

# QB3 asks entrepreneurs to help UC startups fly

BY RON LEUTY

San Francisco Business Times

QB3 is tapping an old venture capital idea to push young, incubating companies that much closer to standing on their own.

But instead of entrepreneurs in residence at VC firms turning fresh ideas into a source of funding deals, QB3 wants its in-house serial entrepreneurs to lead companies away from University of California campuses — and the sooner, the better.

QB3's first entrepreneur in residence, life sciences industry veteran Dushyant Pathak, joined in early November, and medical device company veteran Dan Burnett came aboard earlier this month. QB3 could host as many as four or five entrepreneurs in residence for about six months at a time, said associate director Douglas Crawford.

"We want to bring Bob Swansons to our Herb Boyers," Crawford said, referring to the legendary venture capital-UCSF researcher team that in the 1970s launched biotech powerhouse Genentech Inc.

QB3, or the California Institute for Quantitative Biosciences, operates Garage incubators aimed at translating research from UC campuses in Berkeley, San Francisco and Santa Cruz into companies. It also oversees incubator space at the FibroGen building in San Francisco's Mission Bay.

Entrepreneur-in-residence programs at VC firms have met with mixed success, said Pathak, a Chiron Corp. veteran who most



Crawford

recently was vice president of business development at South San Francisco stem cell development company iPierian Inc. "People haven't figured out how to translate or make that work," he said.

The difference with the QB3 program, he said, is that the more-experienced entrepreneurs get access to a corps of 35 young companies already set up in QB3's incubator space in addition to a cadre of researchers at the three UC campuses who have yet to translate their lab work into business plans.

"There's just more to work with here," Pathak said. "I've seen this harmonic convergence of energy, experience and activity — a cross-pollination of really smart folks.

"The innovative atmosphere is all around you. It's in the air. I feel infected by it."

That's exactly what Crawford had in mind as he developed a plan to marry mid-career life sciences industry entrepreneurs with UC researchers. The plan is that those business-builders will find one or more companies whose ideas match up with their expertise and take those companies beyond the UC campuses to attract funding and grow on their own.

QB3 receives no state funding for the program, and the entrepreneurs in residence are not currently paid, but Crawford said eventually QB3 would like to provide "modest compensation."

"This is not about mentorship, although that's a natural by-product," Crawford said. "It's about linking entrepreneurs looking for great possibilities with innovators looking to do something outside the university setting."

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QB3's first entrepreneur-in-residence, life sciences veteran Dushyant Pathak, joined the UC consortium in November.

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