

Biotechnology Technician Certificate Program

WIB/Organization Name
Life Science Career Alliance
Subsidiary of the Workforce Investment Board of Philadelphia

Brief narrative description of the project

In the fall of 2006, LSCA received a three-year High Growth Job Training Initiative grant to develop a biotechnology certificate model in Fermentation and Cell/tissue Growth known as the Biotechnology Technician Certificate. Collaborating partners included the educational community and biotechnology industry partners in the Delaware Valley Tri-State region. This new curriculum answers the call to implement an industry-standard training and educational program within the community college network.

The primary goal of the initiative is to create a standardized training model that is accessible to students, incumbent workers and dislocated workers interested in careers in the life sciences and biotechnology industries. The Biotechnology Technician Certificate program will help build a healthy human pipeline for the future growth of the regional biotechnology manufacturing industry.

"Work in the biotechnology field requires a unique set of skills that these certificate programs will now be able to teach to college students. These programs offer a new way to potentially identify the employees that will be needed in the future as the biopharmaceuticals business continues to grow. The Biotechnology Technician Certificate program is a great example of education and industry partnering to build a strong workforce."

-Loreen Bloodgood, Trinity Manager for Global Manufacturing and Supply (GMS) Biopharm at GlaxoSmithKline

Partners

The following industry partners have participated in the development and validation of the standardized curriculum for the certificate program:

- LifeSensors
- Morphotek
- iBioPharma
- The Wistar Institute
- GlaxoSmithKline
- Wyeth
- PhilaBiologics Associates LLC
- Chiral Technologies, Inc.
- Charles River Laboratories

Five community college partners in the Delaware Valley region are launching the Biotechnology Technician Certificate program in the spring & fall of 2009. These colleges also collaborated with industry to create a customized curriculum to meet their workforce and skill needs. There are plans to replicate the certificate model throughout local high schools and four-year institutions.



Our current educational partners include:

- Burlington County College
- Community College of Philadelphia
- Bucks County Community College
- Camden County College
- Montgomery County Community College
- Salem Community College
- Delaware Technical and Community College

Funding

The Department of Labor High Growth Job Training Initiative grant provides a total $1.5 million over a three-year period from 2006-2009.

Impact

There are four key targeted outcomes and goals resulting from this innovative model:

1. Development of three career pipelines for each model
   - Educate and train students
   - Provide internship opportunities for students
   - Train incumbent workers
2. Development of an industry-based validation process for each model
3. Creation of three to four regional cooperative learning sites
4. Training for at least 100 participants for both models

Lessons Learned

Three challenges in building educational and industry partnership:

1. Time management
2. Communication
3. Consensus building

Key lessons learned:

- Using technology instead of face-to-face meetings proved beneficial to convene partners and offset unanticipated delays
- Creating clear communication pathways and feedback loops was essential in sustaining partner buy-in and maintaining the project's momentum
- Acknowledging each community college's institutional diversity and individual needs, such as internal standards and protocols—prior to reaching consensus presented a challenge
- Involving regional companies in the program design, curriculum validation, and the implementation processes reinforced participation and partnership focus

The LSCA Biotech Project leaders strived to create a standardized program that could be replicated and embed among a variety of educational institution's existing academic offerings, including secondary levels of education.

This workforce solution was funded by a grant awarded under the President's High Growth Training Initiative as implemented by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The solution was created by the grantee and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership. This solution is copyrighted by the institution that created it. Internal use by an organization and/or personal use by an individual for non-commercial purposes is permissible. All other uses require the prior authorization of the copyright owner.

User Notes

Product Category/Sub Category: Outreach Materials/ Partner Marketing
Program Content (product purpose): This product was made available to attendees of the 2009 National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) Forum and the 2009 Pennsylvania Governor's Conference on Higher Education. This flyer was used to promote the LSCA Biotech Project (also known as the Biotechnology Technician Certificate Program) to potential partners in the workforce system and higher education.
Target Group(s): This product was made available to members of the workforce system and stakeholders in higher education in Pennsylvania.
Dissemination Audience: This product disseminated by the program development staff.