

Mentor Program Biographies



Pharoah Garma (she/her)

**Chief Regulatory and Compliance Officer, EBR Systems, Inc.
Erie, CO**

Ms. Garma brings over 20 years of leadership experience in regulatory, clinical, quality, and R&D for innovative medical devices. She began her career as a Lead and Engineering Reviewer at FDA before holding leadership roles at start-ups and multinational corporations, including Philips and Medtronic. She most recently served as COO at Boomerang Medical and previously as VP of Regulatory and R&D at PQ Bypass. At EBR, she oversees regulatory, clinical, medical affairs, and compliance, driving alignment to deliver value to patients, physicians, investors, and regulators.

**Industry: Medical Device
20+ years of
experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students, PhD Students



Kylie Kemp (she/her)

**Sr Development Engineer, Highridge Medical
Westminster, CO**

I've worked in the Medical Device field as a Development Engineer for 9 years, specifically with implants/instruments for spinal surgery. I attended CSU for both undergrad and graduate school, receiving my BS in Mechanical Engineering and my MS in Bioengineering where I focused on Clinical Biomechanics for my Masters thesis. I've worked on a variety of projects in my career, ranging from specialty instrument design, to minimally invasive technology and 3D printed Titanium implants. As a mentor, I can help provide help with resume review, interview prep, facility tours, insight into graduate school (if you're in undergrad), and advice on shifting from academia into industry.

**Industry: Medical Device
9 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate Students, Masters Students



Scott Davie

**Chief Technology Officer, Alio
Broomfield, CO**

This will be my 6th group of mentees. Typically I spend a lot of time on networking and job finding skills, industry vs. academia, industry segments. Beyond that I let the group drive the direction. My background is biomedical engineering, large company and small companies, innovation, team leadership, clinical experience. I've lived in 4 states and 3 foreign countries. See my LinkedIn profile for details.

**Industry: Medical Device,
Digital Health
33 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate Students, Masters Students

Mentor Program Biographies



Annie Bargsten

**Field Application Scientist, STEMCELL Technologies
Longmont, CO**

After graduating from medical school, I pursued a PhD which led me to a non-bench position in the industry. Later, I went back to the bench and left it again with a better understanding of what I am passionate about and what works for me. If you aren't sure what you want to do when you grow up, let's talk!

**Industry: Biotechnology
7 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate Students, Masters Students, PhD Students



Briston Foster (she/her)

**Principal Strategy Lead Complex Spine, Medtronic
Grand Junction, CO**

My career has spanned Clinical and Medical Affairs, from running traditional clinical trials to leading global clinical strategies creating data needed to submit to regulators (FDA and equivalent) and what data surgeons need to feel confident adopting the device or new procedure. I've worked at the crossroads of science, strategy, and patient care, helping bring innovative medical devices to market. Along the way, I've learned how different strengths - whether analytical, creative, or people-focused - can shape meaningful careers in healthcare. As a mentor, I support students with career exploration, interview prep, and resume building, while also serving as a guide and cheerleader (virtual pom-poms included!) to help you reach your own unique goals.

**Industry: Medical Device
10 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate Students, Masters Students, PhD Students



Lance Ashbrook (he/him)

**Manager of Analytical Development, Tolmar
Fort Collins, CO**

I am a Ph.D. chemist who can help advise on graduate school decisions and on the various career paths available. My particular career path has taken me down the road of pharmaceutical R&D but it started in inorganic solar cells. My background is in analytical and materials chemistry, which has served me well in pharma. I started on the bench and eventually transitioned to management ~2 years ago so I can bring perspectives from both sides. I am also happy to give lab tours of our primary R&D facility in Fort Collins.

**Industry: Pharmaceuticals
9 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate Students, Masters Students, PhD Students, Postdocs

Mentor Program Biographies



Industry: Biotechnology
25 years of experience

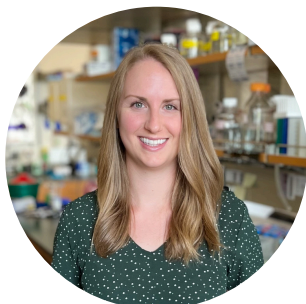
Kevin Marhenke (he/him)

Director, External Medical Engagement, Amgen (Retired)
Aurora, CO

I began my career as a pharmacist primarily working in hospitals for 18 years, where I focused on critical care medicine. Following my hospital career I was hired by Amgen, the world's largest biotech company, where I worked for 25 years. My roles at Amgen consisted of serving as a Medical Science Liaison, Training Director, Medical Director and finally Director of External Medical Engagement. Part of my responsibilities also included mentoring my colleagues as they advanced their careers both with Amgen and other companies. I feel that my broad experience in the pharmaceutical industry, as well as my clinical experience would serve to benefit mentees that I would have the privilege of working with.

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students, PhD Students



Industry: Biotechnology
3 years of experience

Lindsey Lee (she/her)

Senior Scientist, Biochemistry, Edgewise Therapeutics
Boulder, CO

I'm a biochemist at Edgewise Therapeutics, where I help develop new treatments for rare muscle diseases. After earning my PhD in Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology at CU Boulder, I started my career in industry because I wanted to apply my training to research that directly impacts human health. On the biochemistry team at Edgewise, I get to tackle complex scientific questions while contributing to the big picture therapeutic goals. I'm excited to be a part of this mentorship program and to share insights from my path, answer questions, and support career exploration.

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students, PhD Students



Industry: Diagnostics
21 years of experience

Becky Yacht-Yhap (she/her)

Sr. Director Commercial Effectiveness and Sales Training
Biodesix
Louisville, CO

I am happy to be of support as you are going through your educational journey. I didn't know a job like the one I have existed when I was in college. There are so many opportunities in the Biotech and diagnostics space. I have experience in diagnostics across commercial specialties (marketing, sales, and commercial training), and am happy to provide any insights that may guide someone interested in learning more about leadership within a commercial team.

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate Students, Masters Students

Mentor Program Biographies



Rita "Ruta" Sanzgiri (she/her)

**Member of Board of Directors Executive Council, CBSA
Boulder, CO**

With over 20 years in the life sciences industry, my career has spanned from research to law, providing me with a unique perspective to guide emerging talent. I began as a scientist in India, pursued a Ph.D. and postdoctoral work in Genetics and Neuroscience in the US, then transitioned to patent law. I have worked as a patent lawyer in law firms and as in-house counsel, including as Associate VP and Assistant General Patent Counsel where I worked closely with scientists and business development teams to protect the company's intellectual property. Now, I aim to support and grow Colorado's life sciences community, leveraging my passion for education and mentoring to help young professionals succeed.

**Industry: Biotechnology
20+ years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students, PhD Students



Shlomo Harnas (he/him)

**Managing Director, Akrolyth Advisory
Westminster, CO**

I have particularly extensive experience in Life Sciences - firsthand across consulting and industry, and working closely with entrepreneurs and investors. All after having started off thinking that I would spend a lifetime in academia and "falling to the dark side" along the way. My career path has been a combination of planning and serendipity, and both professionally and personally I have a particularly broad range of experience and knowledge about career and professional paths, advantages and pitfalls. Happy to share perspectives, so hopefully others can benefit from my experience without having to attain it the hard way.

**Industry: Biotechnology
17 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters students, PhD students,
Graduates/Entrepreneurs



Daniel Buehler (he/him)

**Intellectual Property Manager, Tolmar
Fort Collins, CO**

Daniel began his career with a robust academic path, progressing from undergraduate studies to a postdoctoral fellowship. He then transitioned into the start-up world before moving into intellectual property at a law firm. Daniel further advanced his career by joining a pharmaceutical company, where they managed both branded and generic drug portfolios and gained extensive experience in business development, including mergers and acquisitions and new product development programs.

**Industry: Pharmaceutical
9 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students, PhD Students

Mentor Program Biographies



Industry: Medical Device
4 years of experience

Anna Haugen (she/her)

**Senior Manufacturing Engineer, Highridge Medical
Westminster, CO**

The entirety of my career in medical devices so far has been in spinal implant/instrument manufacturing. Currently, I'm managing supply base transformation projects, which lean heavily on cross-functional teams to transfer manufacturing of a product between external suppliers to improve operational efficiency. Prior to this version of my role, I bounced around a variety of areas, including sustaining engineering projects, internal machine shop support, and project management. As a mentor, I am able to offer insight into the nuances of medical device manufacturing and the cross-functional areas that work together to support products from design to launch. I'd also love to help students prepare for the transition to industry (resume reviews, career pathway discussions, etc.) and welcome them onsite to Highridge for a facility tour.

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students



Industry: Biopharma
6 years of experience

Hee Young Yi (she/her)

**Project Engineer between roles
Boulder, CO**

I graduated with a bachelor's in Chemical and Biological Engineering from the Colorado School of Mines in 2019. Shortly after I started my career in the biopharmaceutical manufacturing industry. My role has been ever evolving, providing me diverse experience including hands-on manufacturing, process improvement, and change controls; specifically in the viral vector/cell therapy/mammalian realm. Most recently, I have worked as a project engineer at AGC Biologics, where I managed all types of projects throughout the site to implement changes and improvements.

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students



Industry: Biotechnology
23 years of experience

Kristine Young (she/her)

**Associate Director - Validation, KBI Biopharma
Boulder, CO**

I am experienced in Validation and Quality Assurance bringing expertise in small molecule sterile injectable pharmaceutical, solid and liquid oral dose pharmaceutical and therapeutic protein biotechnology manufacturing environments. I have a BS in Biology and found myself in the pharma industry right after college. I have about 10 years in Validation and 10 years in Quality Assurance with a few years in recruiting for life science positions. Almost all of my time has been supporting manufacturing facilities in one fashion or another.

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate Students, Masters Students

Mentor Program Biographies



Nathan Frank (he/him)

**Sr. Research Scientist, Terumo Blood and Cell Technologies
Lakewood, CO**

I started my science career relatively late in life and worked a very wide range of jobs up until starting on my current path. I worked my way through two degrees at a commuter campus and it took much longer than usual to complete my degrees. I believe I have a diversity of experiences and the associated level of empathy for a range of circumstances and perspectives that might help to make me an appropriate mentor for different types of students in many different stages of their development.

**Industry: Biotechnology
14 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students, PhD Students



Teisha Rowland (she/her/they/them)

**Product review (for cell and gene therapy products), FDA
Broomfield, CO**

I am a CMC reviewer for cell and gene therapy products at the FDA. I've previously worked in industry (biopharma startup) as a principal scientist and team lead. I've also worked in academia as a founding research center director and as a postdoc in a Nobel Laureate's lab. Overall I have a broad range of experience and am happy to mentor students interested in industry, in stem cell products, in the FDA regulatory process for approving new biologics, applying to graduate school and picking labs to rotate in, science writing (technical and for the public), and everything in between.

**Industry: FDA
6 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students, PhD Students, PostDocs



Jessica Barkow (she/her)

**President, Corgenix Medical Corporation
Broomfield, CO**

I became President of Corgenix through a non-linear career path filled with moments of self-doubt and growth. Along the way, I learned that leadership isn't about having all the answers—it's about asking the right questions, seeking guidance, and building strong networks of people with diverse expertise. I've developed a passion for connecting with and learning from others, which has been key to my success. As a mentor, I aim to share these lessons and help students navigate their own paths with confidence and curiosity.

**Industry: Biotechnology
6 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students, PhD Students

Mentor Program Biographies



Sascha Strait (he/him)

**Senior Research Scientist, OnKure, Inc.
Boulder, CO**

I'm the lead pharmacologist on multiple targets in our drug discovery program at a small (~50 employees) biotech company in the Boulder area. We're focused on developing mutant-selective small-molecule PI3K inhibitors from medicinal chemistry through clinical trials. I came into this role directly from a PhD program at CU Anschutz and can offer some insights on transitioning into biotech without doing a postdoc. We have an on-site chemistry and biology lab that we can tour.

**Industry: Pharmaceutical
3 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students, PhD Students



Charlotte Cialek, PhD (she/her)

**Integrated DNA Technologies
Fort Collins, CO**

My interest in emerging technologies and communication led me to my current role as a Field Application Scientist. I've worked for the past 3 years in SynBio and now am in Functional Genomics, including CRISPR and DNA/RNA technologies. I've worked for small 3-5 person companies, a mid-sized companies, and now am in the Business Unit at a large company and am happy to talk about the differences between these experiences. Also, I'd love to talk more about how you can use your passion for science communication in industry. Lastly, I got my PhD at CSU in the BMB department and am happy to discuss the graduate school path.

**Industry: Biotechnology
4 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students, PhD Students



Ginger Gonzales (she/her)

**Quality Engineer, Highridge Medical
Broomfield, CO**

As a mentor, I aim to support students with guidance on a variety of topics that can help shape their future careers or education paths. I completed my undergraduate degree in Mechanical Engineering and then earned my MS in Biomechanical Engineering. After graduation, I went straight into industry and have been working in the medical device field for about a year. I understand how challenging it can be to break into the industry and how important networking is to that process. I'd be happy to share advice on a wide range of areas, whether that's considering graduate school, building an effective resume, preparing for interviews, or exploring what types of roles you might enjoy.

**Industry: Medical Device
1 year of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students

Mentor Program Biographies



Branden Antonio Salinas (he/him)

**Vice President - Process Sciences, Umoja Biopharma
Louisville, CO**

I have taken a winding path within biotechnology companies including large pharma, industrial biotech, capital projects, academic contract manufacturing and most recently a startup company. Additionally, I have a PhD myself as well as worked with and managed many PhDs during my career. From this experience I can provide insight into many different types of academic and career paths in biotechnology. I am able to offer tours of our facility in Louisville, CO as well.

**Industry: Biopharma
22 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students, PhD Students



Zaragoza Briseno (he/him)

**Vice President of Operations, TriSalus Life Sciences
Westminster, CO**

Provide an insight in comparing large corporations, medium size companies and start-up sized companies. Provide insights into starting your own consulting business. Provide insights to international assignments (Belgium, Italy, Costa Rica, and China). Provide an insight into building strong teams. Provide insight into how to transition from start-up Operations to a public company Operations.

**Industry: Medical Device
30 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students, PhD Students



Sophie Griggs (she/her)

**Product Marketing Lead, Eon Health
Denver, CO**

When I was in college, I often felt lost and intimidated trying to figure out what I wanted to do with my career. By chance, I landed at a health tech start-up right out of school, where I was able to explore a variety of roles and discover what I was both good at and passionate about. As a mentor, I hope to help students who feel the same way see that there are countless career paths and opportunities that aren't always visible from the classroom. Having been employee #2 at a company that has since grown to over 200 people, I can offer insight into the benefits of helping to build something from the ground up so early in your career, managing imposter syndrome, and how curiosity, learning fast, and a little "fake it till you make it" can take you far.

**Industry: Digital Health
7 years of experience**

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students

Mentor Program Biographies



Industry: Medical Device
13 years of experience

Matthew Long (he/him)

**Senior Manager of Customer Focused Quality, Terumo Blood Cell Technologies
Lakewood, CO**

I have experience across R&D, Commercial, and Quality organizations within the medical device space, and can help guide students on all of the different possible career paths they can pursue within the industry. After spending 4 years within R&D in both New Product Development and Sustaining roles, I've spent most of my time in Quality leading teams who have responsibilities ranging from technical root cause analysis to customer/regulator conversations. I can also speak to my experience with a career outside of the bioscience industry, following a 2-year stint working in clean technology for heavy industry - and ultimately, why I choose to come back to medical devices.

Open to Mentoring

Undergraduate students, Masters Students