

# **Community-Based Job Training Grants**

*Mount Wachusett Community College*

**Grantee:** Mount Wachusett Community College

**Industry Focus:** Biotechnology/Biomanufacturing

**Key Partners:** Bristol-Myers Squibb; Massachusetts Biotechnology Council; North Central Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board; North Central Massachusetts Career Centers (Leominster and Gardner); Gardner Public Schools; Fitchburg Public Schools; Leominster Public Schools; and North Central Massachusetts Tech Prep Consortium

**Grant Amount:** \$1,578,550

**Leveraged Amount:** \$983,880

**Location of Grant Activities:** Cities of Gardner, Leominster, Fitchburg, and Devens, Massachusetts

**Challenge:** Employment in Massachusetts' biopharmaceutical industry is expected to grow by 64.3% in the decade ending in 2014. Approximately 300 biotech-related firms in Massachusetts currently employ more than 30,000 workers. Eight percent of industry workers are hired with an associate's degree credential. There is a need for more than 8,000 associate's degree workers to fill entry-level positions as production operators and lab personnel statewide. However, local community colleges face challenges in developing curriculum, acquiring lab equipment, and coordinating career information dissemination and pre-college preparation programs among students in the K-12 school systems and the regional/tech prep collaborative.

**Addressing the Challenge:** The Biotechnology/ Biomanufacturing Partnership Project will develop career ladders and curricula to link pre-employment, certificate, and associate's degree programs in biotechnology and biomanufacturing technology. The project will include special outreach programs in high schools and One-Stop Career Centers to expose youth and adults to career opportunities. By equipping labs and hiring and training faculty, the program will prepare individuals to fill critical career areas, including quality control chemists (QC) and quality assurance microbiologists. Candidates with less than a B.S. degree will be able to pursue a certificate program in biotechnology/biomanufacturing or an associate's degree that prepares them for work as upstream/downstream operators and process support operators.

**Projected Outcomes:**

- 190 students will receive Biotechnology/Biomanufacturing training
- 90 students will earn a Pre-Employment certificate; 60 students will earn an industry certification; and 40 will earn an associate's degree
- 50% of students will be recent high school graduates, and 50% will be dislocated/retrained workers