



Steve Zylitus / UCI

Gamers' field: UCI's eSports arena will be first run by a public university

UCI to Open 3,500SF eSports Arena

University of California-Irvine this week will open the first eSports arena run by a public university.

The Sept. 23 launch event includes top-ranked players recruited for UCI's League of Legends team. League of Legends was developed by Los Angeles-based **Riot Games** and is the world's largest competitive video game, drawing millions of viewers to events.

The 3,500-square-foot iBuyPower Arena includes 80 custom PCs from **iBuyPower** in Industry and a live webcasting broadcast studio. It cost about \$250,000 to build; UCI said no public funding was used.

The arena is open to the public for about \$4 per hour.

The gaming event is part of UCI's eSports program in its Institute for Virtual Environments & Computer Games that will launch next week.

The research university will offer up to 10 academic scholarships on its competitive gaming team.

The Institute links multidisciplinary research projects in anthropology, art, computer science, engineering, history, medicine, psychology, science and technology.

eSports is a growing segment of competitive gaming that's going mainstream, a shift evident by the rise of corporate backers, college scholarships for hard-core gamers, and greater ability to obtain work visas in the U.S. through the mastery of a joystick, controller or keyboard.

Irvine-based **Blizzard Entertainment Inc.** and **Kingston Technology Inc.** in Fountain Valley are local firms involved in the trend that's attracting stadium-size crowds to venues, as well as millions of online viewers.

College Magazine last year ranked UCI No. 1 for gamers based on the types of computer equipment for students, the quality of its gaming teams and gaming programs that include eSports offerings.

—Chris Casacchia

Allergan Buys Derma Firm for \$639M

Allergan Plc will buy Vitae Pharmaceuticals Inc. for about \$639 million.

Allergan is a drugmaker that maintains an eye care and aesthetics hub in Irvine; it's based in Ireland, with U.S. operations centered in New Jersey.

Vitae is a publicly traded dermatology drug developer in Fort Washington, Pa.

The acquisition gives Allergan two clinical stage products—one for psoriasis and one for atopic dermatitis—as well as a drug design software platform Vitae calls Contour.

Psoriasis is a chronic autoimmune condition that speeds up skin cell development, which causes red, painful, itchy patches on the skin. Atopic dermatitis is a skin condition caused by inflammation and a deterioration in the skin's protective and generally impermeable lipid barrier that prevents moisture from leaving the skin and keeps harmful

external irritants out. About 25 million people are affected by one or both of the conditions.

Drug design software such as Contour helps drug and medical device makers visualize product possibilities as part of an overarching approach to product development in which a firm looks for ways that one discovery can lead to several products, or one product can have multiple uses. It expands the development pipeline for a company.

Allergan said its product development approach, which it calls Open Science, has resulted in "65+ mid-to-late stage pipeline programs in development."

"The acquisition of Vitae is a strategic investment for Allergan that adds strength and depth to our innovative medical dermatology franchise," said Allergan Chief Executive **Brent Saunders**.

—Paul Hughes



Saunders: acquisition a 'strategic investment' for Allergan's dermatology franchise

Zhang Signs On to Mentor at Concordia

Charlie Zhang, founder of the Laguna Hills-based **Pick Up Stix** restaurant chain, has been named Entrepreneur-in-Residence by **Concordia University Irvine's** business school.

Zhang will mentor and counsel students on new business ideas, guest lecture in undergraduate and graduate classes, and keep office hours. Students across majors will have access to Zhang's counsel.

He began in his role Aug. 22 and also will meet with members of the business student fraternity Delta Sigma Pi to discuss career options and review students' business plans for Con-



Zhang: Pick Up Stix founder named Entrepreneur-in-Residence

cordia's second annual Cornelius Business Plan Competition next spring.

Entrepreneurs-in-Residence at Concordia must be Christian business leaders who have started a successful company.

Pick Up Stix was No. 19 on the Business Journal's most recent list of OC-based restaurant chains with about \$115 million in annual systemwide sales. It employs 375 at 24 OC locations, and has 68 restaurants systemwide.

The chain is a subsidiary of **Mandarin Holdings Group LP** in Delaware.

—Deirdre Newman



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