

BIOTECH PARTNERS ANNOUNCES LARGEST COHORT OF SUMMER INTERNS IN ITS HISTORY

Executive Director Deborah Bellush is thrilled to announce that the organization has placed 43 at-risk high school students from Berkeley and Oakland Technical High Schools in paid summer internships with companies and institutions throughout the Greater Bay Area.

“This is our largest cohort in the twenty-year history of Biotech Partners,” says Bellush. “This year’s students have dedicated themselves to completing all the job preparedness training, learning the instruments and practices that they need to assist at the various sites, and shown the comportment and maturity necessary to work in the biotech, bioscience and healthcare fields.

“The internship is both a culmination of their preparation and recognition for a doing well in class,” she adds.

For eight weeks (June through August), Biotech Partners (BP) students are providing skilled technical support to scientists and technicians at 16 Bay Area sites, including **Aemtek Laboratories** in Fremont, **Alameda County Sherriff’s Office Crime Lab** in San Leandro, **Bayer HealthCare** in Berkeley and San Francisco-Mission Bay, **Berkeley Dog & Cat Hospital**, **Children’s Hospital Oakland Research Institute (CHORI)** in Oakland, **Highland Hospital** in Oakland, **Joint BioEnergy Institute (JBEI)** in Emeryville, **Kaiser Oakland Medical Center**, **Libby Laboratories** in Berkeley, **Mango Materials** in Albany, **Xoma** in Berkeley and four **UC Berkeley Labs**.

“This year, we are especially excited to welcome Aemtek Laboratories, Mango Materials and Xoma to our consortium of collaborators,” states Program Director Meghan Colgan.

Colgan oversees the internship programming, arranges for the positions and works directly with the host site scientists and technicians who mentor and supervise the students. Throughout the summer, she ensures that the students and the institutions where they work all benefit from the internship experience.

In this unique internship program that connects academic coursework in biotech directly to career-based employment, participating high school students also attend four evening workshops in which they share their experiences, receive

financial and time management training and complete other assignments—an interview with a co-worker, a brochure marketing the worksite and a poster and presentation about their internship experience.

To prepare for the internship, the students via an application process participation in Biotech Partners' Biotech class during their junior year. This course features a bioscience curriculum devised in collaboration with industry professionals and academics, three days per week of hands-on lab activities that include proper use of science lab equipment, and job readiness training such as interviewing, resume-writing and proper worksite comportment.

“Our classroom is set up like a worksite,” explains High School Program Manager Marithess Rico. “Students sign in as if they are going to work. We create expectations and deadlines. And the students love it. Our attendance is nearly perfect! For students who have been less involved in their education for years, this is a remarkable achievement.”

Currently celebrating 20 years of community service, Biotech Partners has been providing a comprehensive, hands-on academic and job training program in the sciences to Berkeley and Oakland public school students from populations typically underrepresented in the sciences – especially students of color, young women and those from low-income households. ***The program has a 100% high school graduation rate and 100% college matriculation rate.***

“We are all so amazed by the emotional maturity and self-confidence of our interns that we sometimes forget they are only 17 years old! They pick up everything quickly and are able to work on their own without us telling them what to do. They are just as competent as many Cal undergraduate students that have worked in the facility,” says Hitomi Asahara, UC Berkeley DNA Sequencing Lab Supervisor.

Biotech Partners is still seeking eight \$2,500 sponsorships to support these remarkable young people in their positions. All sponsors are recognized at the end-of-summer internship poster competition and celebration.

To provide financial support or learn more about Biotech Partners, please contact Jerry Metzker, Development & Marketing Manager at [510.705.7324](tel:510.705.7324) or info@biotechpartners.org.