

The College of Business

Entrepreneurial Students Can Find Start-Up Help Right on Campus

It once was that students were the entrepreneurs of tomorrow. But now, with Facebook and YouTube valued in the billions, it looks like students have graduated to become the entrepreneurs of today, leapfrogging the years of experience once believed necessary to make it in business.

Andre Yap, managing director of the venture firm Ynnovation Groupe and founder of the

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Amy Desmarais '08

Center for University-Based Enterprise & Development (CUBED), sat in a room at The College of Business recently with aspiring businesswoman Amy Desmarais '08 B.S., working their way through Desmarais' Travel 2.0 Start-Up. “We’re looking beyond Priceline, Orbitz, and your first generation of ‘travel shopping’ models, and exploring new frontiers using social networks, media and technologies to revolutionize travel,” Yap says.

The brains behind the College of Business’s groundbreaking program, Yap says CUBED will

guide entrepreneurs through the art and science of Internet start-ups. CUBED’s flagship program is the Venture Quest, a 12-month program that requires entrepreneurs to hurdle 12 milestones to secure venture funding.

“I’m not just doing it for a grade or to get credits,” says Desmarais, who intends to run her own company by the time she graduates in May. “CUBED is helping me build a strong business.”

With four participants this semester, Yap is projecting 20 slots for the 2008 Venture Quest, open to anyone — including alumni and the general public —

interested in starting the next billion-dollar company. “Our goal is to discover world-class entrepreneurs and to work with them to start-up, finance and bring to market great companies,” Yap says.

For Desmarais, CUBED is paving the way for far more than a job and a paycheck after graduation. “CUBED has helped me realize what it will take to turn my concept into reality,” Desmarais says. “I’m working toward my dreams and my passion, and overcoming the obstacles along the way.”

More information on CUBED Venture Quest is available at www.cubedquest.com.

Student Amy Desmarais with Andre Yap, founder of the Center for University-Based Enterprise & Development (CUBED)