

NEWS RELEASE



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UMKC Bloch School Creates ‘Venture Hub’ Incubator for Start-Ups

*New community resource will provide portal
to array of entrepreneurship support services*

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – The Bloch Venture Hub, set to open March 24, will be a community resource for entrepreneurial ventures at multiple pre-launch stages, powered by the resources of **Country Club Bank** and the [Regnier Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation](#) at the [University of Missouri-Kansas City’s Henry W. Bloch School of Management](#).

The home of the new Bloch Venture Hub at 4328 Madison in Kansas City formerly housed [Country Club Bank’s](#) commercial and SBA lending division. The bank approached the Bloch School with an offer of partnership and use of the building following the move of the lending division to their new corporate headquarters at 1 Ward Parkway. As a local, community-based financial institution, Country Club Bank offers the Bloch Venture Hub affordable space and access to a host of financial planning and mentoring initiatives.

The facility features a unique three-story layout that provides entrepreneurs with a place to access resources that can help them at whatever development stage they have reached, leading to launching a venture and refining their concept to achieve success and growth. Entrepreneurs at any stage in the start-up process can enter the Bloch Venture Hub incubator at the appropriate level.

“The Bloch Venture Hub will provide a welcoming place for aspiring entrepreneurs in the Kansas City Community to develop their venture ideas,” said Jeff Hornsby, Ph.D., director of the Regnier Institute and chair of the Department of Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the Bloch School. “As Kansas City’s university, we have always been dedicated to supporting venture creation in our community, but now we have a central location for people to easily access our knowledge and resources.”

“Country Club Bank is devoted to the greater Kansas City area, its enterprising visionaries and those who form the creative backbone of our city’s future economy and business values,” said Paul Thompson, President/CEO of Country Club Bank. “My father, Byron Thompson, an entrepreneur himself, began his journey with Country Club Bank in 1985 and remained committed to supporting, furthering, and encouraging Kansas City’s entrepreneurs throughout his life. My father walked the entrepreneurial walk, instilling the importance of that spirit in all of us and in the very fabric of Country Club Bank. Throughout his career he looked to the mentorship of others by asking, ‘What can you tell me to make me better?’ Providing that mentorship to others is both a privilege and the True North mission for Country Club Bank.”

Level 1 at the Bloch Venture Hub is home to EntreLab, a new initiative designed to provide mentoring, advice and access to resources to would-be entrepreneurs in the initial idea phase. It provides a physical meeting space for entrepreneurs to meet with mentors, attend educational programming facilitated by the Bloch School, access the startup resources of other UMKC programs such as [KCSourceLink](#) and the UMKC [Entrepreneurial Legal Services Clinic](#), and engage informally with peers and industry experts. EntreLab, which is funded by a grant from the [Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation](#), will have space for 15 to 30 participants at a time.

Level 2 at the Bloch Venture Hub is a start-up incubator that will serve as a first home for launch-stage ventures. The space will hold approximately seven to ten such start-ups and provide them with access to many of the same services, including the 160 industry experts on the roster of the Regnier Institute mentorship program. Level 2 will also encourage the “collision factor” of a co-working space, promoting idea-sharing, problem solving and synergy among the participants.

Level 3 houses a scale-up incubator for ventures that are gaining traction and require more space to grow. Scale-up ventures avoid the risk of traditional, long-term leases and have

access to services, programming and mentors who can provide industry-specific advice tailored to the growth phase.

“What sets the Bloch Venture Hub apart from other incubators is the easy and immediate access to such a wide array of supports and services,” Hornsby said. “Our goal is to remove as many barriers as we possibly can to entrepreneurial activity in this community.”

The public is invited to visit the Bloch Venture Hub at a special Open House celebration from 1 to 4 p.m. Friday March 24.

About the University of Missouri-Kansas City

The University of Missouri-Kansas City, one of four University of Missouri campuses, is a public university serving more than 15,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional students. UMKC engages with the community and economy based on a four-part mission: life and health sciences; visual and performing arts; urban issues and education; and a vibrant learning and campus life experience. For more information about UMKC, visit www.umkc.edu. You can also find us on [Facebook](#), follow us on [Twitter](#) and watch us on [YouTube](#).

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