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Dr. Adnan Siddiqui, new Jacobs Institute CEO, on what drives him

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Dr. Adnan Siddiqui has plenty on his plate in his role as a neurosurgeon.

It's those moments at the operating table that motivate him to do more.

As he deals with the devastating effects of stroke, aneurysms and other health calamities, Siddiqui is constantly reminded of the limitations of the tools at his disposal.

"I'm acutely aware of the impact a good tool can make in the survival of patients and in their quality of life after the procedure," Siddiqui said.

"What drives me is the ability to bring new technologies that make a material impact on patients and their lives and families."

Siddiqui is vice chair and professor of neurosurgery at the University at Buffalo Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences and director of neurological stroke service at Kaleida Health's Gates Vascular Institute.



JACOBS INSTITUTE

Dr. Adnan Siddiqui, CEO of the Jacobs Institute

He's been chief medical officer of the JI since 2016 and was recently promoted to CEO, replacing William Maggio, who stepped down to focus on other business opportunities. Maggio remains a senior adviser to Siddiqui.

The Jacobs Institute seeks to combine UB's research acumen with the cutting-edge clinical work at Kaleida. The goal is to create business opportunities in the neuro and cardiovascular space in Buffalo.

Siddiqui said the Jacobs Institute has created a thriving business in training corporate and government scientists on the latest cardiovascular, neurological and vascular procedures. Through its partnership with 3D printing firm Stratasys, the JI also helps develop and test cutting-edge medical devices. And through its recent hire of former U.S. Food and Drug Administration executive Carlos Pena as chief regulatory officer, it is now a consultant on regulatory approval for new devices.

But it's the Idea 2 Reality program that truly embodies the institute's initial mission as an engine of commercialization in Buffalo. The i2R partners with early-stage startups and helps them develop prototypes – the point where they're ready to build business around their technology.

Several companies have been accepted into the i2R program, but Siddiqui said the road ahead is to build out a more robust team to find i2R tenants and support their development.

"One of the reasons the program is not quite as robust is that we don't have the staff to fast-track projects, so we are constrained by our resources," Siddiqui said. "My plan is to let the smart entrepreneurs do their work and to focus on philanthropy so that I can provide them with the support they need to get these projects out the door."

The Jacobs Institute was created with the financial support of Delaware North chairman Jeremy Jacobs and his wife, Margaret, in the honor of Dr. Lawrence Jacobs, a neurologist who went on to fund Biogen. It also builds off the work of Dr. L. Nelson Hopkins, a Buffalo-based neurosurgeon who pioneered new surgical practices that have been adopted around the world.

Siddiqui is one of Hopkins' proteges, and said he wants to honor that entrepreneurial legacy.

“My desire is to achieve Nick’s vision of having a center focused on entrepreneurship for the advancement of vascular disease, which is a major cause of mortality and morbidity in Erie County and around the world,” he said. “We want this to be a robust entrepreneurial catalyst that hopefully has a regional impact with many clients that go on and build plants, factories and institutions in Western New York.”

Siddiqui credited Maggio for stepping into the project when it was more of an idea, and helping it establish revenue-bearing segments and business processes. The Jacobs Institute will also search for a full time chief operating officer.

In the meantime, Siddiqui said his work at the Jacobs Institute will seek to solve the bigger problems that support the work of operating physicians.

“My hope is that we are able to improve patients’ lives and attract medical device companies to Western New York,” Siddiqui said. “We want to uplift the region and improve quality of life.”

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