



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 4, 2008

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**ACTION AND SPORT LEADERS TO GATHER
FOR 'X-TREME' NETWORKING ON FEB. 12**

*Incubated within CONNECT, new business accelerator
expected to help fuel multibillion-dollar industry*

SAN DIEGO – Virtual hang gliding, snowboarding and surfing are just a few simulators to test when action sport icons, entrepreneurs and technology connoisseurs alike gather for the first Action and Sport Innovators' (ASI) X-treme Networking event on Feb. 12 at the Balboa Park Hall of Champions.

Incubated within CONNECT, San Diego's technology and business accelerator, ASI is the first San Diego-based program focused on assisting the formation and growth of innovative action sports, traditional sports and sporting goods firms in Southern California.

X-treme guests include some of the most innovative leaders in the action and sports industries, including Roger Hickey, an Olympic Gold Medalist and 20-time street luge champion. Hickey believes the event will bring together some of the most creative minds in the extreme sports business.

"The action and sports industries need an organization like ASI to allow key executives to share connections and ideas. That's how entrepreneurship is born and fostered in this county," Hickey said.

Hickey will display and donate items from FreshPark, his line of portable, folding skate ramps. Guests will also enjoy complimentary lifestyle bags containing action sport must-haves. VOZ Sports will giveaway two VOZTeck Packs, the ultimate all-terrain backpacks built for the most extreme challenges and environments.

In addition to promoting sport products and innovation insight, the event will honor “Surf Diva” Isabelle “Izzy” Tihanyi with the first ever Authentic Entrepreneur Award. Tihanyi, the author of *Surf Diva: A Girl's Guide to Getting Good Waves*, founded the Surf Diva Surf School, the original all-girls surf school in San Diego. The school now operates in the United States, Australia and Costa Rica.

San Diego County is home to more than 300 thriving action and sporting goods companies; employing between 20,000 to 30,000 people. ASI will provide a forum for these companies to find capital, obtain mentoring and begin networking through CONNECT and it's existing programs.

“CONNECT has helped San Diego build its reputation as a high technology and biotech hub,” said ASI founder and local tech entrepreneur Marco Thompson. “ASI plans to do the same for the action and sports business and attract more companies, capital and great management teams within the industry.”

Lifelong surfers and Sheppard Mullin partners Dick Kintz and Jim Mittermiller, Mitch Thrower, CEO of The Active Network and author of *The Attention Deficit Workplace*, and CONNECT CEO Duane Roth, will act as the event's host committee. ASI's official media partner is Encinitas-based Planet X TV, a unit of Planet One Ventures, Inc. (POV), which creates lifestyle television episodes featuring surf, snow, skate, bike, motorsports and music.

The X-treme Networking event will be held on Feb. 12 at the Balboa Hall of Champions from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Tickets for the event are \$25, with a percentage of the proceeds to benefit the Tony Hawk Foundation of Vista, Calif. More information about attending the X-treme Networking event and becoming an ASI member is available at www.actionandsportinnovators.com.

About Action & Sports Innovators:

ASI is an accelerator for emerging action sports, sporting goods and traditional sports companies focused solely on developing and sharing strategies for growth and success. ASI will offer mentoring to entrepreneurial startup CEOs to help elevate their business to the next level; provide exclusive local networking opportunities for key executives of the action sports and traditional sports industries; promote San Diego companies to partners and buyers internationally; help foster strong relationships between local companies and international giants; connect industry executives with service providers who specialize in the action and sports industries, such as corporate and IP lawyers, real estate, accountants, and public relations firms; and promote Southern California as the center of the action and sports industry.

About CONNECT

CONNECT is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating and sustaining the growth of innovative technology and life science businesses in San Diego. Since 1985, CONNECT has assisted in the formation and development of over 1,200 companies and is widely regarded as the nation's most successful regional program linking inventors and

entrepreneurs with the resources they need for success. Its programs include Springboard, Venture Round Table, Frontiers in Science and Technology, FrameWorks, CEO Strategy Forum and Connect with CONNECT; affiliate programs with The Center for Commercialization of Advanced Technology (CCAT), Tech Coast Angels (TCA), and MIT Enterprise Forum (MITEF); and its awards and recognition programs, Hall of Fame, and The Most Innovative Products (MIP) Awards.

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