HIMSS conference showcases Birmingham as a hot spot in the U.S. for health IT

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BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – March 21, 2013 – Birmingham companies representing more than 1,000 employees in the region made a strong showing at one of the largest and most prestigious health information technology trade shows in the country. A large contingent of Birmingham health information technology companies, leaders and advocates attended the Health Information Management Systems Society’s (HIMSS) annual conference last week in New Orleans, joining 40,000 health care leaders to discuss current health care challenges and view cutting-edge health IT that address them.

The Birmingham Business Alliance’s Steven Ceulemans, Vice President of Innovation and Technology attended the conference to help market health IT excellence in Birmingham and to take note of the Birmingham community’s numerous noteworthy accolades, new products, cutting-edge technologies and emerging partnerships. Ceulemans cited Birmingham’s strong health care and information technology industry base as a critical reason for the region’s excellence in health IT.

“The need for technology solutions to address national health care reforms and the challenges of an aging population has never been more important,” he said. “It was obvious last week at the convention that Birmingham is leading in health care technology, building on our community’s unique mix of large medical providers, a diverse and well-trained talent pool spanning both the technology and medical fields, and a technology reservoir of more than 450 IT companies.”

Prior to the conference, the BBA’s economic development team worked to bring together local leaders in the health IT industry to address challenges and barriers within the industry and seek out ways the BBA can actively promote Birmingham’s successes in this diverse sector of the local technology industry. This roundtable of health IT leaders will meet on a regular basis as part of the Blueprint Birmingham Industry Leadership Council initiative, coordinated by the BBA.
Here are some of the local companies included in the initiative:

- **PointClear Solutions** is a leading software development partner that incorporates expertise in clinical informatics and user experience to build transformative technologies. The company held its third Annual HIT Innovations Awards event at the conference. This year’s top honors went to **McKesson’s Enterprise Intelligence Division**, with offices in Birmingham. McKesson is the largest health IT company in the United States, ranked in Healthcare Informatics Top 100 HIT companies.

- Also at HIMSS, McKesson showcased its enterprise patient care visibility solution, a result of the company’s 2007 acquisition of Awarix, a Birmingham-based pioneer in the field of enterprise patient care visibility systems. McKesson employs a team of software developers in Birmingham working on its **Performance Visibility Solutions**, including the enterprise patient care visibility system.

- A Birmingham newcomer to the HIMSS exhibition was **MedSnap**, which introduced its new **ID Enterprise** product, a technology solution for health systems. The company provides a suite of apps that help clinicians, patients and caregivers address medication safety and adherence issues. Using a process as simple as snapping a smartphone picture of pills, MedSnap can accurately identify which medications the pills contain and how they might affect or interact with a treatment or new medications.

- **Proventix Systems Inc.** also exhibited at this year’s conference. Proventix delivers technologies to reduce the human and economic losses associated with illness. **The company recently launched its new nGage™ system**, a point-of-care compliance monitoring system that motivates health care workers to follow hand hygiene standards. nGage has propelled Proventix to the leading edge of healthcare innovation with several great results and accolades to show for it. The company’s Putting Power into Healthcare Initiative (PPHI), in which 27 Alabama hospitals adopted nGage, recently announced a reduction of nearly 19 percent in Hospital Associated Infections (HAIs) over the first six months of the program, resulting in 587 fewer patient days in the hospital and a cost savings of $661,540. **Proventix also recently announced a partnership with Lincor Solutions** to integrate Proventix’s nGage™ system and Lincor’s MEDIVista platform into a touch screen terminal at every bedside that can only be used by health care professionals after they adequately have washed their hands.

- Birmingham’s **MEDSEEK** was another prominent star at the conference. With more than 300 employees and ranked No. 23 in the top 100 Alabama companies listed by Inc.5000, MEDSEEK provides software to help health care organizations attract potential patients, engage patients and their families, coordinate care, and improve operational efficiency. At HIMSS, **MEDSEEK showcased the expanded capabilities of its MEDSEEK Influence platform** to help health care organizations move beyond patient engagement to influence—giving organizations the power to strategically guide patient decisions and behaviors before and after a clinical encounter. **The company also announced an expansion of the services offered by Virtual Influence Planning Group**, an independent consulting firm of MEDSEEK, to include patient portal adoption and marketing plans.
for health care organizations. Additionally, Virtual Influence Planning Group announced it is accepting new members for its eHealth Council 2013. The exclusive council, comprised of hospital and health system CEOs, CIOs, CMIOs and CFOs, meet once a year to discuss how best to develop and strengthen their digital patient acquisition, engagement, influence and population health strategies.

- The fast-growing, Birmingham-based SuccessEHS featured its patient-centered EHR solution at this year’s HIMSS conference. The solution is used to support health systems with patient-centric care models, a widely recognized key to improving quality, patient experience and outcomes and decreasing health care costs. The company recently announced that it had hired 165 new employees in 2011, and nearly 130 in 2012, and was named a 2013 EHR Direct Qualified Vendor, one of only 23 to earn the designation.

- Rounding out a very strong Birmingham presence at the conference was the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Department of Health Services Administration, which houses the UAB Master of Science Program in Health Informatics. This cutting-edge program, taught in a format that accommodates working professionals and that attracts talent internationally, includes a curriculum centered around the use of technology to collect, manage, exchange, analyze, use and store clinical and administrative information in a healthcare setting.

The Birmingham Business Alliance is a dynamic advocate, unifying voice and constant catalyst for economic development and business prosperity for the Birmingham region. For more information about the BBA visit its website at www.birminghambusinessalliance.com.

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