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Parallel18's alumni shine bright at SXSW 2017

The accelerator will lead a panel on latino entrepreneurs, while several of the startups from previous cohorts will be launching products and pitching

San Juan, Puerto Rico (March 6th 2017) - Global accelerator [Parallel18](#) (P18) and 5 of the startups that have been through its program will have highlighted participations at the [SXSW](#) (South by Southwest) innovation conference, which begins this week in Austin, Texas. The companies that will be represented are: [Abartys Health](#), [ALEX](#), [UAV-IQ](#), [Brands of](#) and [PowerSiesta](#).

SXSW celebrates innovation by combining startups, technology, music and film, and has been a launching platform for well-known companies, such as Twitter. More than 150,000 people attend the conferences, exhibition and independent music and film festivals, throughout the two-weeks event.

Sebastian Vidal, P18's Executive Director, will lead the panel "[Se Habla Spanglish: A Bridge for Latino Startups](#)", where Puerto Ricans [Ramphis Castro](#), [Giovanni Rodríguez](#) and [Nancy Santiago-Negrón](#) will discuss the Hispanic market potential in the U.S. as a portal for Latin American and Caribbean entrepreneurs. The panel will be held on Saturday, March 11th at 5:00 p.m. and is part of the official SXSW 2017 schedule in the Startup Village track.



“The idea for the panel is to combine the lessons we have learned at P18 working with so many international startups, with the experience Nancy, Giovanni and Ramphis have with latino entrepreneurs in the U.S. to present the opportunities and resources that could help open the door for them,” said Vidal, about the panel organized by the accelerator.

SXSW's official schedule includes conferences, workshops, panels and keynote speakers about diverse subjects, including business, culture and public policy. The process to curate the content starts 8 months prior to the event with a call for sessions and speakers, that are then submitted to the public vote and later on vetted by an internal committee.

International Exposure

In addition to the accelerator's panel, at least 5 P18 alumni will have different interventions throughout the conference. First up is [ALEX - Anyone's Learning Experience](#), who will be pitching tomorrow, Tuesday, March 7th at the pre-event [SXSWedu](#). The startup co-founded in the U.S. by Puerto Ricans Alana Matos and Sergio Marrero is 1 of 10 finalists selected for a "lightning pitch" competition.

While on SXSW's official first day, Friday, March 10th, Dolmarie Mendez and Lauren Cascio will make [Abartys Health](#) the first startup founded in Puerto Rico to pitch on the [Release It](#) competition, one of the main events of the Interactive festival. SXSW Release It serves as a platform for 10 startups to release new and innovative products. A panel of judges comprised of technology industry experts, venture



capitalists and high-profile media select the product or service most likely to succeed in the marketplace.

"We will be officially releasing our new product, 'InsureLynk', on stage at SXSW and will be judged on the viability of the product in its respective market. We're excited to represent Abartys Health and Puerto Rico in Austin," pointed out Dolmarie Mendez, CEO of the startup.

Abartys Health has created a unified system for the three major components of healthcare -patients, doctors, and insurers-, streamlining services, communication, and treatment. Its technology is moving healthcare from the existing disjointed state to a centralized hub.

A second P18 Alumnus might be in the same competition, since ag tech startup [UAV-IQ](#), is an "alternate" for Release It, which means they should be ready to pitch in case one of the finalists can't make it at the last minute.

Ready to win some customers

SXSW also includes a trade show, March 12-15, where startups, established companies and delegations from cities, states and countries exhibit innovative products and services. This year, Puerto Rican P18 alumni [Brands of](#) and [PowerSiesta](#) will be there.

"We're honored to be at the SXSW Trade Show, since we'll be launching our new sites Brands of El Paso and Brands of Mexico. My team and I are thankful to the Borderplex Alliance and the city of El Paso, Texas for inviting us to be part of the Mexico pavilion. Brands of was born in Puerto Rico, but since the beginning, our goal



was to develop a scalable tool, that connects the world with local brands and entrepreneurs," said Alan Taveras, cofounder of Brands Of.

Meanwhile, PowerSiesta is one of 12 products that will be showcased at the ["Powered by Paper"](#) gallery at SXSW 2017. Luigi Gonzalez, cofounder of the local startup, explained that the [Paper and Packaging Board](#) wanted to take to SXSW commercial innovative products made with paper and packaging materials.

"The PowerSiesta caught their eye because we use corrugated carton in a novel way, making a product that is light, compact and portable," said Gonzalez about the solution his team created to help travelers get a better sleep on the go.

"We're proud of the local startups and the international startups with links to the island that will be participating in this year's SXSW, since they're spreading further the message that Puerto Rico is a productive platform to scale globally", concluded Vidal, Executive Director of P18.

About Parallel18 and the Puerto Rico Science Trust

[Parallel18](#) is a startup accelerator in Puerto Rico that helps build and scale local and international companies while also spurring innovation and economic development on the island. Parallel18 is an economic development initiative operated by the [Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust](#) in collaboration with Puerto Rico's [Department of Economic Development and Commerce](#), and the [Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company \(Pridco\)](#). For more information visit: www.parallel18.com. The Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust, as described in Public Law 214, is a private nonprofit organization created in 2004 to maximize Puerto Rico's participation and creation of jobs in the global knowledge economy by promoting the investment and financing of science and technology research and development. By investing in research and the commercialization of technology, the Trust serves as a catalyst for creating and retaining the Island's highly qualified, well educated, and often bilingual residents. The Trust is also responsible for Puerto Rico's public policy for science, technology, research and development. For more information log onto <http://www.prsciencetrust.org>.

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