



Your Launchpad to GROWTH in 2026!

Schulze Hall, University of St. Thomas

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

www.mnentrepreneurs.org

Morning Session - Schulze Auditorium

8:00 Registration Opens & A Special Time for Attendee, Sponsor and Cohost Conversations

8:40 Convening and Welcome – [UST - Danielle Campeau](#)

8:45 Introductions and Sharing of Kick-off History & the Day's Opportunities – [Hill Capital – Patrick Donohue](#),
[Grumbles Law – Ernest Grumbles](#)

8:55 Creative Wealth Solutions – [Matthew Thielen and Micaiah Ferguson](#)

9:00 Opening Keynote: “Your Vision – Your Team – Your Legacy” – [Ross Bernstein](#)

9:25 **Business by the Numbers** – Fed. Tax Code & St. Law Changes and their Business Strategy Implications
[Fergus Falls Economic Development – James Leiman](#), [Southwest Initiative Foundation – Scott Marquardt](#), [Hill Capital – Nick Ehret](#), [LegalCORPS – Francisco Martinez](#), [Scale Bank](#)

10:00 Break

10:15 **From Research to Revenue** – Steering through Disruption to Positive Ends - in Ag, Food and Healthcare
[AURI – Shannon Schlecht](#), [Naturally Minnesota – Allison Hohn](#), [Hormel Institute – Leena Hilakivi-Clarke](#),
[PhD, StableFeed - Mary Hartman](#)

10:55 **Employee Ownership and Community Impact** – [MN Center for Employee Ownership – Kirsten Kennedy](#),
[Scipi Companies – Jeff Behrens](#), [Creative Wealth Solutions – Matthew Thielen](#), [Micaiah Ferguson](#)

11:25 **MN Accelerators & Featured Startup Showcase Announcements** – [Holmes Center – John Stavig](#)

11:30 Lunch & Networking

12:00 to 12:30 [Start-up Company Showcase](#) – Schulze Auditorium - [MN Cup – Kailin Oliver](#)
[Encrypticom – Huxley Westemeier](#), [TailorEDU – Shannon Seavers](#), [StableFeed – Mary Hartman](#), [Food For Health – Adam Southam](#), [FanSpark – Sean Williams](#), [AI Monster – Jeanette Dorazio](#)

Afternoon Session - Schulze Auditorium

GROWING TO SCALE with Ecosystem Insight and Support!

12:40 Reconvene and Introductions – [Brimacomb – Brian Berg](#), [Scale Bank – Todd Williams](#), [Lab651- Piers Concord](#), [Applied AI – Molly Doyle](#)

12:55 **Technology Keynote** – “The AI Arena and Its Potential” - [Matthew Versaggi](#)

1:15 Keynote Discussion – Exploring MN AI Arena Opportunities – Minnestar – Meg Steuer, Mesa – John Moroney, MinneAnalytics – Arun Batchu, Minnesota Innovates – Dave Neville, HealthcareMN – Mary MacCarthy, Lab651 – Piers Concord

1:45 Transition Guidance – MTN – Val Lockhart

1:50 – 3:20 Breakout Sessions – Details are reflected below this full-day Agenda

Track One – Positioning SaaS Companies to Scale - Experience a Mesa Short Course!

Track Two – Integrating the AI Stack - From Solopreneur to Production Floor

Track Three – Navigating Life Transitions – Identifying Opportunities and Business Pathways

Track Four – Sales, Marketing, and Financing – Your Doorways to Growth

3:20 Transition

Closing Session – Schulze Auditorium

3:30 Reconvene and Introduction – Minnesota Innovates – Dave Neville

Lifter Award Presentations - “Living Our Legacies” Lois Josefson

Lifter Awardees

3:55 Next & New Horizons Featured Founders Showcase – Mentors – Paul Taylor, Mary MacCarthy
Molly Clarke – Taking Stock, Jason Eland – Pitch and Rudder, LLC, Eugene Alvey – Swinergy, Jacob
Baumler – Coach Air, Benjamin Scharf – Remarket Space

4:30 Closing – EO – Lisa McEllistrem

4:40 A RECEPTION FOR CONNECTING – A Fine Opportunity!

5:30 Doors Close

Breakout Sessions

Track One: Positioning SaaS Companies to Scale - Experience a Mesa Short Course! (Rm 127)

1:50 Operating Processes and Team Culture in Preparation for Rapid Growth

Mesa, Minnestar

2:40 Cap Table Ownership Structure DOs & DON'Ts for Scaling

Mesa, Hill Capital, Grumbles Law – Ernest Grumbles, Mary MacCarthy – Jazz Ventures

Track Two: Integrating the AI Stack – From Solopreneur to Production Floor (Schulze Auditorium)

1:50 Preparing Your Company to Leverage & Benefit From the Impact of AI Integration on Business Operations

MinneAnalytics – Dan Atkins, Minnesota Innovates – Dave Neville, Applied AI, Lab651 – Piers Concord,
Scale Bank

2:40 Beyond the Hype – What AI Can Do For Your Business Today

MTN – Val Lockhart, Applied AI – Molly Doyle, Featured Presenter – Dave Mathias, Featured Presenter –
Michael Hands, Featured Founder – Jeanette Dorazio

Track Three: Navigating Life Transitions – Identifying Opportunities and Business Pathways (Rm 252)

1:50 Veterans, Doers, Founders, & Funders Make Connections, Share Insights & Explore Opportunities

Featured Presenter – Jay Sachette, Featured Founder – Eugene Alvey, Featured Presenter – Paul Riedner,
Featured Founder – Jason Eland, Featured Founder – Breanne Kennedy, Grumbles Law – Bryan Kravis,

Southwest Initiative Foundation – Scott Marquardt, Fergus Falls ED – James Leiman, EO – Lisa McEllistrem, Scale Bank, Creative Wealth Solutions

2:40 Discover Business Growth Resources and See Communities in a New Way – Meet Greater MN !
Wright County ED Partnership, Sherburne County ED, Owatonna Business Development Center, MNCEO, LegalCORPS, Thrive – Breanne Kennedy, Silicon Prairie Online

Track Four – Sales, Marketing, and Financing – Your Doorways to Growth (Rm 255)

1:50 Successful Sales & Marketing on a Stretched Budget

Brimacomb – Brian Berg, Featured Presenter – Craig Espelien, Featured Presenter – Hector Cortes

2:40 Financing Sources for Companies Across their Growth Stages

Hill Capital, Southwest Initiative Foundation – Scott Marquardt, SBDC, Scale Bank, Scale Funding, Silicon Prairie Capital Partners