

NEWS RELEASE

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NC State's BTEC Will Help Create Jobs For North Carolina

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

While North Carolina ranks among the top three biotechnology regions in the United States, a lack of well-trained workers needed for the coming boom in biopharmaceuticals could threaten the state's place among the national leaders in the emerging biomanufacturing industry.

The new Biomanufacturing Training and Education Center (BTEC) being constructed on North Carolina State University's Centennial Campus will be the largest facility of its kind in the nation, and will answer the state's need for biomanufacturing training. Through partnerships with community colleges, BTEC's distance education and on-site programs will train up to 2,000 to 3,000 students and prospective employees per year for the state's biomanufacturing industry.

Biomanufacturing companies create new end products from living cells or their components. These products include medicines, vaccines, diagnostics, enzymes, amino acids, veterinary medicines and related products that improve lives, create jobs and boost the state's economy.

The state's biotechnology industry currently employs about 20,000 people at almost 200 companies. Relatively few new workers currently receive the needed training, while some estimates place the need at roughly 3,000 new employees per year.

BTEC will simulate a biomanufacturing pilot plant facility capable of producing biopharmaceutical products and packaging them in a sterile environment. It also will include support training and education classrooms, laboratories, building and process utilities. The facility will be outfitted so that students will gain experience using the same large-scale equipment they would use on the job.

The center also will help attract new biomanufacturing companies to North Carolina, assist the development of new technologies for production of value-added biopharmaceuticals,

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protein-based products and chemicals from organisms, plants, cell cultures and other bio-based systems; and enhance the creation of rural biomanufacturing jobs and new agribusiness opportunities.

“NC State’s legacy is one of listening and responding to the needs of North Carolina,” said NC State Chancellor James L. Oblinger. “BTEC is a perfect example. This type of education and training exists nowhere else in the country at this scale and should serve as a magnet for new business expansions and relocations by this critical sector for our state’s economy.

“The center will be a major new force for statewide economic development and job creation in the biomanufacturing, pharmaceutical and related agricultural industries. Through partnerships with industry, other academic institutions and with support from Golden LEAF, we’re creating a tremendous opportunity for North Carolina to lead the world in biomanufacturing.”

Golden LEAF has provided about \$34 million to design, build and equip the BTEC, as part of an overall \$60 million grant for biomanufacturing research training at North Carolina Central and for five Regional Skill Centers in the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS). The NCCCS also will operate a BioNetwork learning center within BTEC.

Peter Kilpatrick, head of the NC State Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering and founding director of BTEC, said, “This training consortium will mobilize to bring unique job skills to future generations of North Carolinians.

“Students from throughout the state’s universities and community colleges could come to the center for a variety of one-to-three-week educational programs, for modules that could serve as course credits in their B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. curricula or for seminars as part of their science degrees.”

In addition to BTEC, several existing and planned degrees at NC State will prepare students to work in the biomanufacturing industry. For example: a graduate certificate program in molecular biotechnology; a biotechnology-pharmaceutical concentration within the Master of Business Administration (MBA), which will prepare students for managerial positions in the biotechnology industry; a biomolecular engineering degree with a bioprocessing focus; and a new bioprocessing science degree in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.