



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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****PRESS RELEASE****

NEWSOM ANNOUNCES NEW BIOTECH INITIATIVES

\$1.1 Million NSF grant for biotech job training to prepare low-income and under-represented minorities for jobs in the biotechnology industry

New Biotechnology Advisory Council to assist City in growing its emerging biotech sector

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - Mayor Gavin Newsom announced today two exciting new initiatives aimed at fostering the growth of the biotechnology sector in San Francisco and ensuring that local residents are prepared for, and have access to, the industry's high quality jobs.

\$1.1 million for biotech training program

A nationally recognized partnership between SFWorks and City College of San Francisco received two National Science Foundation (NSF) grants totaling \$1.1 million to prepare low-income and under-represented minorities for jobs in the burgeoning biotechnology industry. \$600,000 will go to SF Works for its "On-Ramp program", a feeder program that prepares low-income adults with skills at the 6th-9th grade levels for entry into City College's highly touted "Bridge to Biotech" program. The additional \$500,000 will go to expand the Bridge to Biotech program to additional campuses and populations, including City College's Mission Campus, and to offer the program to limited-English speakers from under-served Asian, Filipino, Pacific Islander, Latin and Eastern European communities.

"Programs like On-Ramp and Bridge to Biotech are integral to our strategy of linking workforce development with economic development," said Mayor Newsom. "We are addressing a critical issue by providing access to quality jobs for our neediest residents while at the same time providing a pool of highly trained workers for an industry that is constantly facing a shortage of such talent."

"The good news for San Franciscans is that existing workforce demands in the biotech sector offers opportunities to extend employment opportunities within the industry to previously under-represented low-income and minority populations," says Terri Feeley, Executive Director of SFWorks.

This partnership was recognized earlier this year by the Association of Community College Trustees as one of the five best practices nationally for community economic development. "A major challenge we face when focusing on high-wage employment initiatives is to commit ourselves to providing opportunities and access to people who are sometimes penalized by lack of education and challenging socio-economic circumstances. The beauty and significance of the On-Ramp Program is that it is a pathway for a number of economically and educationally disenfranchised students," says Philip Day, CCSF chancellor.

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"Biotech jobs are not just for scientists," said Supervisor Sophie Maxwell, "Each PhD-level job within the industry requires between five to seven accompanying support positions. These are high-quality, high paying jobs that our residents have a real chance of accessing thru programs that help them become competitive in this industry. These grants support that effort."

Formation of Mayor's Biotechnology Advisory Council

The Mayor also announced today the formation of a new Advisory Council to assist the City in growing its emerging biotech sector. Called the Mayor's Biotech Advisory Council ("MayBAC"), it will be chaired by G. Steven Burrill, a leading biotech venture capitalist, and includes many of the pre-eminent thinkers and entrepreneurs in the nation.

"This is another indication that we are poised for a real biotechnology renaissance in San Francisco," said Mayor Newsom, "The quality of this group underscores how committed we are to bringing biotech back to it's birthplace."

MayBAC's membership includes many of the luminaries in the biotechnology and life sciences field, including leaders in academia, law, finance and the corporate sector. "MayBAC can help the City by serving as San Francisco's ambassadors to the industry," said Steve Burrill, "We will also provide advice to the Mayor and other policy-makers on initiatives and policies they can implement to facilitate expansion of this key sector in the City."

"I applaud these initiatives which undoubtedly make our city more attractive to biotechnology companies" said Supervisor Michela Alioto-Pier. "Following on the heels of my success in creating a payroll tax exemption targeted for biotech companies, these grants will continue to ensure that our city's biotech workforce is the finest in the world and that biotech employment is open for all our citizens. The growth of biotech in the City means not only incredible job opportunities but also an infusion of new revenue for the City and expanded commercial possibilities for our business sector. I look forward to working with the new Mayor's Biotech Advisory Council and others in our continuing efforts to make San Francisco one of the world's leading biotechnology centers."

Biotechnology Advisory Council Members:

Mike Bishop, Chancellor, UCSF
Brook Byers, Partner, Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers
Dr. Robert Corrigan, Chancellor, San Francisco State University
Phillip Day, Chancellor, City College of San Francisco
Sue Desmond-Hellman, Executive Vice-President, Development & Product Operations, Genentech
Fred Dorey, Attorney, Cooley Godward
David Goeddell, CEO, Tularik
Bruce Jennet, Partner, Heller Ehrman
Gail Maderis, CEO, Five Prime Therapeutics
Joel Marcus, CEO, Alexandria Real Estate Equities
William Rutter, Founder and Former Chairman, Chiron
James Sabry, CEO, Cytokinetics

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