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Sleeping Giant Capital Launches Kalamazoo-Based Human Capital Advisory and Solutions Platform With the Acquisitions of Rep-Lite and Pondera Advisors

Sleeping Giant Capital – a long-term, place-based succession alternative to traditional private equity – announced today the launch of a new Human Capital Advisory and Solutions Platform with the acquisitions of Rep-Lite and Pondera Advisors. The platform will be headquartered in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and marks Sleeping Giant Capital’s first step in building a nationally relevant talent strategy business anchored in West Michigan.

Rep-Lite, founded in 2012, is a national provider of outsourced sales talent solutions. Pondera Advisors, founded in 2006 and based in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is a leadership consulting firm known for its proprietary Pondera® Virtual Advisor (PVA) personality and leadership assessment tool. Together, the two firms bring complementary capabilities across the talent lifecycle, from commercial talent acquisition to leadership development and culture alignment.

“This is more than an acquisition—it’s the foundation of something bigger,” said Kelly Conway, who has been named CEO of the new Human Capital Advisory and Solutions Platform. “Rep-Lite and Pondera have a unique ability to deliver scalable, brand-aligned talent solutions that help companies perform at a higher level. In a competitive market, talent wins. Our clients count on us to build stronger teams and fill critical commercial gaps with people who drive results—while also equipping leaders to build healthier, more effective cultures. With Sleeping Giant Capital’s support, we’re excited to deepen our impact and expand our reach.”

Conway brings more than 25 years of leadership experience to the role, including senior executive positions at Stryker, Lockton, and Acrisure. Her vision for the platform includes expanding service offerings, investing in talent, and serving as a long-term partner to organizations navigating growth, change, and workforce transformation.

Rick Barnett, founder of Rep-Lite, will continue in a key leadership role, bringing deep expertise in commercial sales recruitment and field team deployment. Rob Elliott and Joe Day, co-founders of Pondera Advisors, will also remain in leadership roles, continuing their work helping organizations align leadership, culture, and strategy to drive lasting impact.

“We are thrilled to build a human capital advisory and solutions platform and partner with Kelly and her newly formed leadership team,” said Derrick McIver, Co-Founder and Managing Partner



at Sleeping Giant Capital. “Rep-Lite and Pondera exemplify the kind of talent-first, scalable businesses we seek to grow. As our first step in developing a broader Human Capital Solutions Platform based in West Michigan, we’re proud to support their continued success.”

About Rep-Lite LLC

Founded in 2012 and now headquartered in Kalamazoo, Michigan, Rep-Lite provides outsourced sales talent solutions to companies nationwide. The firm specializes in placing high-performing commercial professionals who accelerate growth, enhance execution, and strengthen customer engagement.

For more information, visit www.rep-lite.com.

About Pondera Advisors LLC

Founded in 2006, Pondera Advisors is a leadership consulting firm with offices in Grand Rapids and a newly established presence in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The firm partners with organizations to develop leaders, align teams, and transform culture. Its proprietary Pondera Virtual Advisor (PVA) tool has helped thousands of professionals become more effective and impactful.

For more information, visit www.ponderaadvisors.com.

About Sleeping Giant Capital

Sleeping Giant Capital is a place-based investment firm advancing a new model for majority buyouts. Focused on the generational transition of small businesses, the firm empowers local ownership while delivering strong financial returns and measurable community impact. Through a long-duration fund and hands-on operating platform, Sleeping Giant Capital retains capital and control within communities, develops the next generation of owner-operators, and partners with universities to strengthen regional economies.

For more information, visit www.sleepinggiantcapital.com