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## **Private Sector; No Hoop, but Net Is Crucial For This Tournament Champ**

By MATT RICHTEL

The N.C.A.A. crowns its basketball champion next week, but the powers that be in venture capital have pronounced the University of California at Irvine the victor in a business-plan competition among college and graduate school entrepreneurs, a competition worth \$5 million to the winning company.

In a contest it called February Madness, executives of Hummer Winblad Venture Partners, including a founding partner, Ann Winblad, compared business plans from 64 schools, then took meetings with the "Sweet 16." Their investment went to MyDrugRep.com.

Quang X. Pham, the company's founder, intends to use the Internet to make drug marketing more efficient. Instead of having representatives go door to door trying to meet with harried doctors, he plans to offer a Web site where doctors can learn about new and existing drugs, order samples, and read sales information. The Web site will make commissions on the drug sales it generates. "This replaces the whole sales channel over time," Ms. Winblad said. "It'll be a bits-driven business versus a knock-on-the-door business.'

Knocking on doctors' doors is something Mr. Pham knows about as a former representative of Genentech and Astra Merck. Mr. Pham, 35, left Genentech last year to attend the executive M.B.A. program at the University of California at Irvine Graduate School of Management.

Ms. Winblad predicted that in this tournament, there would in a sense be 5 or 10 winners, all likely to eventually receive financing from venture capital firms.