

Sunday Oregonian 10 June, 2007 D1

# ENTER THE ENTREPRENEURS SE 0247-

Business schools at Oregon universities teach students survival skills for a shifting economy

By **JONATHAN BRINCKMAN**  
THE OREGONIAN

**R**ichard "Rico" Krohn, an 18-year-old Oregon State University freshman with a loud voice and a greased pompadour, figures he's the perfect entrepreneur: gregarious, creative and quick to question authority.

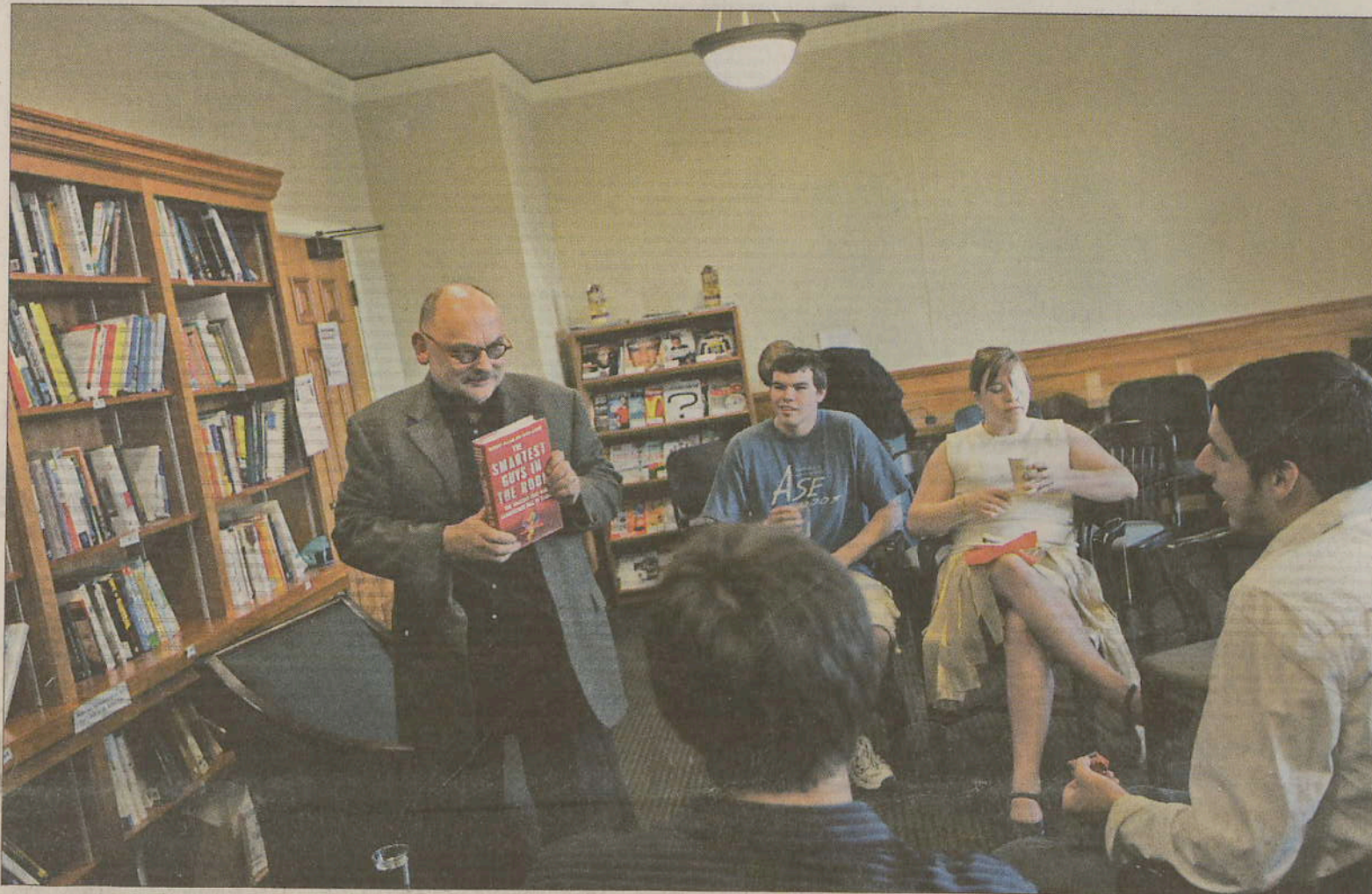
As a high school student in Wimer, near Grants Pass, he earned \$4,000 total breeding sows and selling piglets. "My outgoing personality helps with networking," he said. "I've pretty much been an entrepreneur my entire life."

Krohn is enrolled in OSU's Austin Entrepreneurship Program, which offered its first for-credit courses this year. With 268 students living in Weatherford Hall, it's the nation's largest residential entrepreneurship program.

OSU's program is part of a wave of new and expanding offerings at Oregon universities. Each of the five top business schools in the state have expanded or are expanding their entrepreneurship programs at a time when Oregon's small-business economy could use an infusion of creativity.

"There is a realization, now more so than ever, about how important entrepreneurial thinking is," said Randy Swangard, managing director of University of Oregon's Lundquist Center for Entrepreneurship and a business professor at the university.

Entrepreneurial thinking is crucial because Oregon's economy is linked to small business — the kind launched by entrepreneurs. The state and the Portland area are putting increased emphasis on attracting newly emerging businesses, including those in high tech and the booming environmental sector.



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Michael Powell, owner of Powell's Books in Portland, browses books as he prepares to speak to students at the Austin Entrepreneurship Program's Weatherford Hall at Oregon State University last month. Powell told students that, with the pace of change accelerating, even large companies need employees with entrepreneurial skills.

Please see **ENTREPRENEURS**, Page D3

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMS AT OREGON UNIVERSITIES

SE 0247-2

All five Oregon universities with business colleges accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business are expanding their entrepreneurship programs. Here's a summary of the programs, with students from each explaining why they specialized in entrepreneurship.

### University of Oregon, Eugene

**Public, enrollment 20,394**

The Lundquist College of Business offers concentrations in entrepreneurship for undergraduates and MBA students. The Lundquist Center for Entrepreneurship blends entrepreneurship courses with a variety of experiential learning opportunities through its Technology Fellows Program, Strategic Planning Projects and the New Venture Championship, a business-plan competition that it hosts annually.

**Web site:** [www.uoregon.edu](http://www.uoregon.edu)

**E-mail contact:** [lce@lcb.uoregon.edu](mailto:lce@lcb.uoregon.edu)



**Nathan Lillegard, 31,**  
Eugene  
Degree: MBA, 2006  
*"I chose to study entrepreneurship as the focus of my MBA studies because I wanted to learn how to create and build my own business, not simply manage someone else's venture."*

### Oregon State University, Corvallis

**Public, enrollment 18,764**

Undergraduates can get a minor, option or certificate in entrepreneurship through the College of Business. MBA students can get an entrepreneurial emphasis. The Austin Entrepreneurship Program, created three years ago and based in Weatherford Hall, has about 250 freshmen and sophomores enrolled in entrepreneurship classes.

**Web site:** [www.bus.oregonstate.edu](http://www.bus.oregonstate.edu)

**E-mail contact:**

[aep.info@bus.oregonstate.edu](mailto:aep.info@bus.oregonstate.edu)



**Richard Krohn, 18,**  
freshman  
*"As an entrepreneur I possess the ability to set my own hours, to fit my own schedule to make time for my own hobbies, to spend quality time with my own friends and family. I have complete control of my activity in the workplace."*

### Portland State University, Portland

**Public, enrollment 21,672**

The School of Business Administration offers undergraduate and MBA entrepreneurship courses. The Architecture Program, College of Urban and Public Affairs and Graduate School of Social Work also offer entrepreneurship courses.

**Web site:** [www.pdx.edu](http://www.pdx.edu)

**E-mail contact:**

[deansoffice@sba.pdx.edu](mailto:deansoffice@sba.pdx.edu)



**Rusty Gates, 29,**  
Portland  
Degree: MBA, 2007  
*"There are a lot of opportunities to work with startup companies in biotech, sustainability or renewable energy in Portland. The entrepreneur piece of my education is really important to speak the language of venture capital and people who will invest in this."*

### University of Portland, Portland

**Private, enrollment 3,234**

All students at the Dr. Robert B. Pamplin, Jr. School of Business take a three-course entrepreneurship "module." A post-MBA certificate in entrepreneurship is offered. A Center for Entrepreneurship, founded eight years ago, is open to all five of the university's colleges and offers "E-scholar" programs for undergraduates.

**Web site:** [www.up.edu](http://www.up.edu)

**E-mail contact:** [ecenter@up.edu](mailto:ecenter@up.edu)



**Nick Tostenrude, 27,**  
Portland  
Degree: Bachelor of Science, Electrical Engineering; E-scholar, 2002  
*"Studying entrepreneurship in college allowed me to dedicate time to working on the business my partner and I started while at the University of Portland."*

### Willamette University, Salem

**Private, enrollment 2,420**

All students in the Atkinson Graduate School of Management must take an entrepreneurship and strategy course in their first year. In the second year, entrepreneurship becomes an elective. Those taking it start a company using a business plan developed in their first year.

**Web site:** [www.willamette.edu](http://www.willamette.edu)

**E-mail contact:**

[entrepreneurship@willamette.edu](mailto:entrepreneurship@willamette.edu)



**Ashleigh Williams, 23,**  
Tacoma  
Degree: MBA, 2006  
*"I didn't start business school knowing that I wanted to study entrepreneurship. Once in business school, I realized my passion is in startups."*

# Entrepreneurs: Students told to widen their business skills

Continued from Page D1

Oregon ranked fourth nationally in 2006 in the percentage of residents working for companies with fewer than five employees — and that percentage is rising.

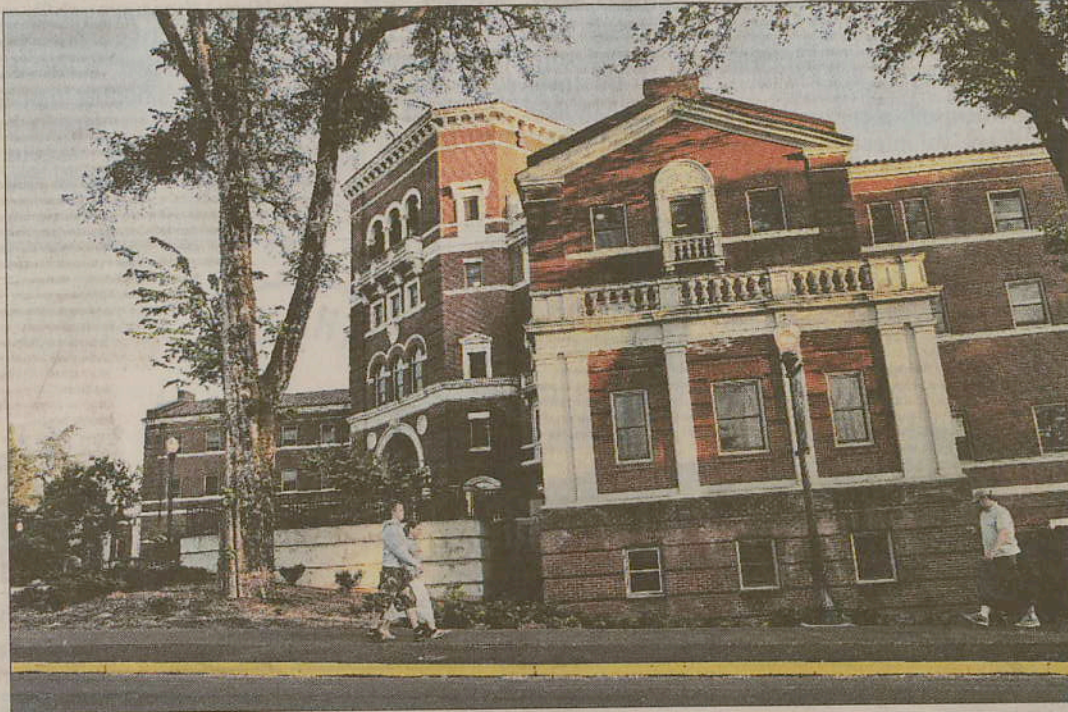
"We in Oregon have a limited amount of large corporate presences, but there are a tremendous amount of entrepreneurial businesses," said Bob Repine, director of the Oregon Department of Economic and Community Development.

Even in big business, the skills of flexibility, efficiency and innovation taught by entrepreneurship programs are in high demand, said Rob Wiltbank, an assistant professor at Willamette University's entrepreneurship program. That's the reason Willamette now allows MBA students to specialize completely in entrepreneurship in their second year.

"We instituted training in entrepreneurship as way of integrating the different areas of business," he said. "As you move up in the executive ladder it's no longer enough just to be good at one thing, say finance," he said. "You have to understand how decisions in one arena can affect things in another."

## The power of an idea

Students gathered one spring evening in OSU's Weatherford Hall to draw knowledge from Michael Powell, one of the state's most successful entrepreneurs, who took a tiny storefront and created a world-renowned



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With 268 student residents, the Austin Entrepreneurship Program's at OSU's Weatherford Hall is the nation's largest residential entrepreneur program.

ways looking for opportunities to be creative; they're always looking for things that don't exist."

## Changing business world

The growth of entrepreneurship programs in Oregon — and across the country — reflects the increasingly frantic pace of change in the business world.

Tim Berry, founder and chief executive of Palo Alto Software in Eugene, said that when he received an MBA from Stanford University in 1981, the goal for most graduates was to land a job with a large corporation. Back then, a degree from a top-brand business school was a way to show that you would be a top manager.

Many of today's students seek to gain more generalized business skills, useful for either starting a business or working for a hungry company. Entrepreneur

"It's night and day different now from when I went to business school," said Berry, who teaches a course at the University of Oregon on starting a business. "The Stanford MBA opened a lot of doors. Now you open your own doors."

Gone are the days when people could get a degree in management, get hired by a large corporation, and count at working at that corporation — and rising up the ranks — until they retired.

Paul Magelli, a scholar-in-residence at the Kauffman Foundation, a Kansas City nonprofit, said the need to compete in a global economy is forcing companies to constantly become more efficient. That means top managers can't count on lifetime jobs. Learning entrepreneurship, he said, is a way for students to become self-sufficient.

them deal with that."

At Oregon State, Krohn's OK with the fact that the old model is gone. He's too impatient, he

said, to stay at one place. "As an entrepreneur you have to learn to let go of things," he said. "I expect to move around."

He has several ideas, including "fast casual" Italian restaurants that will serve food quickly but let customers dine on premises, and "moving coffee shops," made from modified double-decker buses.

Even if his companies succeed, he doesn't expect to stay with them. "I'm just going to sell everything, start something else, sell everything, start something new, keep moving on."

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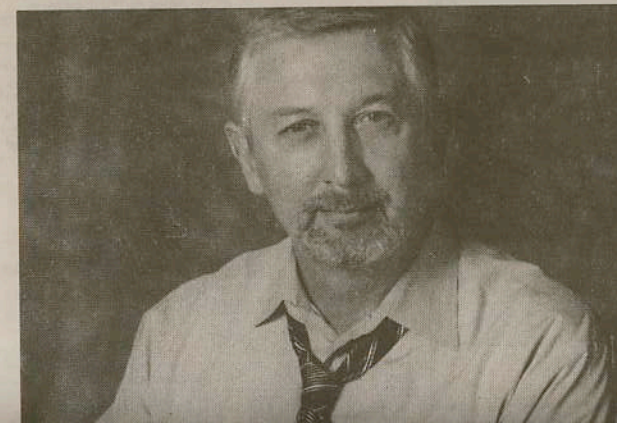
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# Real.



...to draw knowledge from Michael Powell, one of the state's most successful entrepreneurs, who took a tiny storefront and created a world-renowned bookstore that is now a major tourist attraction. Powell's big innovation decades ago: mixing new and used books, a novel idea that allowed him to expand his flagship store to a full city block.

Entrepreneurial skills are becoming more important throughout the business world, Powell told students in the Austin Entrepreneurship Program. Globalization, he said, has put everything in play, and the pace of change is accelerating. Even large companies want people with the entrepreneurial spirit, he said.

His advice to the students: Learn a variety of business skills. "In terms of starting and growing a company, there are enormous challenges that the unprepared often trip over," he said.

Other success stories are more recent.

Nick Tostenrude, who graduated from the University of Portland in 2002, used skills learned at the university's "Entrepreneurship Scholar" program to co-found EnableMart while an undergraduate. That company, which distributes assistive technology such as voice-recognition software and kitchen aides, is now a profitable operation with 17 employees and projected revenues this year of \$10 million.

Tostenrude, chief executive of EnableMart, said entrepreneurial abilities are crucial to managers of both large and small companies.

"From my perspective, entrepreneurs tend to think differently if they are facing a problem," he said. "Entrepreneurs are al-

Many of today's students seek to gain more generalized business skills, useful for either starting a business or working for a hungry company. Entrepreneur programs meet the new goal, said Berry, whose company has 38 employees and 70 percent of the U.S. market for business plan software.

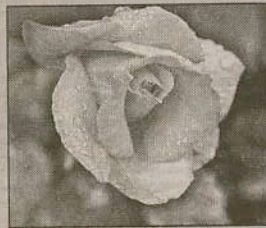
SE 0247-4

on lifetime jobs. Learning entrepreneurship, he said, is a way for students to become self-sufficient.

"There is a feeling among young people that the contract with the workplace has been broken," Magelli said. "Young people are seeking skills to help

**TODAY!**

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