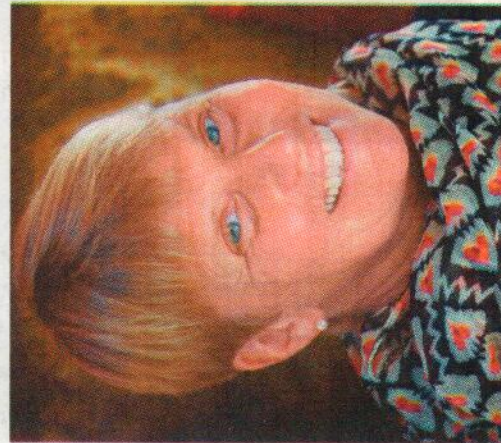




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IN BRIEF

Brainstorming biotech



Kristiansen

"It's a great opportunity for us to make sure that, into the future, we have industries that are viable and growing," she said. Kristiansen said the biotech incubator concept is still in its "exploratory phase," and that there are no plans for it to open

KEENE GROUP EXPLORES STARTING INCUBATOR

The Hannah Grimes Center, with a small group of local scientists and business leaders, is brainstorming how to build a biotech sector in Keene. And they believe that starting a biotech incubator in the city is the best way to do it.

The center, which already runs a business incubator program that serves about 15 startup companies at a time, is considering opening a lab and incubator program that could serve three to four biotech ventures, according to Executive Director Mary Ann Kristiansen.

anytime soon. However, she said, there's a space in downtown Keene that the center would consider leasing if it decides to create the lab and start the incubator. She didn't specify where that space is.

Roy Wallen, chief executive officer of Brookline, NH-based Directional Healthcare Advisors, said the Monadnock Region has lots to offer biotech companies, even though none has set up shop yet. His firm works with biotech and medical technology companies across the country.

"We think Keene is a place that could be affordable and yet can have access to resources where these companies could benefit," he said.

Kristiansen said the Hannah Grimes Center would take in only biotech companies that already have some funding of their own.

But, she said, for the biotech incubator to open, the center would need some "lucky breaks" in terms of funding. It would also need to forge more connections within the biotech world.

Even if the Hannah Grimes Center doesn't start the biotech incubator, Kristiansen said, she and the team she's been working with would want to help start a biotech sector in the region using other means. — **THE KEENE SENTINEL**

Sharon McCarthy
President/Publisher
smccarthy@mcleancommunications.com, ext. 5117

Jeff Feingold
Editor
jfeingold@nhbr.com, ext. 5118

Lisa Rajala
Associate Editor
lrajala@nhbr.com, ext. 5158

Bob Sanders
Staff Writer
bsanders@nhbr.com, ext. 5136

Mista McDonnell
Office Manager
mmcdonnell@nhbr.com, ext. 5114

Jodie Hall
Creative Services Director
jhall@nhbr.com, ext. 5122

Robin Saling
Graphic Artist
rsaling@nhbr.com, ext. 5124

Nancy Tichanuk
Sr. Graphic Artist
ntichanuk@mcleancommunications.com, ext. 5116

Kimberly Lencki
Group Advertising Sales Director
klencki@mcleancommunications.com, ext. 5154

Karen Bachelder