



**Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray Announces
Expansion of the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center's
Internship Challenge Program**

*Formerly summer-only program will now be available during the
academic year*

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Waltham, MA – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray and the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center announced today an expansion of the Center's flagship workforce development program, the Internship Challenge. The formerly summer-only program will now be available to students year-round, starting in the Fall semester. The announcement took place at the 2011 summer Internship Challenge kick-off event today at the WPI Life Sciences & Bioengineering Center in Worcester.

The Internship Challenge program, currently in its third summer, is a workforce development program focused on enhancing the talent pipeline for Massachusetts life sciences companies. Over the past three summers the program has provided paid internship opportunities at life sciences companies for 487 students and recent college graduates who are considering career opportunities in the life sciences. This summer the program has matched 214 students from a pool of more than 1,300 applicants at 125 sponsoring companies. More than fifty interns have already reported that they have been offered employment by their host company directly following their internship.

"The Life Sciences Center's Internship Challenge has proven effective and successful in developing new talent within the life sciences industry in Massachusetts, and we are pleased to announce the expansion of the program," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, Chair of the Governor's STEM Advisory Council, which incorporates learning and training opportunities for students in fields related to science, technology, engineering, and math. "Increased access to STEM-related internship opportunities is essential to Massachusetts' future economic competitiveness, including our strength as a global leader in the life sciences."

“Life sciences companies that move here or expand here always cite our talented workforce as one of their main reasons for choosing Massachusetts,” said Dr. Susan Windham-Bannister, President & CEO of the Center. “The Center’s Internship Challenge helps attract and train the next generation of life sciences workers, and expanding the program to cover the entire academic year will further strengthen its impact.”

“The Center’s internship program was invaluable for our company,” said Barbara Fox, CEO of Wayland-based Avaxia Biologics. “We hired an outstanding intern from Bridgewater State University who provided valuable hands in the laboratory at a critical period for our young company. I believe it was also an excellent opportunity for our intern to learn about the biotech field before starting a Ph.D. program last year.”

“Our two interns, both Chemistry majors at WPI, were big assets in the lab, and we were thrilled that the Center facilitated the entire process,” said Dr. Jeffrey Kiplinger, President of Worcester-based Averca Discovery Services, Inc. “We found suitable resumes immediately, interviewed six candidates and chose two very rapidly, and they started work the next week. This is probably the best organized and most transparent state program I’ve ever seen. Best of all, it gives good students useful work experience and good companies, especially small ones like mine, a boost. What a great use of funds!”

“The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center’s Internship Challenge program was fantastic,” said Janice Ye, who was hired as a Lead Research Scientist with Cambridge-based InVivo Therapeutics after participating in the program. “It was a very easy process to go through, and my experience working with the Center’s staff was great. The program helped me a great deal, and I wouldn’t be where I am today without it.”

The Internship Challenge provides interns with practical, “hands on” experience that prepares them to step into the workforce ready to meet the job requirements of life sciences employers. In order to participate, students must either reside in, attend, or have attended school in Massachusetts.

Students who are selected for the Internship Challenge will be paid up to \$15 per hour and host companies or institutions will commit to providing a dedicated mentor and meaningful internship opportunity that ties to the academic focus of eligible students. Participating companies will contact and interview candidates, select interns for their programs, and notify the Center of their desire to provide an internship to a qualified student. The Center will begin accepting applications for Fall semester internships in late July.

Massachusetts college students and recent college graduates can find statewide resources to build their lives and careers here in the Commonwealth at www.massitsallhere.com/stayhere.

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