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## **Wistar's New Biomedical Research Technician Training Program Obtains First State Approval as Non-Traditional Apprenticeship to Support Region's Life Sciences Workforce**

**PHILADELPHIA—(May 30, 2017)—**[The Wistar Institute](#)'s **Biomedical Research Technician (BRT) Apprenticeship** has become the first-ever registered, nontraditional apprenticeship program in biomedical research approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry. This training model is now fully recognized by the state and will help serve the workforce needs of the region's burgeoning life sciences community with experienced lab technicians.

“As the U.S. Congress now authorizes a budget in support of funding innovative, job-driven approaches that expand new apprenticeships in high growth new industries, we are proud that the BRT Program is the first science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), non-traditional apprenticeship model supporting the development of the biotech labor force in Pennsylvania,” said **Dario C. Altieri, M.D.**, president and CEO of The Wistar Institute. “Today—now more than ever—it is critical to obtain specialized skills in our knowledge-based economy, and this program moves the innovation lifecycle forward to support a vibrant, growing life sciences community in our state.”

The BRT Apprenticeship offers those pursuing degrees at the Community College of Philadelphia and elsewhere a career pathway to become biomedical research technicians in research laboratory environments. Through coursework and on-the-job training opportunities at Wistar and other partnering laboratories, trainees acquire skillsets to facilitate experimental procedures, manage a laboratory and monitor lab safety, conduct data analysis on experiments, and various other highly skilled techniques with the goal of supporting a lead scientist in the laboratory.

“The life sciences sector requires a vital and dynamic skilled workforce, and BRT trainees will possess the critical and varied skillsets that are demanded in the industry,” said **William Wunner, Ph.D.**, Wistar professor and director of Academic Affairs, and director of Outreach Education and Technology Training Programs. “This program provides students of diverse backgrounds with hands-on biomedical research experience in laboratories while meeting the needs of the biomedical sector with a select employee talent pool.”

Developed from the [Biomedical Technician Training \(BTT\) Program](#), the BRT Program expands upon BTT Program structure and concepts. In 2000, the BTT Program was created in partnership with the Community College of Philadelphia to reinforce the region's workforce with experienced lab technicians. The evolution of the BTT Program to the state-approved and credentialed BRT Apprenticeship showcases Wistar's critical role in science education and training in Philadelphia, affirming the value of being globally connected and locally relevant.

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*The Wistar Institute is an international leader in biomedical research with special expertise in cancer, immunology, infectious diseases and vaccine development. Founded in 1892 as the first independent nonprofit biomedical research institute in the United States, Wistar has held the prestigious Cancer Center designation from the National Cancer Institute since 1972. The Institute works actively to ensure that research advances move from the laboratory to the clinic as quickly as possible.*

[wistar.org](http://wistar.org).

