



Vator Splash Event to Shine Spotlight on Oakland’s Emerging Role as Tech Hub 2-Day Tech Startup Competition & Conference Planned for May 6 -7

OAKLAND, CA, February 18, 2014 — With local and national startups competing to win meetings with top VCs, an array of prominent speakers and sponsorship by major companies as well as the [City of Oakland](#), the 2-day [Vator Splash](#) conference planned for this spring promises to shine a spotlight on the city’s increasing attraction as a tech hub.

As many as 1,000 attendees are anticipated to attend presentations, panels and “fireside chats” at the Jack London Market building in Jack London Square, participating in two tracks of content designed to educate startup tech entrepreneurs as well as VC and angel investors. Speakers include luminaries in the venture capital world as well as civic and business leaders who will talk about how to start and scale successful companies and trends that are shaping future tech investment.

The extensive speaker slate includes Mitch Kapor, founder of Lotus Corporation and [Kapor Center for Social Impact](#); [Sungevity](#) co-founder Danny Kennedy; [Blue Bottle Coffee](#) founder & CEO James Freeman and Brian Wong, of [Kiip](#). Wong, at 18, is the youngest CEO to receive venture funding. Among many venture capital leaders speaking or leading workshops are Tim Draper, [DFJ](#) founder; Sharon Wienbar of [Scale Venture Partners](#); Jeff Clavier of [SoftTechVC](#); Tony Conrad, founder of [True Ventures](#); and Jed Katz, founder of [Javelin Venture Partners](#). The growing [agenda](#) and [speaker list](#) are available on the event [website](#).

[Vator](#), the 6-year old online business publication and social network that produces the event, has held successful, smaller Splash events, in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York and London. Vator’s founder, award-winning journalist Bambi Francisco, picked Oakland quite intentionally as the launch pad for the inaugural two-day expanded conference.

“Splash has always been about bringing entrepreneurs and investors together in a dynamic environment where founders who have been in the trenches can inspire young startups – and where successful VCs can help guide future investment. Oakland was ranked #11 in top places to found a tech startup last year and has the kind of assets that can draw the next generation of tech companies here. But it also has an impressive array of organizations that want to shape this growth organically – that don’t want to see tech create another sprawling Silicon Valley or gentrified San Francisco. We want this Splash event to also be a place where those conversations can happen.”

Another highlight of Vator Splash Oakland will be on-stage presentations from finalists in two, concurrent tech startup competitions that launched in January: the [Vator Splash](#) competition, open to any US-based tech startup, and the [Oaktown Tech](#) competition, sponsored by [Oakland Forward](#), for Oakland and neighboring East Bay startups. Finalists must survive two rounds of judging, competing not only for recognition but an estimated \$40,000 in in-kind services and sit down meetings with major VCs and angel investors. Past Vator Splash competition participants have gone on to receive upward of \$140 million in follow-on funding. To qualify for the competition, startups must be under 3 years old and have under \$2 million in outside funding.



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The growing list of major sponsors for Vator Splash Oakland includes [KPMG](#), [City of Oakland](#), [Braintree](#), [Javelin Venture Partners](#), [Oakland Forward](#), [Kapor Center for Social Impact](#), [The Port Workspaces](#), [Rackspace](#), [OBDC Small Business Finance](#) & [Illuminate Venture Partners](#).

About [Vator](#)

Vator (short for innovator) is a professional network for entrepreneurs and investors. Founded and run by veteran and award-winning journalist Bambi Francisco, Vator consists of Vator.tv (soon to be vator.co), one of the largest business networks dedicated to entrepreneurship and now a crowdfunding platform for startups and VatorNews, Vator's news site focused on the business and trends of high-tech entrepreneurship and innovation. VatorNews has 500-plus contributors. Vator also has a technology platform called Vator Competitions, which is an online competition management system.

Press contacts: Karen Wertman, karen@vator.tv; Bambi Francisco, bambi@vator.tv

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