

SCIENCE SEMINAR

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31

KNOTT HALL B01

3PM

THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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THERE IS A PREVAILING MYTH THAT STARTUP COMPANIES ARE BUILT ON INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES. AS SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS, THIS MYTH APPEALS TO OUR EGOS AND COMFORTS US, BUT IT ISN'T TRUE (AND SHOULDN'T BE). WHILE INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES CAN PLAY A ROLE IN A SUCCESSFUL NEW COMPANY, THESE COMPANIES SUCCEED *IN SPITE OF* THEIR TECHNOLOGIES RATHER THEN BECAUSE OF THEM. COUNTLESS SUCCESSES HAVE EMERGED WITH NO FUNDAMENTALLY NEW TECHNICAL VALUE PROPOSITION. COMPARATIVELY FEW HAVE EMERGED THAT *ARE* BASED ON A TECHNICAL VALUE PROPOSITION. THIS TALK WILL DISCUSS WHY THIS IS TRUE, AND WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN FOR GOOD (OR BAD) TECHNICAL IDEAS TO MOVE SUCCESSFULLY INTO THE MARKET. WHAT ARE THE KEY INGREDIENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL COMPANY, AND WHY ARE THESE INGREDIENTS IMPORTANT? WHAT CAN YOU, AS A SCIENTIST OR ENGINEER, DO TO PREPARE YOURSELF TO OPERATE SUCCESSFULLY AS AN ENTREPRENEUR?

THE SPEAKER HAS HELD FOUNDING LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN FOUR STARTUP OR TURNAROUND COMPANIES. TWO SUCCEEDED, ONE FAILED, AND THE FOURTH IS STILL UNDERWAY. PRIOR TO HIS EXPERIENCE IN STARTUP COMPANIES, HIS GROUP AT SILICON GRAPHICS GENERATED NEARLY \$250M IN CORPORATE REVENUE IN THE FIRST YEAR OF ITS PRODUCT'S RELEASE

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED