

The Southeastern Connecticut Entrepreneur Network is so pleased to be here celebrating the CURE Commons. The Commons will increase the prominence and attractiveness of CT's growing biotech corridor. Thank you Pfizer, Connecticut and CURE for making this possible. For those of you unfamiliar with SECTen, I would like to introduce you to our group and mission.

SECTen, the Southeastern Connecticut Entrepreneurs Network, was formed in 2012 to address the needs of entrepreneurs in SECT and improve the regional economy with enhanced entrepreneur productivity.

Our more than 150 members are highly experienced professionals with roots in SECT. We are inventors, we have successfully presented drugs for approval to the FDA, we have participated in the start up of numerous new companies, we have held leadership roles in the establishment of partnerships and alliances, and we have portfolio management and finance expertise.

The network goals are to:

Create a vibrant network and communication vehicles for local consultants and startups

Promote existing resources

Celebrate local success stories

Extract and disseminate lessons learned from entrepreneurial experiences

Develop focused learning sessions to meet member needs

Although still quite young the network has been successful in connecting local talent to new job opportunities and connecting local entrepreneurs to each other. In addition to hosting speakers and panel discussions, the SECT Entrepreneur's Network has been holding monthly meet-ups where local entrepreneurs can informally talk with their peers to keep apprised of news and look for opportunities to collaborate. The meet-ups have been well attended and attendees have discussed important issues like the current status of funding opportunities, roadblocks encountered and so on. We haven't been doing this work alone. We have enjoyed the strong support of SECTER, our regional economic development agency and business sponsors and we have partnered with organizations including UCONN, CURE and elected officials.

The Entrepreneur Network believes that CURE Commons will strengthen business opportunities by being the networking hub and the physical space that was lacking in our region. The Commons will help facilitate formal and informal interactions by being that hub.

We look forward to working with Susan and Kim as they roll up their sleeves to create their own startup and launch the CURE Commons. Today we are celebrating a real bright beginning. Thank you!