

Thirty students crowded into the Startup AggieLand offices this weekend for 3 Day Startup, the 72-hour workshop wherein students develop business ideas.

STARTUP CONTINUED

encouragement from the investors reviewing the team's proposals, and the team was encouraged to apply to continue developing the idea through Startup AggieLand.

"The whole idea though is to create enough momentum throughout this weekend to sustain a viable company past this weekend," Pearce said.

Lester said each team received critiques at the end of the weekend from the panel investors they pitched their ideas to.

"There are no winners, and we do that intentionally," Lester said. "If there are one or two people here that are really good at graphic arts they may help multiple teams and we try to create that incentive for them to do it."

Luke Neiss, philosophy senior and member of the leadership team, said the cooperative approach of 3DS is good because it allows the students to focus working together to develop the best idea they can.

"The idea of this event is kind of like drinking from a firehose," Neiss said. "You just get hit with so much information, and over the next few months things that you don't even realize you picked up you begin to notice."

Neiss said 3DS sets student entrepreneurs up for the future.

"What 3DS does is it gives you a system, a methodology and a direction as well as helps you learn how to do things like customer validation," Neiss said. "And that's really going to help you in whether or not your idea is going to get good traction."

PETQUEST CONTINUED

I think it's good for both sides, and we're in the middle."

Richard Lester, clinical management professor and PetQuest mentor, said he was excited to get involved when it came to Startup AggieLand.

"They had main expertise that they knew what they were talking about," Lester said. "They could implement, and they were passionate about what they were doing. So those kind of criteria made me say, 'I want to help these students any way I can.'"

Fang said PetQuest started out as a hobby, but the team began to consider developing a business after meeting with Startup AggieLand.

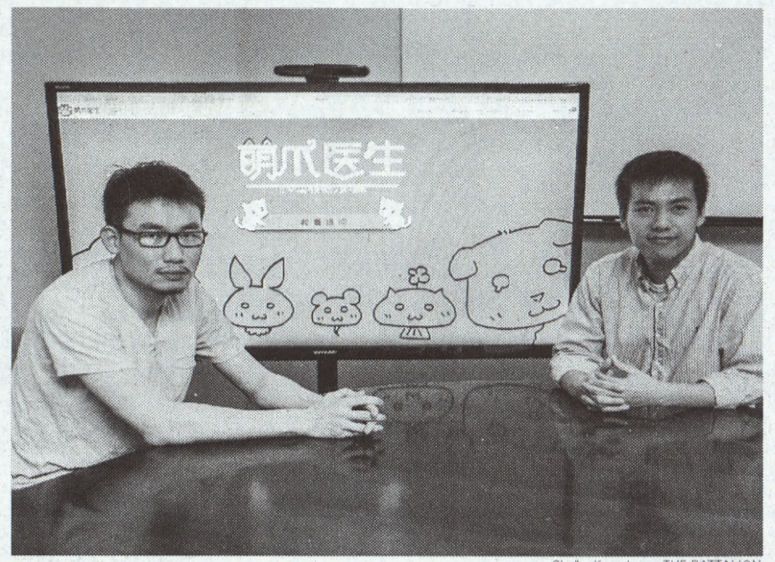
She said he got involved with the team when it first started out as volunteer group.

"George had this idea, about two years ago, and asked me if I was interested in doing the startup," She said. "He saw this problem that he just mentioned and he asked me if I knew how to build a website up, I said, 'I don't know how to do that, but I can find people who can do it.'"

Fang said Startup AggieLand focused on creating a stable business model to test ideas and promote future success.

She said attempts at charging money for the service have gone well thus far, with around 45 percent of returning users willing to pay.

"Right now our model is kind of a freemium," She said. "You get your first question for free but we are going to charge the second and



Xintao She (left) and George Fang (right) are the creators of PetQuest.

following questions, it's around \$3 per question."

Shelly Brenckman, marketing coordinator with Startup AggieLand, said the biggest challenge with the program was pitching it to potential investors.

"The most recent, most important thing I've done with them in the time that they've been here was to help them get to Hong Kong to pitch the Hong Kong business network," Brenckman said. "We had 48 hours to help them find some funding so that George could get over there, they had very short notice."

Fang said financial problems arose when the team needed to pitch its idea in person in Hong Kong, but the Aggie network gave

PetQuest an advantage.

"Shelly helped us contact our former president of Texas A&M, Dr. Mobley, and he contacted another person who is the friend of the Jack Ma of Alibaba, that big company in China," Fang said. "He is a long executive director of Alibaba before, and he is a huge guy and he likes our idea from the introduction of Dr. Mobley then he said, 'I'd like to sponsor your trip' and it gets funded in two days."

Fang said he hopes to use PetQuest to break into the market and eventually create a system where he can send pet owners specialized toys and food based on the specific needs of the pet on a monthly subscription basis.

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Newsday Crossword

ACROSS

- Plane pilot
- Mix with a spoon
- Complaint
- "You are not" retort
- Flying toy with a tail
- University official
- Basic concept in economics
- Football six-pt. plays
- Coffeehouse order
- Takes chances
- Famliand measure
- Architect's drawing
- Trash holder
- Sports squad
- Perform a part
- Become inedible
- Baby boys
- Casual greeting
- Sewing-kit items
- Portions of corn
- Annoying, informally
- Demure
- Fractions of a month: Abbr.
- Preschool basics
- Loses traction
- Get to one's feet
- Fissure
- Got to one's feet
- Use watercolors
- Day before a holiday
- Fairy-tale siblings
- Not doing anything
- Aware of

DOWN

- Clenched hand
- Praise highly
- Mischievous kids
- Sixth sense, for short
- Attendance-taking ritual
- Hockey player's footwear
- Windshield glare reducer
- Maybe, maybe not
- Color of Santa's suit
- Guy who writes jingles
- Narrow road
- Concludes
- Knitting material
- Dutch cheese
- Comosiva compounds
- Be durable
- Good (well-repaired)
- Say something
- Farmers tilling soil
- Ice-cube utensils
- In the lead
- Fun after
- Ocean movements
- Pesto-cooking vessels
- Planet's path
- Recedes
- Not entirely wrong
- Assistant
- Perform in a choir
- Valentine's Day flowers
- Get (throw out)
- Cruise vessel
- Cry of triumph
- Merely
- Prefix meaning "against"
- Ending for kitchen or luncheon
- Artery's opposite
- Letters after keys
- Mauna macadamia nuts
- Greeting-card holder: Abbr.

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