

**S**hreefal Mehta exemplifies the essence of Tech Valley, combining business and science.

"I enjoy walking the path that connects both science and business on a daily basis, using my communication skills to make basic science and research move toward products that can be realized with commercial value," he says.

Mehta, 38, co-founded drug discovery startup Myomatrix Therapeutics, and served as its CEO. "I successfully built the company over a period of three years. The objective, in part, was to position new technology to address unmet medical needs."

Myomatrix Therapeutics merged last year with a public Australian biotech company, bringing industry-leading drug discovery technology to the region. Mehta is now vice president for business and corporate development at Cytopia Inc, a wholly owned subsidiary of Cytopia Research Pty. Ltd. and

Cytopia Ltd.

As program director of the Radical Innovation Research Program from 2003 through 2005 at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Mehta worked to involve executives from such market-leading companies as Intel, P&G and Dow Corning. At Rensselaer, Mehta introduced a multi-disciplinary course for engineering and business students, bridging the gap in the current technology and business course offerings.

"This course helps students make better career decisions, and could be useful in helping researchers make better decisions concerning research directions," he says.

The popular Biotechnology Management and Entrepreneurship Seminar Series started five years ago in recognition of a similar need for commercialization expertise in the Capital Region. The seminar series has attracted more than 2,000 cumulative attendees and has become a premier networking event for

students, entrepreneurs and executives interested in biotechnology commercialization in the Capital Region. It is now videoconferenced live throughout upstate New York.

Growing up in India, Mehta was encouraged by his parents' confidence in him. "They sent me alone to the United States at age 16 to pursue my goals of higher education in a fair and flexible education system. When I graduated from high school, I wanted to build therapies (devices) to help others lead improved lives."

Degrees from the University of Texas, Rutgers and Rensselaer's Lally School have followed.

Mehta describes his turning point as the decision to leave bench research to move to go into business. "I did so because I felt I could contribute more by bringing products to market. In hindsight, they were all good moves, but difficult ones to make."

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Vice president for business and corporate development, Cytopia Inc.



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