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### **UNH links Net Startups, resources**

*Hoping to help launch the next billion-dollar Internet company in Connecticut, a new center at the University of New Haven aims to connect entrepreneurs to the guidance, resources and capital they need to bring their vision to fruition.*

WEST HAVEN, November 14, 2007 — UNH's Center for University-based Enterprise and Development, known as CUBED@UNH, guides entrepreneurs through the process of starting an Internet-based company.

It is open to qualified entrepreneurs of all ages, not just students, said Andre Yap, the center's director.

"We're working with the full spectrum of demographics," he said. "We want to work with entrepreneurs who have some big ideas. We're looking for ventures that have a shot at becoming a billion-dollar company."

The center's flagship program, called Venture Quest, guides entrepreneurs — who must pass a screening process in order to be accepted into the program — through various stages of getting a venture up and running.

The 12-month program addresses topics such as marketing, sales, intellectual property, technology and product development and venture capital.

The program is open to ventures that already are in business, as well as entrepreneurs who are in the early stages of developing a business plan, said Yap, who is managing director of Ynnovation Groupe, an international venture firm.

"We've really built a lot of depth and a lot of rigor into it," he said. "Our goal is to recruit entrepreneurs who have what it takes. This is about making world-class entrepreneurship accessible as a career choice. If we can help you build that great company, we'll do it."

Amy Desmarais, a UNH senior, is working with the center to start a travel-focused Internet business. Prior to the program, she hoped to start her own company within the next three to five years, but with the center's help, she hopes to launch the company soon after she graduates in May.

"It's a great way to go from an idea to an actual business," she said of the program. "It's a really fast-tracked center. Hopefully, I'll be in the position to start my business within a year."

UNH is part of a growing group of colleges and universities nationwide that have begun business incubator programs, said Matthew Nemerson, president and chief executive officer of the Connecticut Technology Council.

"There's a trend all around the country now for universities of all sizes to encourage entrepreneurial growth," he said.

With entrepreneurial programs established at UNH, Yale University and the University of Connecticut, among other schools, Nemerson said "the next step" ideally would be for the schools to network with each other, sharing contacts and ideas throughout the state.

Cara Baruzzi, Register Business Editor