

# SALT LAKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

*Companies Benefit from Medical Device Program as Incumbent Worker Training*



**"IF I DIDN'T SEE THE VALUE IN THE  
SLCC PROGRAM, THEN I WOULDN'T  
CONTINUE TO SUPPORT IT."**

Gina Bergman, Director of Quality  
Assurance and Regulatory  
Compliance, BioFire

# Salt Lake Community College Trains Workers in the Medical Device Industry

**Finding quality workers takes time and money. Training them to specific company standards takes even more.**

Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) developed its Medical Device Manufacturing program to build a pipeline of talent and increase the knowledge and skill set of those in medical device careers. As part of the Community College Consortium for Bioscience Credentials (c3bc), SLCC developed four, eight-week long courses that provide individuals with core

knowledge and skills needed to be successful in the medical device industry. Those courses are Intro to Medical Device Industry, Basic Manufacturing Skills, Intro to FDA Regulations, and Intro to Quality Systems.

Using this program for incumbent worker training, two local manufacturers have partnered with SLCC to build the skills their current workers need to be successful employees.

## BIOFIRE INVESTS IN EMPLOYEES' FUTURE WITH SLCC TRAINING PROGRAM

**BioFire Diagnostics**, a Salt Lake City medical device manufacturer, began its partnership with SLCC after attending a local American Society for Quality meeting and hearing about the program. Due to low unemployment rates in the Salt Lake City area, BioFire heavily competes with many other manufacturers alike to find skilled and qualified employees. With a rapid increase in size, going from 219 to 900 employees in less than seven years, BioFire found themselves having to hire candidates that have no background in Medical Device manufacturing.

With a lack of skilled workers and a large increase in the number of employees being onboarded, BioFire went to SLCC to help with training. "Current employees want promotion and advancement opportunities. We put this out as a challenge. Do you really want to advance? Then prove it to me. Go to SLCC, take these courses, pass, and we'll pay for it," said Gina Bergman, Director of Quality Assurance and Regulatory Compliance, BioFire.

Gina explained every one of her employees has the option to take the SLCC program, and it is strongly encouraged for lower level employees for promotion capabilities. To date, BioFire has sent 20 employees through the program.

"The difference is the confidence," Bergman said of the employees before and after taking the program. "I have promoted people that have attended and I do believe it has increased their confidence, skill sets, and it shows our employees that we are investing in their education and career growth."

BioFire is not only sending internal candidates to the classes, but also is actively looking to hire graduates of these classes.





“It was purely opportunistic for me. I’m a person that likes value. It costs me \$2,000 to send a person to a conference for training, so SLCC is a much better value.”

- Brad Brown, CEO, ATL Technology

## ATL TECHNOLOGY EXPERIENCES 50% SAVINGS ON TRAINING COSTS FROM SLCC

**ATL Technology** CEO Brad Brown came across the SLCC program at a medical device gathering. Because of the company’s commitment to 40 hours of training a year for each employee, Brown believed the program would be a great opportunity to complete this training requirement. Brown looked at the curriculum and even took the introductory course himself. He found the instructors to be “outstanding.”

Beginning in 2015, ATL Technology has had 22 employees go through the program, and every employee is asked to take at least the introductory course. In return, Brown has offered incentive to take the course with a 1% pay raise for every class his employees take in the program, for a **total possible 4% raise**. This incentive has fueled many employees to take the courses due to seeing a significant return on their time.

“I’m committed to [the program]. I want every one of my employees to take it. I can see the difference and I can feel the difference,” Brown said.

Brown liked the fact that the program is taught by instructors from other medical device companies, allowing for employees to hear a different perspective with real time examples rather than just quoting regulation.

As a result of the training, Brown has experienced a better understanding and participation from his employees. After taking the program, ATL Technology employees understand why they are doing what they’re doing. In addition, he feels it is helping reduce turnover by investing in his employees. “This program is very cost effective. **The main benefit of doing the program through SLCC is we are paying more than 50% less** than what we have been paying to train employees through daylong seminars. Doing the training over an eight-week period makes the information sink in, rather than going to a three-day training,” Brown said.





Josh Weibel, Quality Specialist, BioFire

## BIOFIRE EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Josh Weibel completed his English degree with the intent of being a teacher. After realizing that wasn't what he wanted to do with his life, Josh worked in a restaurant, bartending, for years. Josh had a friend who worked for BioFire and was able to land a job in document control. To get up to speed with medical device manufacturing, BioFire sent Josh through the SLCC program. "I learned more than I thought going into it. I think it's worthwhile, and it's constantly improving. It gives extra support and adds to the level of understanding with our role within the company."

## ATL TECHNOLOGY EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Jason Blohm worked as a Lean Manufacturing consultant for a couple of years prior to coming to ATL Technology. Having no experience in medical device manufacturing, Jason felt the SLCC program was valuable for him getting external exposure from the instructors and fellow classmates. Jason also felt the instructors had credibility and real stories to back up what they were saying. "We have great incentive to go. I'm in the regulatory and quality side and I'm exposed to this anyway. The biggest benefit I've seen is it takes it from something that you do but you don't know why, to understanding why you're doing it and where it's coming from."



Jason Blohm, Quality Management System Supervisor, ATL Technology



**School:**  
Salt Lake Community College



**Total companies involved:**  
10



**Courses**  
Intro to Medical Device Industry  
Basic Manufacturing Skills  
Intro to FDA Regulations  
Intro to Quality Systems

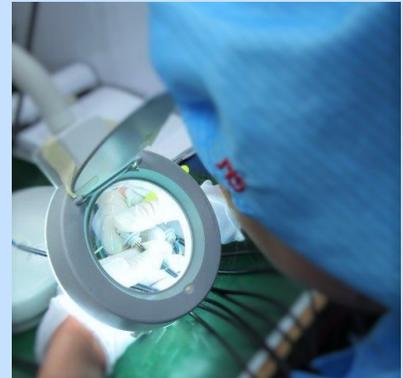


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**Program size:**  
71 students

*Additional Courses towards ASQ certification:*  
Intro to Quality Control  
Quality Auditing Concepts  
STUDENTfacturED® (internship)



### About the C<sup>3</sup>BC:

The Community College Consortium for Bioscience Credentials (c3bc) is a multistate consortium of 12 community colleges engaged in an educational and training initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Labor under grant TC-23761-12-60-A-37. Under the c3bc, 12 Community Colleges nationwide coordinate to support the following strategies to assist grant participants to obtain employment in high-wage, high-skill occupations, such as biotechnology, biomanufacturing, and medical devices:

1. Harmonize a set of core skills across the biosciences and embed stackable and latticed, industry-recognized credentials into training for biosciences jobs that will create career pathways for TAA-eligible and other displaced workers.
2. Improve and expand recruitment, testing and aptitude assessment for trade-impacted workers in tandem with the public workforce system. This will help fill industry demand for biosciences workers.
3. Expand and improve the delivery of education and career training programs at the Community College level. Accelerate completion time in certificate/credentialing programs through improved assessment of prior learning, focused support services, the removal of institutional barriers and development of technology.
4. Build community college capacity for biosciences education and training that meets local, state and national employer needs across subsectors of laboratory skills, biomanufacturing and medical devices.

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## Community College Consortium for Bioscience Credentials (C<sup>3</sup>BC):

