

# **Biotechnology Research Facility at SIUE Launches Job Shadow Program for High School Students**

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EDWARDSVILLE – As part of its ongoing efforts to provide hands-on training for all students, the National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Center (NCERC), located in University Park at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, has launched a job shadowing program for high school students interested in learning about careers in biotechnology.

The Careers in Biotechnology job shadow program will facilitate on-site learning opportunities at the NCERC facility for students who want to learn about how biotechnology intersects with several different career fields, including chemistry,

biology, engineering, business, communication, marketing, and others. The new program will pair high school students with NCERC's individual staff members and give students exposure to different career paths in an innovative research environment.

“Through my role as a member of the Waterloo School Board, I've seen the various ways high school students research and engage with different career fields,” said John Caupert, executive director of NCERC. “One of the most impactful ways to do so is to give students the opportunity to witness firsthand what a day looks like for a professional. The biotechnology industry is growing rapidly, making it an ideal investment for those who want to pursue careers in a dynamic field while having the security of knowing their dream job will exist in 40 years.”

Career opportunities in biotechnology continue to grow as the industry diversifies and expands, creating incredible long-term career options for students looking at higher education programs. According to Schmidt Futures, the future global bioeconomy will be worth somewhere between \$4 trillion and \$30 trillion based on recent projections. Developing a diverse and dynamic workforce to power the current and future bioeconomy is critical to establishing a strong manufacturing foothold in the United States.

“This opportunity has given me a significant advantage in refining what career path I want to pursue,” said Kennedy Voelker, a senior at Waterloo High School and the first participant in the NCERC job shadow program. “I've found that hands-on learning is critically important as it allows you to find what you will enjoy in your career and determine what you can be successful at. After having spent time with the NCERC staff, I'm eager to enter my senior year of high school and pursue a college degree in environmental science.”

To learn about the Careers in Biotechnology job shadow program, or any of NCERC's workforce training initiatives, visit [EthanolResearch.com](http://EthanolResearch.com).

*The NCERC at SIUE is a nationally recognized research center dedicated to the development and commercialization of biotechnologies. Their unique research laboratories house bench- to demonstration-scale bioreactors and pretreatment and downstream processing equipment, making it the perfect partner to companies in the biotechnology industry.*