

URL:

<https://stvp.stanford.edu/blog/videos/bioengineering-supporting-innovation-across-disciplines-in-a-university-setting>

Hennessy explains that the Clark Center is important to the future of Stanford because it represents the growing importance of biology to the coming century. It is a radical organization for a university because it brings together faculty from a broad range of departments in an attempt to understand the translation between basic science and the applications of basic science.



Transcript

While the Clark Center is very important because I think it captures several things which I and most of my faculty colleagues believe in.. First of all I believe this is the sentry of biology in the same way that physics was the discipline that really revolutionized the last century with everything from the creation of nuclear energy to the creation of semiconductors.. So I believe biology will be and it has the feel of technology that the signs that's really exploding as we begin to understand things in a much more quantitative, much more basic function than we ever did before.. So the Clark Center is an attempt to understand that.. It like any other science will need translation from basic science to applications of basic science which is why we started the bio engineering department, which is why we built the Clark Center to try to bring together people from different disciplines who will work on interesting problems.. So this was a certainly a gamble because we had to restructure the way we do things; after all it's a building with 40 faculty from 20 different departments in it.. That's a rather radical organization for universities which put things on the basis on discipline.. But if you look back historically this has happened in the past.. Look at how many people in mechanical engineering, in civil engineering, in electrical engineering would cite physics as their grounding discipline.. 50 years ago, 100 years ago they would be in a physics department; that's where they would have been doing that work..

Today those things have grown up in their own direction and I think we will see the same thing will occur in biology.. Because I believe that biology is growth I believe the area, Stanford and our whole area will vibrate from being a strong and areas related to the bio sciences and having the same kind of connections as we've had in engineering disciplines and computer science.. So I think it is an important move for us.. It's obviously--it's a venture investment.. It's a 100 million dollar plus building.. It's an investment in the future and it's an investment in the faculty who we think will help and the students who we think will help create that new future...