

# HELPING MILITARY PERSONNEL DEVELOP NEW SKILLS FOR CAREERS IN BIOPHARMA

## MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS IN BIOPHARMA MANUFACTURING (MSMBM)



### Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

Type:  
Academic Research Institution

Participating Organizations:  
North Carolina Biotechnology Center, Central Carolina Community College, Durham Technology Community College, Merck & Co., Inc., and Pfizer, Inc.

» *Jenny Ligon, Texas A&M University*



## INDUSTRY NEED

According to a December 2020 PhRMA/Techonomy Partners LLC Report, the STEM skills gap will leave 2.4 million positions unfilled in the U.S. between 2018 and 2028.<sup>1</sup> Despite the biopharmaceutical industry's rapid growth, this skills gap has made it difficult to find qualified, skilled workers. In particular, the biopharmaceutical industry values talent with hands-on training so workers can quickly jump into their roles, minimizing training time and expense. To address these challenges, the industry needs to identify additional sources of talent with the right kind of training to quickly fill critical roles in manufacturing and process development.

## OUTCOME

In the summer and winter of 2021, the MSMBM program was delivered to five cohorts in Texas and North Carolina to a total of 41 veterans and military spouses. Courses covered key topics in biopharmaceutical manufacturing: Working Safely and Current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP); Measurement, Metrics, Unit Operations, and Documentation; Process Flows, Technology, and Equipment; Analytical Techniques and Maintaining Quality; Aseptic Processing, Fermentation, and Cell Growth; and Harvest, Filtration, and Purification. Students had the opportunity to interview with Merck & Co., Inc. and Pfizer, Inc. upon completion of the program. In addition, participants in North Carolina had the chance to attend BioNetwork's November Career Fair and interview with biotechnology companies. Of the 41 participants across the cohorts, 50% received offers from biopharmaceutical companies within three months of completing the program. One participant from the TX/NC 2021 cohort shared that, "The hands-on experience with instruments, techniques, and technology inspired me to seek employment in biopharma."

## SOLUTION

Leveraging the extensive military presence in Texas and North Carolina, Texas A&M University and its partners developed the Military Service Members in Biopharma Manufacturing (MSMBM) program. Service members have skills that translate well into careers in the biopharmaceutical industry. MSMBM builds on these transferrable skills and provides targeted technical training for successful careers in the industry. Additionally, the program connects participants to leading biopharmaceutical companies Merck & Co., Inc. and Pfizer, Inc. by facilitating presentations and interviews before and after the training. MSMBM helps industry tap into a significant and underutilized talent source and offers veterans new career possibilities.

“The military community is an excellent audience to put through a technical training program like this one. These participants can really hit the ground running, add value to pharmaceutical companies, and bring amazing skillsets to the table.”