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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Chicago Area Needs More Serial Entrepreneurs, Argonne Chief Says** |  | 4/17/2007 | |  | | | |  | | | | |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | CHICAGO – There is enough capital and research to support local entrepreneurial development in the high-tech sector, says [Argonne National Laboratory](http://www.anl.gov) director [Robert Rosner](http://www.anl.gov/Administration/Bios/rosner.html) in today’s *Reporter’s Notebook*. On the other hand, he says we’re lacking enough serial entrepreneurs. Rosner also discusses how to best compensate researchers and a lab’s role in national security.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **The disconnect we have in this country about what it means to do science is amazing.** | | ~ Robert Rosner, director Argonne National Laboratory | |   Located about 25 miles southwest of Chicago in a leafy part of DuPage County, Argonne National Laboratory is a government-funded research institution with a $475 million annual budget. The lab has approximately 750 people with doctorates on its payroll.  It was conceived in the 1940s at the University of Chicago as part of the Manhattan Project. Rosner says Argonne exists today to oversee and advance acutely technical applications no longer supported by industry and universities.  In a [column](http://www.suntimes.com/business/spirrison/343092,CST-FIN-spirr16.article) from Monday’s *Chicago Sun-Times*, Rosner discussed how the region needs more seasoned entrepreneurs who are unafraid to take risks.  From a technological development perspective, he says they must compete with business clusters on the coasts. Rosner added: “It has to do with how folks who want to be serial entrepreneurs are treated. There is a real negative associated with failure. People tend not to look at the overall picture of what has happened.”  Rosner, a world-respected astrophysicist before leading Argonne, also has some compelling views about what makes the world – research or otherwise – tick.  **On Why Researches Choose Argonne Over Industry, Universities**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Argonne National Laboratory director Robert Rosner Photo courtesy of Argonne | |   “Historically, the labs have provided the bridge between basic research and applied research to then serve a national service. … If you’re an academic, it’s all about publishing and establishing a professional recognition. The rewards are not monetary. That is totally ancillary.  “Those who start a research career are folks who don’t have money as the first issue. They are interested in the work itself. … The conundrum is you don’t get the ego satisfaction from publishing and the stroking of the peers. By definition, they are not getting any money.  “They love the work. That’s the only possible thing.”  **On the Importance of ‘Jeffersonian Science’**  “To do Jeffersonian science is to provide facilities that industry can’t support and then enable that transition to useful industry.  “A national lab provides the venue where applied people and industry people intermix. … The Manhattan Project was the proof. They had to work together to produce what they produced. There are some areas in technology that – if you didn’t have national labs – you’d have to invent them.”  **On Advanced Research, National Security**  “I agree with (*New York Times* columnist and “The World is Flat” author Thomas) Friedman. What are my grandchildren going to be doing when they get to be my age? It is not just a question of energy supply and global warming but to what extent the U.S. can be competitive with economies in India and China.  “Are other places in the world making huge investments in R&D? It’s a very scary question. We are not making investments to be competitive. The disconnect we have in this country about what it means to do science is amazing.” | |  |