Thoughts from Dr. Christine Gulbranson, SVP, Chief Innovation Officer

The Changing Relationship Between Academia and Entrepreneurship

Universities have always been recognized for their role in research and the associated translation of research into products for industry. Over the last 50 years, the role universities have played in R&D, innovation, and entrepreneurship for the economy and for corporate companies has shifted as companies have adopted a greater reliance on acquisitions for innovation and as the VC and investment industry has grown, fueling a plethora of startups.
Universities are becoming hives not just of innovation and research, but also of entrepreneurship. The University of California and many UC campuses have gained national and international recognition for their approaches to innovation and entrepreneurship, but we still have a long way to go to fulfill our growing role in innovation and entrepreneurship as a university and as a public institution with a responsibility to society.

Two UC Davis-associated companies, Japa and Aluminum Oxide, have made it into the final-four round of the Sacramento Kings Capitalize contest. Japa Inc. CEO & Co-Founder, Mathew Magno, won the Grand Prize and was presented with the prize check of $10,000. Magno is a prior recipient of Big Bang Business Competition. Read more

Learn about their company:

- **Japa**, is a smart parking company delivering data and advanced analytics to solve parking issues. Japa's pioneering technology makes the parking experience for consumers easier, while making corporate campuses and cities more efficient.
- **Aluminum Oxide (finalist of 2018 UC Systemwide Entrepreneur Pitch Competition)**, a company that was started by UC Davis engineering students and based on the work of Jerry Woodall, distinguished professor of electrical and computer engineering at UC Davis, utilizes the properties of gallium and the elemental power of aluminum to produce high purity Aluminum Oxide (HPA) in an environmentally friendly and cost-effective way, which can be used in semiconductors and batteries. Read more
velox Biosystems, Byron Shen, Shares Pitch Deck Pointers at UC Irvine

The right pitch can earn a startup everything from cash prizes and funding, to recognition and strategic partnerships. Byron Shen, CEO of UCI Applied Innovation startup Velox Biosystems, has firsthand experience.

Hot off his recent win at the 2018 UC Entrepreneur Pitch Competition, Shen shared pitching tips in a lunch-and-learn event at the Cove @ UCI Applied Innovation.

“Being a startup is tough business. It’s like running an obstacle course, overcoming one challenge after another,” said Shen of the struggles that startups face. “And one of the biggest challenges is finding funding.”

CEO and UCI Professor, Gillian Hayes, Leads AVIAA Toward Expansion After Graduating from UC Irvine

Gillian Hayes experienced a migratory life growing up, as her parents would move the family from state to state pursuing careers in academia at universities. Her decision to pursue computer science as a
Second major unveiled a newfound passion.

“I just fell in love with computer science and seemed to excel in classes that were considered more challenging in computer science, where in bio I had struggled,” said Hayes.

That small change set the foundation for what is now Hayes’ career as UCI professor of informatics and, as of January 2018, CEO of startup company AVIAA. AVIAA is an international group purchasing organization for business aviation started in the U.K., now headquartered here in Irvine with offices worldwide. an international group purchasing organization for business aviation started in the U.K., now headquartered here in Irvine with offices worldwide.

UCLA Anderson FEMBA Alumna, Ksenia Yudina ('14), Cracking the 529 Code for Regular People

When Ksenia Yudina ('14) realized she was more interested in the finance side of the mortgage brokerage she worked for than she was in the real estate side, she got herself an undergraduate degree in finance. From there, as her talents blossomed and she earned her CFA as well as her Anderson MBA, her career path seemed a natural climb up the corporate ladder at Capital Group Companies. But instead, Yudina took a gamble on a new chapter. “It was a pretty risky adventure,” she says. “It wasn’t an easy decision for me.” In 2017, Yudina gave up managing $1.2 billion in business for Capital Group — where she rose to VP of American Funds in less than three years — to found her own company. She says she felt a now-or-never compulsion to develop a business idea she knew could solve a problem.

Young UC Merced Student Developing
First-year student, Kumaran Akilan, has developed an algorithm that uses the retinal vessel system to find abnormalities that can signal Alzheimer's disease. He is working on a lens that could make this technology accessible for a smartphone, enabling primary care physicians to possibly take the lead in diagnosing the disease quicker than current methods. Akilan was recognized at CES in January and has a personal connection to the disease through his grandfather. Read more

An interdisciplinary team of UCLA engineers and medical professionals has won an award from the UCLA Innovation Fund for their work in advancing efforts to image structures of the eye using lasers. The endeavor is a collaboration between Kouros Nouri-Mahdavi, an assistant professor of ophthalmology in the glaucoma division of the UCLA Jules Stein Eye Institute, Chee Wei Wong, professor of electrical and computer engineering in the UCLA Samueli School of Engineering, and Jinghui Yang and Yoon-Soo Jang, two research scientists in Wong’s lab. Read more
Computer Scientists Create Programmable Self-Assembling DNA

Computer scientists at the University of California, Davis, and the California Institute of Technology have created DNA molecules that can self-assemble into patterns essentially by running their own program. The work was published March 21 in the journal *Nature*.

“The ultimate goal is to use computation to grow structures and enable more sophisticated molecular engineering,” said David Doty, assistant professor of computer science at UC Davis and co-first author on the paper. Read more

3D Printing Becoming a Surgical Game Changer

Imagine 1,000 puzzle pieces without any picture of what it’s ultimately supposed to look like. With few, if any, reference points, the challenge of fitting them together would be daunting. Head and neck surgeon, Brad Strong, holds a model produced by a 3D printer, which can be seen behind him. That’s what surgeons often confront when a patient suffering from a traumatic injury or condition has a portion of their body that is dramatically damaged or changed. The “puzzle” can be exponentially harder when the injuries involve a person’s face or skull – areas of the human anatomy that are complex, difficult to surgically navigate, and
From Chile to UC Davis: Entrepreneurship Academy Helps UC Davis Alumnus Reconnect and Build His Network

UC Davis Graduate School of Management alumnus, Tiago Cavagnaro MBA 10, returned to campus to attend the 2019 Food, Ag + Health Entrepreneurship Academy, presented by the Mike and Renee Child Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. While in Northern California, Cavagnaro also met with other UC Davis alumni, angel investors and venture capitalists to build his network. Cavagnaro is the chief innovation officer at ADA Soluciones Informaticas in Santiago, Chile. Read more

Fueling Tomorrow's Entrepreneurs

A diverse cohort of 75 MBA students and Ph.D. candidates from UC Davis, Rice, Lamar, and other top universities recently spent four days immersed in entrepreneurship at the 2019 Ignite conference. A collaboration between the UC Davis Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and the Rice Alliance for Technology and Entrepreneurship, Ignite introduced the students to some of Northern California’s top startup leaders and innovative CEOs. Held March 6 to 9 at the UC Davis Graduate School of Management, Ignite included meetings with, and presentations by, some of Northern California's top entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs, and gave students the opportunity to grow their networks with like-minded peers at other schools. Read more

Education Kit Teaches Practical Skills in Integrated Photonics at UC San Diego

Students today typically don't learn
practical skills in integrated photonics—like how to characterize and test photonics integrated circuits—until the PhD level. Electrical engineers at UC San Diego, in collaboration with Tyndall National Institute in Cork, Ireland, are changing that. They developed an educational toolkit to bring integrated photonics into the undergraduate college engineering and science curriculum. The team envisions that teaching these skills earlier on will enable more graduates to enter the integrated photonics industry workforce and meet the growing demand for photonics technicians and engineers. Read more

Research at UC San Diego: The Robots That Dementia Caregivers Want

Building robots that can help people with dementia has been a longtime goal for roboticists. Yet until now, no one has sought to survey informal caregivers, such as family members, about what characteristics and roles these robots should have. A team of scientists at UC San Diego sought to address this by spending six months co-designing robots with family members, social workers, and other caregivers who care for people with dementia. The research is led by computer science professor, Laurel Riek, a member of the UC San Diego Contextual Robotics Institute. The researchers found that caregivers wanted the robots to fulfill two major roles: support positive moments shared by caregivers and their loved ones; and lessen caregivers’ emotional stress by taking on difficult tasks, such as answering repeated questions and restricting unhealthy food. Read coverage in Medgadget. Read more

Meet UC Founders

UC Berkeley Alum, Savan Devani, of BioTrillion

Savan Devani is the CEO & Founder of BioTrillion, a health tech company building an AI-platform called BioEngine4D to digitally detect developing diseases. Their
Current disease targets are in the neurology and respiratory areas and their BioEngine4D solution will be deployed initially for the Consumer market, via a front-end BioTrillion mobile App.

Savan is a trained Bioengineer and later spent the bulk of his career on the business side the Life Sciences industry as an Investment Banker at Citigroup and Deutsche Bank. Savan graduated with a M.S.E. in Bioengineering from the University of Pennsylvania, with an emphasis in Business from Wharton and a B.S.E. in Bioengineering focused in Computer Science from the University of California at Berkeley. Read more

UC San Diego Visiting Scholar, Dr. Jason McKeown, of Neurovalens

Dr. Jason McKeown is the CEO & Founder of Neurovalens, a health-tech startup that creates non-invasive tech wearable devices (based on neuroscience research) that help improve the lives of those who suffer from neurological issues, such as obesity and insomnia. Neurovalens was a winner of the 2018 UC Entrepreneur Pitch Competition. Dr. Jason McKeown is a UK trained medical physician with an interest in the neurological aspect of obesity, diabetes and metabolism. His current roles are based at both the University of California, San Diego where he holds a Visiting Scholar position at the Center for Brain & Cognition, and also at Queen’s University of Belfast where he holds an MD Research Position at the school of Medicine. Read more

UCLA Alum Parsa Rezvani of Tutorfly

Parsa Rezvani is the CEO & Founder of Tutorfly, a startup that participated in the 2018 UC Entrepreneur Pitch Competition. Congrats to Tutorfly for placing 1st in PitchForce competition three times consecutively in the EdTech Track in the Young Startup West Conference and exceeding $15k in revenue during February.
They also launched a test Affiliate Sales Program and closed $100k of their fundraising round. The judges from the competition represented MIT Angels, Bay Angels, Band of Angels, 500 Startups, and the Keiretsu Forum. Most recently they pitched on March 7th at the Venture Summit West Conference at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

### Upcoming Competitions & Deadlines

**Grand Prize Pitch Day – due 4/24/19**

5:00 pm PT | B100 Blum Hall, UC Berkeley

Don’t miss this exciting event! After months of developing their Big Ideas with mentors, selected student teams compete in the annual Big Ideas Grand Prize Pitch Day for up to $5,000 in prizes. Teams will share their vision for social impact with a panel of esteemed judges. This annual highlight of the Big Ideas Contest is not to be missed and offers opportunities for audience participation and networking. Stay tuned for the pitch lineup. [RSVP here](#)

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**Apply to the J.M.K Innovation Prize – due 4/30/19**

The J.M.K. Prize seeks to identify, support, and elevate innovators who are spearheading transformative early-stage projects in the fields of the environment, heritage conservation, and social justice. There are up to ten available prizes, each including a cash award of $150,000 over three years, plus $25,000 for project expenses, for a total award of $175,000. Awardees also receive guidance through the J.M.K. Fund and its resource network, providing training and tools for ascendant change makers. [Apply here](#)
venturewell E-Teams Grant – due 5/8/19

Open to all science and engineering based student teams!

Students can receive an E-Team grant of up to $25K and get training through our early-stage innovator training program. The program provides peer networking, expert coaching, national recognition, and hands-on workshops. Our offerings advance teams through the pathway they’re likely to take as an innovator and entrepreneur. More info

Apply to Girls in Tech’s AMPLIFY Pitch Competition - due 5/10/19

Open to all female founders! Girls in Tech’s AMPLIFY is a half-day startup pitch competition for women-founded startups. If you are a founder, work at a female-founded startup, or know someone who does, consider applying to AMPLIFY for a chance to win $10,000+ in seed funding and services, exposure on a global stage, and be introduced to a community of investors committed to supporting women entrepreneurs.

Apply here

Apply to the Make in LA Accelerator Program - due 5/15/19

Open to all early-stage startups! Make in LA is a four-month accelerator program in Los Angeles that invests $100,000-$600,000 in early-stage startups. The program starts in mid-August and ends in mid-December 2019. MiLA specializes in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, food tech,
mobility, clean tech, and Latin American startups, and has invested in 17 startups since 2015. Apply here

**Create the Future Design Contest** - due 7/1/2019

Do you have a product or design idea that could create jobs, improve daily life, save time/money, help the environment, or benefit society in other ways? Enter the 2019 "Create the Future" Design Contest for a chance to win $20,000 USD, other great prizes, and global recognition. More info

**CONNECT Springboard Accelerator Program** - due on a rolling basis

Springboard is a free mentoring program for entrepreneurs with startups in tech or life science. Springboard helps entrepreneurs develop a compelling commercialization strategy and prepare for future funding and growth. Springboard offers rolling admission so you can get going right away. Apply here

**Energy/ Cleantech Entrepreneurs** - Get Help Commercializing Emerging Energy Technologies - due on a rolling basis

The San Diego Regional Energy Innovation Network is a free program for startups that are developing solutions to help California meet its energy goals. The program provides access to the resources and facilities of a number of regional partner organizations and connections with industry in order to accelerate the commercialization of emerging energy technologies. Apply here
Upcoming Events

UCLA Anderson's Impactathon

April 25-26, 2019 | UCLA, CA

Impactathon is part of Impact Week 2019 and gives individuals interested in social impact and social entrepreneurship the opportunity to learn from UCLA faculty about how social impact works as a system! Participants working in teams will also have a chance to win $10,000 for their enterprise solution or up to $1,000 for mapping out a solvable problem! More info

Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Systems Forum

May 15, 2019 | UCLA, CA

AI and Autonomous Mobility in Collaboration with UCLA CAEV - 5/15/19
Whether you approach AI as a data scientist, researcher or entrepreneur, this conference will provide you the opportunity to learn and network with experts in AI and those working on innovations in the automotive and transportation sectors. More info
Innovate to Grow 2019

May 17, 2019 | UC Merced, CA

Innovate to Grow is the bi-annual showcase of UC Merced student ingenuity and entrepreneurship. Save the Date for our Spring 2019 event, which is scheduled on Friday, May 17, 2019. Everyone – the campus community and the public – is invited to Innovate to Grow to see the amazing results of student teams from our signature programs: (1) Capstone Innovation Design Clinic (2) Engineering Service Learning and (3) Mobile App Challenge (which will feature in our Spring edition). The work these teams perform will have long-lasting implications, not only for the students and partnering organizations, but also for the wider community, the state, the nation and, potentially, the world. More info

Understanding IP Due Diligence from the Investor’s Point of View

May 30 | 5:30 pm PT | Room 212, Byers Hall, UCSF Mission Bay

Early-stage companies will have to obtain funding or go through an exit process at some point in time. Since intellectual property (IP) often represents the bulk of an early stage company’s assets, investors will typically conduct due diligence on the IP during their evaluation process. Key areas that are evaluated include ownership of the IP, strength of the company’s IP, and freedom-to-operate. Join us May 30 to get a primer on how to prepare for IP due diligence from Douglas Portnow and Piers Blewett from the IP law firm Schwegman Lundberg & Woessner. Register

BIO 2019 Registration Now Open

Join us in Philadelphia, PA for the can’t-miss biotechnology event of the year! Register Now
Bio International Convention 2019
June 3 - 6, 2019 | Philadelphia, PA

The BIO International Convention is hosted by the Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO). BIO represents more than 1,100 biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centers and related organizations across the United States and in more than 30 other nations. BIO members are involved in the research and development of innovative healthcare, agricultural, industrial and environmental biotechnology products. More info

Nanotech Conference & Expo Date
June 17-19, 2019 | Boston, MA

Join us in Boston Massachusetts for the 21st annual Nanotech 2019 Conference & Expo, co-located with the TechConnect World Innovation Conference, AI TechConnect and SBIR/STTR Innovation Conferences. On behalf of our symposium organizers we warmly invite you to submit your research abstract and participate in this exciting international event. More info

University of California Pitch Day Presentations
June 28, 2019 | UC Irvine

The UC Center for Accelerated Innovation (CAI) and UC Biomedical Research, Integration and Development (BRAID) are partnering with UCI Applied Innovation to host a forum for UC Faculty to pitch advanced translational programs to a group of potential investors. Friday, June 28, 2019. UC Irvine or webcast. More info
Quicklinks
UC Incubators & Accelerators
Innovation Support & Funding
Innovation Training & Education
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