



Entrepreneur!

You wake up one morning with no money and a great idea for a business. Next day you're living in Silicon Valley or Hong Kong with a fat bank account. Right?

Wrong, says Eric Rego '06, junior biology major and E-Scholar. "I know how tough it can be. Success or failure is all up to you when you start your own business. I may be working a lot of 18-hour days, and I don't expect to get rich quick.

"But the possible rewards are worth it, to me. I want to control my own situation, even if it means stress and long hours. I do want to make good money, too, but money isn't my sole motivator."

Rego is one of twelve students selected through a competitive application process to participate in the E-Scholar program sponsored by the McNeely Center for Entrepreneurship. As far as he's concerned, it is a marriage made in heaven.

"This is the most rewarding program I've been a part of in college. It is so hands-on. We're doing exactly what we're studying. We're actually designing a real venture," he says, as if he still can't believe a college class can be so relevant to his ambitions.

Eric Rego '06

The class is "Creating World Class Ventures," in which teams of E-Scholars design and prepare feasibility studies for new ventures. Rego and teammates have designed Collegeville Carpet, a company that would offer custom-fit dorm carpeting to students for the same or lower prices than they pay for standardized carpeting now. Along with other E-Scholar ventures, it got the go-ahead at a presentation to management faculty and may be implemented later in the program.

On his own, Rego has been analyzing another possibility, which draws on his interest in both biology and business: private mosquito control. "I've learned that entrepreneurs are good trend-spotters. They see changes coming before others do. This could be one of those things. Most people don't realize it yet, but it's possible to have a private company spray your property for mosquitoes.

"I have a product that I know works, because I've done test spraying at my house. It is safe and effective. But there are lots of other factors to consider, like insurance and legal fees. Terri Barreiro, director of the McNeely Center, has been really great — helping me to plan, to understand the steps I need to take. Once I do a feasibility study, I'll have a better idea of whether or not to go ahead with it.

"I may not be able to start my own company anytime soon, but I know that I will do it. It's definitely in my future."