

AIS NEWS



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FIRST ANNUAL CBSA CAREER FAIR

WRITTEN BY: VAN WILLIS

Early in November, the Colorado BioScience Association (CBSA) held its 1st annual career fair, which convened directly after BioWest. The exciting venue connected twenty three local companies with over three hundred potential job seekers. Prospective employees had the chance to leave a resume and meet one-on-one with company recruiters.

The career fair also offered educational seminars, which were held throughout the day. The sessions included panels on career success and advice from bioscience industry leaders. The career success panel consisted of representatives from the recruiting companies, Kelley Scientific and Aero-tek. These recruiters offered advice about writing successful cover letters and resumes, as well as interviewing skills.

A successful cover letter uses your own voice, portrays who you are, and includes a description of how you are a good fit for

the position.

Their advice on resume writing mainly emphasized brevity. Information must be easily accessible, which is accomplished through wording and format.

Resume red flags are gaps in employment, frequent job changes, and non-specific accomplishment statements.

If the cover letter and resume lead to an interview, it is necessary to research the company beforehand, and to wear business attire during the interview. Also, you must always follow-up with a thank you letter.

The bioscience industry leader panel was composed of Derek Cole from Allos Therapeutics, Ginny Orndorff of Evolutionary Genomics and Maggie Popesco. When asked about how to gain the training necessary to succeed in the biosciences Derek Cole, who entered the industry from a business background, replied that it is essential to understand how the industry works as a whole,

in addition to your specific job responsibilities. Understanding both issues assures the company that you know how you fit into the bigger picture.

Ginny Orndorff advised maintaining your adaptability because you never know what hurdles a company might face. Maggie Popesco, a former post-doc from Anschutz Medical Campus, who works in industry, described persistence and networking as the key to landing a job in the biosciences industry.

The 1st annual CBSA career fair was an essential networking event for anyone entering the local biosciences job market in the next few months. The combination of education and communication was so successful that the career fair has been slated as an annual event. We look forward to seeing these events in the coming years. Next year's career fair will be posted on the AIS website, as well as the CBSA website, as soon as it is scheduled.

AIS STUDENT ROOM
Ed- 2: P28-2204!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

January 13th

The State of Investing
in BioScience

January 23th

AegisCreative Visit

January 26th

Biobeers @ Wynkoop
Brewing

Feb 27th

Invention 2 Venture

The Front Range Biotech Revolution: South Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce STEM-EC Meeting

WRITTEN BY: NICOLE GRAVAGNA

A movement stirring in the Front Range may finally be building some productive steam. For close to a decade there has been a collective desire to put Colorado on the biotechnology map.

Currently, the strongest US biotech clusters are in Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, Minneapolis/St. Paul/Rochester, Austin, Boston, New York/New Jersey, Philadelphia, Baltimore/Washington DC, and Research Triangle NC. These areas neatly outline the east and west coasts, with spotty representation on the northern and southern borders, and virtually nothing in between.

Denver is over 800 miles away from the closest biotechnology cluster, yet is home to 380 biotech businesses and 16,000 biotechnology jobs. However, a quick calculation reveals that these are, on average, small companies. Colorado's biotech cluster development is plodding along happily in its toddler stage, and needs a helping hand to stay growing. The Colorado Bio-Science Association (CBSA), Bioscience Larimer County, and the South Metro Chamber of Commerce are three groups tying biotech businesses together and building legislative support to continue its development. CBSA fosters biotech directly through strategic plans that include building infrastructure, while the South Metro Chamber of Commerce focuses on a different niche - the future biotechnology workforce.

The South Metro Chamber of Commerce has developed a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Education Coalition (STEM-EC), which started in 2006 and is organized by Elyse Feldman, Executive Assistant to CEO of the Chamber. The ultimate goal is to create a pool of home-grown biotechnology talent in Colorado. Although the mountains and weather attract highly educated professionals to the state, relying solely on an imported workforce can't be sustained.

Unfortunately, Colorado only ranks 25th for yearly spending on K-12 education, only \$8,337 per student, in contrast to the larger DC bio-cluster (ranked first) which spends \$15,073 per student. Test scores simply meet the national average, but do not exceed requirements, which leaves Colorado with a lot of room for improvement.

Three speakers presented their answer to Colorado's educational needs at the December STEM-EC. Solutions encompassed teacher resources, a community college internship/externship program, and low cost computers designed especially for K-12 students.

Stephanie Welch discussed the opening of the Resource Area For Teachers' (RAFT) Denver branch. Originally based in San Jose, California, RAFT collects broken, cast off, or recyclable items from companies and packages them as educational toys for teachers to use in the classroom. Visit www.raft.net for more information.

According to Hal Rattenburg, Arapahoe Community College received funding, from the National Science Foundation, to create internships for community college students and externship for community college professors through programs such as Colorado Advanced Technological Education Partnerships and the WIRED Initiative. The goal is helping students gain soft skills, such as, communication and team work, in a real employment setting. Both the intern and externships are open to University of Colorado Denver students. For more information visit: www.arapahoe.edu/press/2008/nsf-grant.html.

Soon, many Colorado students will receive free laptops pre-loaded with word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software. Additionally, Bob Young explained that the Littleton Public Schools Foundation wants Eee computers made available to their students for only \$100. These small laptops have 90% the processing power as a high end machine, and usually retail for \$400. The Littleton Public Schools Foundation is seeking sponsors to subsidize costs, and offer to outfit each machine with advertisement stickers. More information can be found at www.lpsfoundation.com under laptops for learners.

The next STEM-EC meeting will be Monday, February 2nd 7:30-9:00 a.m. at CH2M Hill in Centennial.

IS A TEACHING CAREER REALLY FOR YOU?

WRITTEN BY: TIANNA HICKLIN

"Most of us take very little time to think," explained professional coach and author, Joan C. King, PhD, during her free one hour career coaching session at the Front Range Neuroscience Group meeting.

"When you're enjoying something, stop, and think about what you love." She advised dissecting out the day to day skills needed for potential careers, thinking about what parts you really enjoy doing.

Dr. King stated if you want to become a professor, ask yourself what you like about teaching, "Is it being in front of a class, preparing presentations, or watching other people's aha moments?"

Figuring out what you love doing may help you discover

career options that you might really enjoy, but may not have considered.

Dr. King advised, "knowing the characteristics of the setting" is also important. Being aware of the challenges can help you determine which positions are most attainable and the ones for which you are willing to work.

Her example, if you want to teach, you should know that universities hire very few new faculty members, and there are a skewed proportion of men compared to women in the high level positions. Dr. King warned that only those with enough motivation, persistence and the drive will succeed, considering the current hiring conditions.

However, if it is what you really want, you can take

small steps to gain job experience. Experience is not only necessary for most positions, but it also allows you to gauge whether you actually enjoy the job.

Gaining teaching experience can be difficult, especially for students enrolled in programs that don't have teaching opportunities. However, students/post-docs can look for experience from other sources, such as teaching an occasional adjunct course in another program, taking a teaching post-doc or a sabbatical at a teaching institute.

"You need to take charge of your career," demanded Dr. King, which is accomplished by thinking about what you love, seeking out appropriate experiences, and finding a good mentor.

GAIN TEACHING EXPERIENCE AT A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WRITTEN BY: MONIQUE BEAUDON

One avenue for gaining teaching experience is through working at a community college. Community College of Aurora (CCA) professors spoke to AIS members about paid teaching jobs for graduate students. Dr. Martha Jackson-Carter, Science Department Chair and chemistry professor, and Dr. Todd Bergren, biology professor and Director of Biotechnology, explained that the CCA Science Department

is always searching for capable faculty who are passionate about careers in teaching, but who may have limited teaching experience.

Potential teaching positions include both full-time and adjunct-faculty positions. Professors teach course lectures and lab sections. New adjunct professors receive old syllabi to start and are consistently mentored by full-time faculty at CCA.

Adjuncts are paid per credit hour and slightly more for lab section credits. Benefits are not offered, but adjuncts may take one free course at CCA per semester, as a perk. Graduate students need to be at least a masters level, which means past their comprehensive exam. Interested applicants can e-mail Dr. Jackson-Carter with a letter of interest and CV at Martha.jackson@ccaaurora.edu.

The Alternatives in Science Club, which began in 2007, is a student-run organization based at the Anschutz Medical Campus of the University of Colorado-Denver. The organization is dedicated to career development for students, post-docs, and faculty of the University of Colorado. The goals of AIS are threefold. We hope to introduce interested members of the university to the potential science careers outside of academia. We also hope to educate research scientists about what skills they might need in order to excel outside the university and how to attain those skills. Finally, we intend to act as a liaison to connect talented scientists with the bioscience community.

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