncil.com
1.414.988.8754

The Water Council Announces 2018 Pilot Program Winners

Four companies in Wisconsin recognized for innovative water solutions

Milwaukee, Wis. – May 23, 2018 – The Water Council (TWC), along with program supporters, Fund for Lake Michigan (FFLM) and Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD), have chosen four 2018 Pilot Program winners to receive funding and support to help develop and validate new, revolutionary water technology products from prototype to small-scale production and manufacturing.

Announced at WEFTEC last October, program applications were accepted from October 1, 2017 through November 11, 2017. The four winning companies were selected based on their product's ability to address integrated water solutions through innovation, application and demonstration while maintaining a cost-efficient, scalable and deployable model.

“Supporting the progression of new water technologies is one of The Water Council’s main objectives,” said Dean Amhaus, president and CEO of The Water Council. “This program provides companies with the opportunity to take those new technologies and working prototypes directly from the lab to real world demonstration sites for practical applications.”

The four winning projects were awarded grants utilizing funds from MMSD and FFLM, and included the following companies and representatives:

- [Energy Tech Innovations, LLC](#) (ETI) - Bryan Johnson, Founder
- [OptikTechnik](#) - Jose Ramirez, CEO
- [STAR Water](#) - Chris Rochfort, CEO
- [Harbor District, Inc.](#) - Lindsay Frost, Water Projects Manager

“This program offers the opportunity to prove out a new water-based technology process—the goal of every startup,” said Bryan Johnson of ETI. “To date, the program has now helped ETI line-up manufacturing support from a well-established national company and will allow other organizations to see ETI’s low-cost biogas to renewable natural gas (RNG) conversion process in action.”

The Pilot Program provides companies with financial and technical support needed for final optimization and validation of technologies about to launch into the commercial market. Beyond the financial and technical support these companies can refine their business model, determine market viability, establish production and licensing strategies and learn how to raise capital with coaching from TWC staff.

"As the Milwaukee area continues to carve out a national reputation as a leader in freshwater technologies, the FFLM is thrilled to support this important sector of our local economy," says Vicki Elkin, executive director of the FFLM. "The Fund is always looking for new and more effective ways to improve water quality in the region. Our goals align perfectly with water tech companies or entrepreneurs who would like to test emerging clean water technologies in real world settings."

Supporters of the Pilot Program also note the importance of TWC's ability to attract solution providers from across the globe to Milwaukee to address operational and regulatory challenges locally, nationally and internationally. The innovation happening in the region helps to reaffirm Milwaukee's position as a leader in freshwater technologies.

"The Milwaukee area is fortunate to be home to the Global Water Center and The Water Council. This international organization provides MMSD the ability to pilot new technologies, allowing us to help meet our needs faster, cheaper and more efficiently," said Kevin Shafer, executive director, MMSD.

TWC launched the Pilot Program in 2015 through the support of a Wells Fargo Clean Technology & Innovation Grant, MMSD and FFLM. Since its inception, the program has awarded grants of \$486,000 to five companies to help pilot technologies in Wisconsin while accelerating the deployment of technologies needed to solve problems, create new business and improve water quality on a regional and global scale.

###

About The Water Council

Headquartered in the Global Water Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, next to the world's largest freshwater system, The Water Council is a non-profit organization that drives economic, technology and talent development to support the global water industry. As the leading U.S. cluster, and one of the most powerful water technology hubs in the world, the organization convenes global water leaders and supports more than 190 members from small and mid-sized businesses and large global corporations to engineers, entrepreneurs, utilities, government agencies, education programs and non-profits, with valuable services, programming and networking opportunities. Established as a 501(c)(3) in 2009, the driving force behind its success is the vibrant spirit of collaboration between public, private and academic sectors with a strong, shared commitment to finding innovative solutions to critical global water challenges. For more information, visit www.thewatercouncil.com.