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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Wisconsin Challenge Looking for Your Food/Beverage Biz Ideas Contest Gives a Boost to Local Entrepreneurs**

Milwaukee, April 4, 2016– Do you have a creative food or beverage business concept or early-stage business that could use a boost? If so, you will want to enter this year's *Hottest Kitchen Entrepreneur Challenge*, a regional contest to find Wisconsin's next great food entrepreneur. The Challenge is sponsored by [Milwaukee Area Technical College](#), [Reliable Water Services](#), a statewide provider of commercial water heaters, boilers and water softeners and [FaB Wisconsin](#), the state's food and beverage industry cluster organization.

The Challenge features a start-up category for those with a new food business idea (not yet to market) and an early-stage category (5 years or under) food entrepreneurs who have launched but are looking for help to get to the next level.

Beginning April 4, aspiring chefs, home cooks and early stage food entrepreneurs throughout Wisconsin can enter online at <http://reliablewater247.com/hottest-kitchen/> by submitting a short application and uploading a photo of their recipe or product concept. The site has contest rules and details.

The grand prize winner in each category will receive:

- \$2,000 in seed money from **Reliable Water Services**
- Tuition for a 3-credit course at **MATC** during the 2016-2017 academic year
- Priceless private meeting with FaB Wisconsin's Director of Innovation and a one year membership in **FaB**.
- A booth at the 2017 Midwest Foodservice Expo
- Prize package worth \$400 from **Fein Brothers** Restaurant Equipment & Supplies

"In addition to seed money and other great prizes, the Challenge offers a unique opportunity to gain advice from some of Wisconsin's most successful and savvy food and beverage entrepreneurs and experts," said Marie Colmerauer, Instructor of Food Science Technology at MATC.

Finalists will be selected in late May to participate in a final judging event on July 20<sup>th</sup> at MATC's student-operated 6<sup>th</sup> Street Café located at 1015 N. 6th St. on the Downtown Milwaukee Campus.

Lori Fredrich, food journalist/writer for onmilwaukee.com and author of "Milwaukee Food: A History of Cream City Cuisine" (2015, History Press) will emcee this year's event.

"As a start-up business, it is difficult to find a forum to get objective feedback from experienced professionals and from the general public that you can immediately use to enhance your ideas. This event provides exactly that opportunity," said Robert Holton, founder of Milwaukee Craft Foods and last year's start-up category winner with Milwaukee Craft Brew Vinegar.

Judges for the contest include:

- Jenny Marino, President/CEO, **Angelic Bakehouse**
- Kurt Fogle, co-owner, **Bass Bay Brewhouse**
- Jan Kelly, owner and chef, **Meritage** restaurant
- Peter Gottsacker, President, **Wixon Seasonings & Flavor Systems**
- Pam Mehnert, General Manager of **Outpost Natural Foods**
- Nick Maas, premise specialist for **Agave Loco LLC** (RumChata, Tippy Cow brands)
- Tonya Garrido, executive chef, **Harwood Place Independent & Assisted Senior Living**

"We are so proud to have helped launch a number of innovative food and beverage products over the past five years and can't wait to see what new ideas this year will bring," said Lynne Robinson, president of Reliable Water Services.

For more information and to enter, visit Reliable Water Services at [www.reliablewater247.com](http://www.reliablewater247.com).