

N.C. bioscience firms hire from student internships

MOST OF NORTH CAROLINA'S BIOSCIENCE companies are creating student internships and work opportunities and using them to find and screen future employees, according to a recent survey.

Industry is looking for new talent — and finding it through a surprising array of internships for students at all educational levels.

The survey of 48 life science companies, conducted by the North Carolina Biomanufacturing and Pharmaceutical Training Consortium (BPTC), found that 88 percent of respondents find student work to be useful for making new hires. The survey is already helping BPTC to optimize internship opportunities for participating educational institutions, said Tim Kelly, chair of the BPTC Industrial Curriculum Committee. "This survey provides information about best practices along with issues that needed to be addressed in increasing student work programs."

Hal Price, NCBIO's technical advisor for the Biotech Manufacturer's Forum and a committee member, said that BPTC programs and other life science training initiatives will be growing as more companies expand and locate in the state. "We need to make sure that opportunities are available to students to get work experience and meet course requirements for community college and university programs," he said.

Survey respondents reported hiring students at multiple

levels of education for manufacturing processes. Chemistry students are most often hired for internships in research and development, and engineering students are most often hired by manufacturing companies.

Companies listed communication skills and organizational skills, including punctuality, as important attributes for student workers. Technical expertise, flexibility and specific course requirements also were listed as important factors.

The BPTC training initiative has won national and international recognition for North Carolina. It combines the resources of North Carolina's university and community college systems to meet the growing demands of the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries in the state. The consortium's key programs are the North Carolina Community College System's BioNetwork program, the Biomanufacturing Research Institute and Technology Enterprise (BRITE) at North Carolina Central University in Durham, and the Biomanufacturing Training and Education Center (BTEC) at North Carolina State University. The BPTC initiative is funded by the State of North Carolina, the Golden LEAF Foundation, and contributions from industry.

This survey also indicated that North Carolina students and companies would benefit from more internship opportunities, and that the existing programs serve as useful models for expansion.

Copies of the survey summary are available from the North Carolina Biosciences Organization. More information is available at info@ncbioscience.org.

NCSU-led proposal among Homeland Security finalists

A North Carolina Consortium led by *North Carolina State University* is one of 18 nationwide being considered for a \$450 million research facility by the Department of Homeland Security.



The university's College of Veterinary Medicine is among programs in 11 states competing with proposals to land the 500,000 square-foot facility, called the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility, or NBAF. Federal guidelines call for the sites to be a minimum of 30 acres, and capable of developing technologies to protect the country's agricultural and biological infrastructure.

DHS officials said they expect to narrow the number of institutions under consideration even further by the end of the year before conducting environmental impact studies. They said the winning site will be named in early 2008.

BT Catalyst is copyrighted and published six times a year by the North Carolina Biotechnology Center. The Biotechnology Center is a not-for-profit corporation funded largely by the N.C. General Assembly. Its mission is to provide long-term economic and societal benefits to North Carolina by supporting biotechnology research, business and education statewide. Please contact Editor Jim Shamp with story ideas, questions or concerns at (919) 541-9366 or by e-mail, jim_shamp@ncbiotech.org.

BT Catalyst is initially published on the Biotechnology Center's Web site, www.ncbiotech.org, to reach readers faster and to reduce the cost and environmental impact of printing and mailing. It is subsequently mailed without charge to people who request the hardcopy version. Please visit www.ncbiotech.org if you wish to subscribe to the mailed hardcopy version, or call Corporate Communications at (919) 541-9366.

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