



Accelerating entrepreneurial success.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Dr. Marnie LaVigne, President & CEO
(716) 881-7576
mlavigne@launchny.org

Launch NY Adds Maggie Dorn, Chief Network Officer at The Motley Fool to Board of Directors, Along with New Staff

National venture capital fund representation brings investor network expertise

Buffalo, N.Y., January 30, 2019 – Launch New York (Launch NY), Upstate New York’s first and only venture development organization to help provide pro bono mentoring and capital access to high-growth potential startup businesses across the 27 westernmost counties of the state, has added another national-level member to its board of directors with the appointment of Maggie Dorn, Chief Network Officer at the Motley Fool. Launch NY’s internal staff is also growing, as it recently filled two newly created positions to enhance its marketing, new product development and investment capabilities.

Maggie Dorn, Chief Network Officer at [The Motley Fool](#) and Venture Partner for [Motley Fool Ventures](#), an early stage, technology-focused venture capital fund powered by The Motley Fool’s brand, investing approach and communities, has joined Launch NY’s Board of Directors, alongside Vice Chair Jordan Levy as a member who has ties to the national venture capital industry. Maggie was part of the Motley Fool Ventures team that led its recent raise collecting \$150 million from over 800 individual limited partners for its debut venture fund.

“As we expand our seed funding programs to achieve the greatest inclusion and diversity possible, we know how valuable Maggie’s expertise will be,” said Marnie LaVigne, President and CEO, Launch NY. “Her experience with Motley Fool’s hundreds of thousands of members and their new venture fund provides exactly the kind of insight we need to fuel the introduction of our own Investor Network to support the robust pipeline of startups we have in Upstate New York. Additionally, we share her commitment to serving underrepresented entrepreneurs with 34% women-led and 23% minority-led companies in our current seed fund portfolio.”

A WNY native, Dorn manages and grows The Motley Fool’s network of influencers, thought leaders and businesses, uncovering collaborative opportunities that add thought diversity and commercial value. An advocate of workplace equality, she co-authored the company’s first internal diversity and inclusion report, which subsequently led to changes in hiring and cultural practices. Dorn also serves as Committee Chair for [The Vinetta Project](#), which supports high-growth female tech entrepreneurs. Additionally, she sits on the board of the Boys & Girls Club

of Buffalo. Dorn was previously in the business innovations department at The Washington Post and graduated with honors from Ithaca College (B.S.) and John Hopkins University (M.A.).

“When Marnie and the Launch NY team shared the foundation of their work and the long term vision for creating a sustaining entrepreneurial ecosystem in Upstate New York, I was inspired and immediately knew it was a perfect fit,” said Maggie Dorn, Chief Network Officer, The Motley Fool. “Their latest Investor Network initiative, which aims to connect investors to support high-growth companies, aligns with my professional work at The Motley Fool and my personal enthusiasm as a Western New York native. Our region’s renewed growth and energy is exciting, and I’m thrilled to be part of Launch’s vision to *invest local* and accelerate entrepreneurial success.”

Celine Keefe has also joined Launch NY as Marketing Director, leading the organization’s marketing, communication, brand and product development, and promotional campaigns, in addition to assisting LaVigne in strategic planning, fundraising, and operational processes.

She graduated with honors from Niagara University (B.A. and B.F.A), and is a recent graduate of the University at Buffalo’s MBA Program, where she was selected as a Western New York Prosperity Fellow for her commitment to the region and contributing to its economic resurgence. Prior to joining Launch NY, Keefe worked at M&T Bank in the Enterprise Transformation Office, focusing on change management, visual branding, and product development. She currently serves on the Friends of Niagara University Theatre Board and UB’s Young Alumni Leadership Council.

Alex Killian, Investment Associate, is responsible for performing due diligence on startup applicants for Launch NY’s Seed Fund along with identifying additional opportunities for financial vehicles to further expand the reach of Launch NY. He also helps manage the organization’s client portfolio, assisting in business model strategy and fundraising efforts, and develops new investment vehicles, including the Investor Network and financing vehicles leveraging the Opportunity Zone incentive introduced by the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Killian earned his MBA from the University at Buffalo. He was previously an Investment Analyst based in Toronto for Fengate Capital Management Ltd, an investment firm with a focus on infrastructure, private equity, and real estate investments.

On February 5 the Launch NY team is hosting its inaugural Invest Local Summit & Expo. In addition to a formal program to introduce Launch NY’s Seed Fund companies that have received the greatest boost from its investment, attendees will have the opportunity to learn about Launch NY’s new Investor Network, Opportunity Zones, hear from Launch NY’s Chair George Chamoun, CEO of ACV Auctions and funders, including the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation and more. Launch NY will release more details in the next few days about this special event.

For more information about Launch NY, its programs, including its Investor Network, Seed Fund, and other entrepreneurial opportunities, visit www.launchny.org, and follow Launch NY on its [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#) pages.

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About Launch New York:

The mission of Launch New York, Inc. (Launch NY), the only U.S. Treasury-designated Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) directly funding businesses in New York State, is to identify, support and invest in high-growth, high-impact companies, and catalyze the entrepreneurial culture in the 27 counties comprising the western half of Upstate New York. Launch NY is a 501(c)(3) non-profit venture development organization that promotes economic development through best practices, including business mentoring and access to seed capital in order to create investment-ready companies which have the promise to create significant economic impact and jobs for our region.

Launch NY uniquely fills the gap in connecting all of Upstate New York's entrepreneurship resources to a pathway to success via unique proof-of-concept capital and high-quality pro bono mentoring support through 23 experienced local entrepreneurs-in-residence and its National Mentor Network of 2,000 industry, business, and investment experts. Launch NY was formed as a result of a collaboration between private and public stakeholders in Upstate New York to create long term strategies that foster a robust, self-sustaining entrepreneurial ecosystem built on regional collaboration. Launch NY is headquartered in Buffalo and has regional co-locations with partner organizations in Binghamton, Ithaca, Rochester, and Syracuse. It has served over 880 companies comprising more than 3,200 jobs since starting operations in 2012.