

MilliporeSigma Introduces Students to STEM Careers With Cooperative Education Program

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Photo Credit: Lakeland University

“You learn exactly what you want to pursue in your career.” That’s what Vincent Hoderny, former Lakeland University **chemistry student**, had to say about his cooperative (co-op) experience at the Sheboygan Falls site of MilliporeSigma, the U.S. and Canada Life Science business of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany.

As the first student to participate in the Sheboygan Falls co-op program in early 2021, Vincent now works as an associate production scientist at MilliporeSigma.

By providing a direct relationship between the classroom and employment, the co-op program helps strengthen the community by hiring local college students who complete the program.

“The co-op program allows students to get tangible experience in jobs they are curious about while being a contributing member of the workforce,” said Jeff Lasselle, head of MilliporeSigma’s Sheboygan Falls manufacturing site and Milwaukee labs. “It provides students in our local community the opportunity to learn about our trade and potentially

get their foot in the door with a growing global company that supports a large variety of products.”

To date, at least ten students now work in full-time or part-time positions at the company.

“It was an invaluable experience, and I got acclimated to the company very quickly with the help of my colleagues,” Hoderny explains. “I got to experience different aspects of the life science industry and helped with processing and packaging different chemicals.”

According to the **United States Bureau of Labor Statistics**, Sheboygan is one of 28 metro areas in the United States whose labor force grew significantly from February to November 2020. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, each of the 28 metro areas saw their labor force increase by hundreds, if not thousands, of workers during those nine months.

“We strongly feel that local students can contribute to the workforce while they are still learning foundational elements of the life science industry in college,” said Paul Griffin, training specialist at MilliporeSigma. “We welcome anyone and everyone to let us help them create their ideal career path.”

Lakeland University’s co-op employer partners, like MilliporeSigma, are actively developing their future talent pipeline and directly influencing the education of students entering their professions.

“We want to really embrace the opportunity to allow for lifelong learning within the organization, whether that is through education, experience, or a combination,” said Lasselle.

Sheboygan’s unemployment rate decreased from 3.8% in February 2021 to 3.3% in July 2021—amplifying that Sheboygan is an area full of job opportunities and employment growth, making it an ideal place for college graduates to start their careers.

Visit MilliporeSigma’s website to find out more information on the co-op program, additional opportunities for **graduate students** and a current list of **open positions in Wisconsin**.

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