

# Community-Based Job Training Grants

## Madison Area Technical College

**Grantee:** Madison Area Technical College

**Industry Focus:** Biotechnology

**Key Partners:** Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin (WDB), Covance and Promega, and the National Primate Research Center, QTI, University of Wisconsin -- Madison and its Center on Wisconsin Strategies (COWS), Dane County School Consortium, CESA 5 and other regional schools

**Grant Amount:** \$1,961,110

**Leveraged Amount:** \$1,990,000

**Location of Grant Activities:** Wisconsin

**Challenge:** The companies in the project have documented industry demand based on the difficulty in hiring lab technicians. The Dane County area has experienced high growth in the laboratory sciences industry. Madison is recognized as a “hotspot” for biotechnology in the Midwest. As the industry has diversified and technologies have converged, however, the need for laboratory workers with broad-based training has evolved with no corresponding source of labor. The bottleneck of technical skills is exacerbated by the region’s history of having the lowest unemployment in the state, if not in the Midwest.

**Addressing the Challenge:** The grantee will design a five-stage training program for an industry- designed laboratory technician career ladder. Simultaneously, the college will address five barriers to increasing its current capacity: 1) outdated program design; 2) inadequate curriculum; 3) limited space and equipment; 4) lack of students; and 5) fully occupied faculty. The integrated career ladder will make it possible to move an individual from entry-level Laboratory Aide to baccalaureate degree level Laboratory Analyst positions. Emphasis will be placed upon building the training and recruitment rungs of the career ladder at the entry level in order to recruit non-traditional populations into this growing industry.

### Projected Outcomes:

- Develop, design, and implement a laboratory career ladder strategy
- Train 435 workers over three years
- Expand physical training capacity; expand program and instructional capacity; deliver training; design placement and retention strategies; and evaluate, disseminate and replicate strategies.

