



PRESS RELEASE

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South Bay Workforce Investment Board
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**South Bay Workforce Investment Board Implements
Bio-Flex Apprenticeship Initiative for the Bioscience Industry**

HAWTHORNE - The South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) has implemented the Bio-Flex Initiative, a new innovative project to develop pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship career pathways for the Bioscience industry and job seekers looking for careers in Bioscience. Bio-Flex is a cooperative partnership between SBWIB, the County of Los Angeles, educational institutions, associations and many Bioscience employers.

Supervisor Mark Ridley Thomas, who has led the effort to create BioLA (Bioscience Los Angeles County) and signal that the County is committed to becoming a global leader in Bioscience, provided the SBWIB with \$200,000 in grants to develop apprenticeships and implement the program. The Los Angeles County Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services Department provided an additional \$150,000 for apprentice training. And, more recently the California Workforce Development Board and Economic Development Department awarded the SBWIB a \$150,000 from the Workforce Accelerator Fund to attract participants into the new Bio-Flex apprenticeship program and to develop additional apprenticeship occupations.

“We are very excited to partner with the supervisor in his effort to make L.A. County a significant hub for Bioscience. We are prepared to do our part in preparing the local workforce to take advantage of these exciting employment opportunities,” said Jan Vogel, SBWIB Executive Director.

The SBWIB will develop an employer driven apprenticeship model that will meet the workforce development needs common to Bioscience industry partners, while providing a framework to allow each employer to design and “flex” their own program. Employers will be able to tailor the curriculum to meet their individual training needs around a specific occupation or department.

Bio-Flex is modeled after the SBWIB’s successful Aero-Flex Initiative, which brought together various industry partners in advanced manufacturing to provide career development and apprenticeship opportunities in the aerospace industry.

Apprenticeship is a proven way to connect employers to a diverse future workforce. This collaboration with employers and other stakeholders aims to create a flexible yet structured career pathway for high school and college level students, veterans, underserved populations, new hires, and incumbent workers who might otherwise have challenges accessing opportunities within this industry. Bio-Flex will support a regional network of partners that will ensure employment opportunities in Bioscience are widely available to all.

The local Bioscience industry currently generates more than \$40 billion in economic activity annually and supports 70,000 direct jobs and 160,000 indirect jobs, but has the potential to create even more, at all skill levels. Resilient against economic downturns, Bioscience was the only industry sector that continued to grow during the Great Recession.



www.sbwib.org

A number of Southland Bioscience employers are involved in Bio-Flex including Bachem, Polypeptide, Protomer Technologies, Sakura, Pasadena Bio, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Takeda, Oak Crest Institute of Science, and Freudenberg Medical, to name a few. Other partners include BioCom, Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, Training Funding Partners, Rx Foundation, West LA College and Cal State University Dominguez Hills.

The vision for Bio-Flex is to deliver an effective and proven employer-directed career development tool, which can be used to attract new talent to the Bioscience industry. The program will provide an important resource to employers and increase job seekers' access to well-paid careers within this exciting industry.

Companies and participants interested in this opportunity may contact Deborah Shepard at (310) 970-7700 for more information and details on how to participate.

The SBWIB operates four One Stop Business & Career Centers within the South Bay service area plus two Teen Centers in Inglewood and Hawthorne. All employment services provided are offered at no cost to the public, visit SBWIB.org to learn more about available programs.

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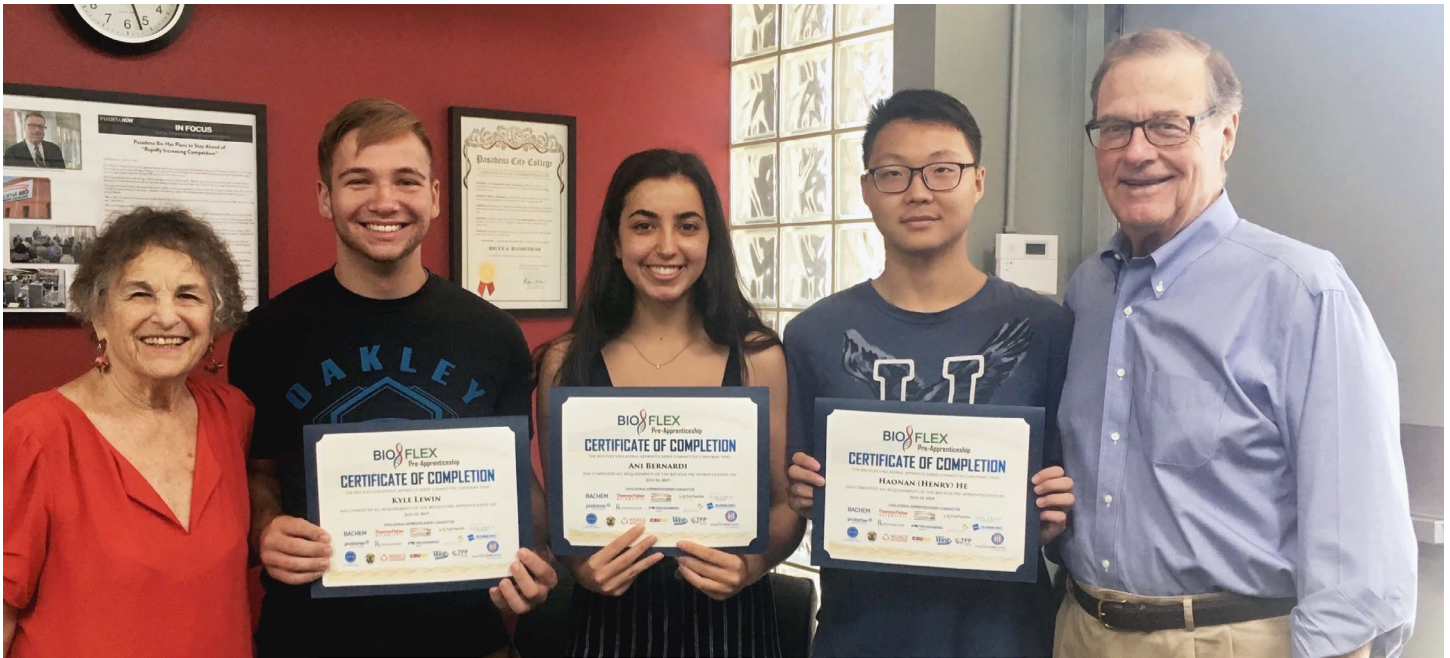


Photo caption: Recent Bio-Flex Pre-Apprentices pose for photo after receiving their certificates. Pictured from left to right; Dr. Wendie Johnston, Lab Director, Pasadena Bio Collaborative incubator, Kyle Lewin, Ani Bernardi, Haonan (Henry) He and Robert C. Bishop, Ph.D., President, Pasadena Bio Collaborative incubator.