

# Delaware job seekers swamp science fair

## Bioscience companies ready to hire again

BY AARON NATHANS • THE NEWS JOURNAL • MARCH 10, 2010



NEWARK -- For those who got the bad news about downsizing at AstraZeneca a week ago, this was the place to look for the next step.

Hundreds of job candidates mobbed a small room at the Delaware Biotechnology Institute on Tuesday, donning their best suits and hunting for job leads.

The Delaware Bio Life Sciences Career Fair, organized by the Delaware BioScience Association, featured 13 potential employers such as Incyte Corp., Sanosil International and W.L. Gore & Associates Inc.

The size of the crowd, and the intensity of the job seekers, was notable, recruiters said.

"It's excitement for us, and a degree of sadness" for the state of the work force, said Brent Saliman, of Agilent Technologies. "Good quality people have fallen on hard times."

The event showed that, after a slow 2009, bioscience companies are hiring at a slightly faster clip. Aerotek Scientific, an employment agency, had one of the longest lines, seeking 40 workers in areas like chemical engineering, chemistry, research science and molecular biology.

ANP Technologies was advertising four research associate jobs.

B&W Tek, Inc., a biomedical instruments company, is planning to add nine new employees in sales, quality assurance and human resources.

There was even a booth from AstraZeneca, which announced it would lay off 550 of its Wilmington research and development workers in the next two years. The company was seeking lots of interns and corporate office workers.

John Zysk, of Chesapeake City, Md., was one of the people who learned last week he'd be losing his job at AstraZeneca. An 11-year veteran of the company, Zysk waited on lines for Incyte, Fraunhofer CMB, Nemours and others, looking for a research scientist position.



"You move on, take a look at it as a new opportunity," he said. "Hopefully."

Bob Dayton, president of the Delaware BioScience Association, said the business models of pharmaceutical and bioscience companies is changing. Much of the research and

development formerly done by the big companies is being farmed out to the smaller ones with less overhead, some of which were in attendance on Tuesday, he said.

"The number of companies here looking to recruit people is a positive sign there are opportunities out there," said Kelvin Lee, the director of the Delaware Biotechnology Institute.

Although there was plenty of hope in the room, frustration abounded, too.

"They don't need people who have no experience," said Sally Almassou of Newark. She has been waitressing for the last year since graduating from the University of Delaware with a degree in biological science. "How am I supposed to get experience if no one is hiring me? It's a circle."

She said she's enjoyed meeting people through waitressing, and she'd consider a job in sales, too.