Sounding Board lands investment from Degreed Co-founder David Blake during COVID-19

Investment from David Blake and The Future of Works Studios underscores the demand for data-driven, virtual leadership development that prepares leaders to thrive, especially during chaotic times

Foster City, Apr 8, 2020 (Issuewire.com**)** - **Sounding Board, Inc**, the premiere scalable global leadership development platform today announced an investment from prolific thesis-driven investor and entrepreneur **David Blake and his *The Future of Work Studios* (TFOWS).** With companies experiencing unprecedented business upheaval due to COVID-19, Sounding Board provides customized virtual leadership development solutions to enterprises that accelerate the development of leaders at all levels. Leaders receive on-demand access to a global network of coaches through messaging and software tools that uplevel their soft skills in real-time to lead through business transformation and change management. This investment validates Sounding Board's data-driven, technology-first approach to leadership development which builds agile leadership skills and measurable business outcomes.

Blake noted "Sounding Board has created a new paradigm in the future of work by utilizing technology to scale leadership skills development to every level of the organization, impacting business outcomes with actionable intelligence. These skills are needed more than ever in today's environment. What we are seeing is that the investment that companies make in bridging the skills gap has a direct impact on revenue. Our investment in Sounding Board is aligned perfectly with TWOFS' mission of building companies that bridge the skills gap," added Blake.

The Future of Work Studios was co-founded by David Blake who also launched *Degreed*, the leading enterprise life-long learning experience platform. Blake's career has been driven by the mission to build the modern skills platform, bridging the gap between talent and learning. With today's rapid digital transformation occurring at all levels of industry, he saw an increasingly important need for soft skills development. Sounding Board's focus on coaching as a means of developing people's skills, rather than simply a wellness check, aligned most closely with The Future of Works' mission.

"David's vision through The Future of Work Studios aligns with the Sounding Board belief that the development of leadership skills is one of the most critical challenges companies face, and that the market for scalable leadership coaching is exploding" emphasized Tao, who launched the company in 2016 with her co-founder and former executive coach, Lori Mazan. "David's expertise on the relationship between the development of soft skills and positive business outcomes is invaluable to the growth of Sounding Board and how we grow the next generation of leaders with measurable impact and strong ROI."

According to a recent PWC Annual Global CEO Survey, one of the top threats noted by CEOs was the availability of employees with key skills. As modern organizations go through disruptive change, there is a dramatically increased need for HR leaders to strategically partner with companies like Sounding Board to develop the leadership bench required to grow their organizations.

Sounding Board clients have seen measurable outcomes that demonstrate how leaders have increased agility and ability to accelerate business outcomes quickly, increased productivity to meet urgent business needs, alignment of employee priorities with corporate goals, and improved ability to attract and retain high performers.

As an example, Pivotal Software, acquired by VMWare earlier this year, used Sounding Board's scalable platform to coach more than 130 of its employees from mid-level managers to VPs. "Through coaching, and periodic "360°" evaluations from people around the employee, Pivotal saw significant gains in leadership skills amidst a $2.7B acquisition by VMWare, including the ability to better manage teams, as well as more effectively hit hiring and revenue goals through a changing landscape," noted Eileen Markatos, senior director of people operations at Pivotal.

The investment from The Future of Work Studios will be used to accelerate the company's sales and marketing efforts, as well as further execute on its product roadmap as a leading platform for developing soft skills in a data-driven, measurable and actionable approach.

About Sounding Board, Inc:

All Leaders Need a Sounding Board! Sounding Board combines best-in-class leadership coaching with enterprise-grade technology and a proprietary, outcome-based Sound CoachingTM methodology to develop new leaders and drive positive business outcomes. Founded in 2016, the company is one of less than 3% of sole female-founded companies to raise venture capital from leading investors such as Bloomberg Beta and Precursor Ventures. Among its clients are a range of Fortune 500 and high-growth companies, including Pivotal, Bill.com, Rakuten and several that have been named among the country's Best Places to Work. For more information, visit www.soundingboardinc.com.

About The Future of Work Studios

The Future of Work Studios (FOWS) is building companies that will bridge the skills gap and empower lifelong learning. We live in a world where technology is accelerating faster than our ability to adapt, and it's creating multi-trillion-dollar skills gaps across all industries. The FOWS believes we must develop and empower people using technology to keep pace. TFOW is co-founded by David Blake and Eric Sharp, who together previously co-founded Degreed, the leading enterprise Learning Experience Platform used by a majority of the world's largest companies. Learn more at www.tfow.com

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