

CEO Shares Story Of Success

The Independent Florida Alligator
September 19, 2002
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During a guest lecture Wednesday night, Digi-Net founder and CEO Robert Parker told potential entrepreneurs that the keys to success are tremendous motivation and the ability to challenge established ways of thinking.

“If someone tells you that you can’t change the world, don’t listen to them,” Parker said at the event organized by the UF Entrepreneur’s Club. “If you’re truly driven, there’s nothing that can stop you.”

A crowd of about 80 people turned out to hear Parker, a former UF creative writing student, share his early experiences in starting and running a company.

Parker also relayed his ideas on the meaning of true success and gave advice on how future entrepreneurs could develop their own business ideas.

One attendee said Parker’s ideas hit home.

“I thought it was very inspiring, and it definitely shows that we can start our own companies with the right mindset,” said architecture senior Cindy Chang. “I came to hear him because he started from where I am, and I wanted to hear his success story as a guide for myself.”

Parker formed the Gainesville-based Digi-Net in 1996 as a Web-based systems-integration firm. His brainchild was recognized in 2002 as the fastest-growing technological company in Florida.

“Each of you have an opportunity that even I’m jealous of,” Parker said. “The reason I’m successful is because that insecurity to constantly excel is what drives me.”

During Wednesday’s speech Parker emphasized that the most important qualities in an entrepreneur are the desires to leave a lasting impact on people’s lives and to change the way they think.

“What interests me is having my ideas rock your world,” he said.

The Entrepreneur’s Club, a student organization that supports and promotes business ventures, contacted Parker after he attended a club meeting last year.

The businessman, who spoke for free, kicked off this year’s Million Dollar Speakers Forum, which is one of several programs the club organizes each year.

“We’re trying to create a culture here that resembles the leading institutions- the MITs, the Stanfords,” said club president Seung Jin Lee. “We try to bring to campus the most successful entrepreneurs in the state of Florida.”