



Caralynn Nowinski Collens

Caralynn Nowinski Collens, M.D., serves as the Chief Executive Officer of UI LABS, a first-of-its-kind innovation accelerator designed to transform entire industries through collaboration. UI LABS solves large-scale challenges by bringing University + Industry together with startups and government to accelerate the deployment of emerging digital technologies, currently focused on digital manufacturing and smart infrastructure. Drawing from her past experiences as an entrepreneur, researcher, and venture capitalist, Caralynn offers a unique perspective to UI LABS' efforts to foster innovation, encourage collaboration, and drive economic growth.

Prior to UI LABS, Caralynn was Associate Vice President for Innovation & Economic Development at the University of Illinois. Caralynn spent her early career in venture capital and corporate finance, primarily focused on technology-based university spin-outs. She was a Principal with early-stage venture capital firms ARCH Development Partners and Midwest Venture Partners, and Senior Vice President of Sikich Investment Banking. As a graduate student, she co-founded SanoGene Therapeutics, an early-stage biotechnology company, where, as CEO, she led the company's spin-out from the University of Illinois and raised a strategic equity investment. Caralynn is a graduate of Northwestern University and she received her joint M.D./M.B.A. from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Caralynn is a Governor-appointed member of the Illinois Innovation & Competitiveness Council and currently serves as a member of World Business Chicago's ChicagoNEXT Council of technology leaders. Caralynn serves on the Board and Executive Committee of mHub, Chicago's start-up incubator focused on physical product development and manufacturing. Caralynn is a member of the Young Presidents' Organization (YPO), The Chicago Network, the Commercial Club of Chicago, and the Economic Club of Chicago, and she also serves on the Board of Imerman Angels. Principal among her honors are inclusion on the Crain's Chicago Business 2008 "Forty Under Forty" List and in the Chicago Council on Global Affairs Emerging Leaders Class of 2014. She is a frequent guest speaker on technology entrepreneurship and industrial innovation.