

SUCCESS STORY



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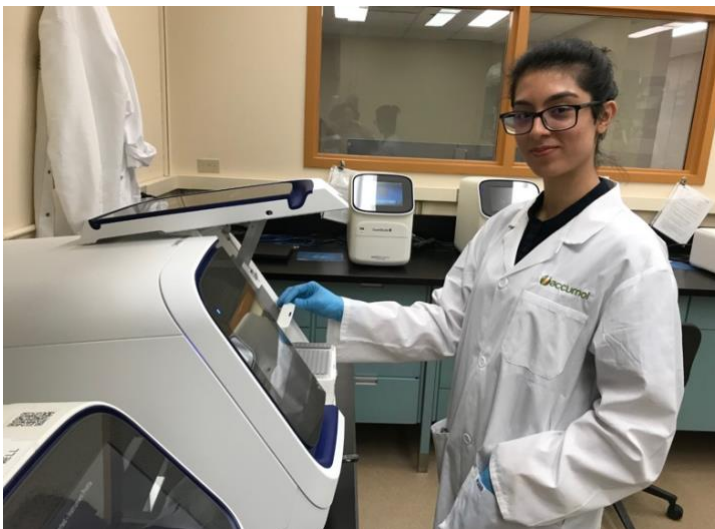


www.accumol.com

Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation (HSCT) is often a necessary treatment for patients suffering from blood cancers, such as leukemia, lymphoma, or myeloma. To monitor the success of HSCT over time, molecular diagnostic laboratories repeatedly perform a complex blood test called chimerism analysis. Accumol, a privately-owned biotechnology company based in Calgary, works in this small niche market. They have developed a unique technology that simplifies and speeds up an essential quality control step in the chimerism analysis process. This allows laboratories to improve their workflow while increasing their confidence in the results of a test that informs crucial treatment decisions.

While Accumol needs extra staff for specific projects such as new product development, they cannot financially maintain a full-time research staff. In addition to an already-tight operating budget, Accumol's sales decreased during Covid. They have been reluctant to increase expenses until their financial situation improves; yet, they still needed extra hands to help advance their product.

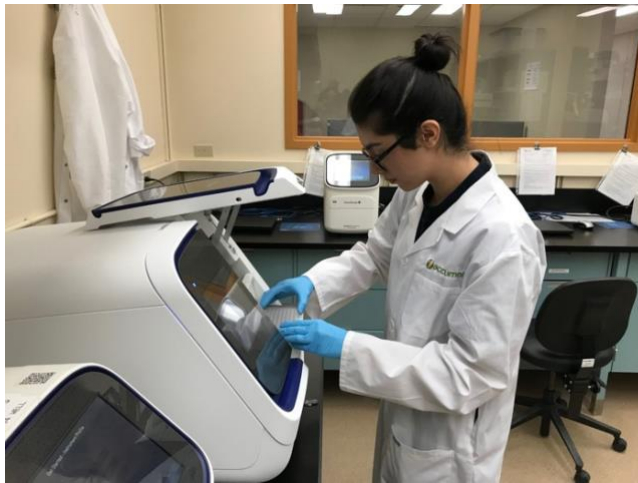
Izza Usman Bajwa, a Biological Sciences student at the University of Calgary, was hired with the help of WIL funding. A previous internship piqued her interest in diagnostic chemistry, leading her to apply for a laboratory technician position at Accumol. Izza jumped right into her work at the lab, working on a new product for Accumol's molecular biology reagent line aimed at recognizing distinct cell types that would be utilized by diagnostic laboratories all around the world to help them make better health decisions. She assisted in developing the product chemistry and led inventory management, order packaging, DNA isolation, and product marketing.



Izza Usman Bajwa at the Accumol laboratory

Accumol Founder Dr. Samuel Sigaud expressed the importance of hiring students, noting that “students offer a unique perspective.” They contribute to making Accumol’s products and technical documentation more user-friendly.

While hiring students allows a company to temporarily increase their workforce at a lower cost, Dr. Sigaud acknowledges students often lack lab experience – onboarding them takes time and resources and is a unique investment of its own. In Izza’s case, she already had extensive experience with molecular biology from a previous internship. In addition, she came to Accumol eager to learn what she did not already know. As a result, she was able to run experiments unsupervised in a very short time. This considerably increased the speed at which the research project progressed.



Izza Usman Bajwa at the Accumol laboratory

In her own words, Izza tells us about her internship: “My internship with Accumol Inc. was tremendously beneficial, as it provided me with new skills and knowledge that I am confident will be useful in the future. After returning to school and graduating at the end of the year, I aim to put these skills to use by applying to biotechnology and life science companies across Canada. I am convinced that my skillset and experience over the last few months will make me a competitive candidate and help me acquire a terrific position with one of these companies beginning next year.”

There are only a few hundred laboratories performing chimerism analysis worldwide. Accumol products are already used in more than 10% of these laboratories in several major markets, including leading hospitals in the US and in Europe. Their goal is to become the new standard for their application, with most laboratories using their products by 2030.

Discover Accumol’s product line at: <https://www.accumol.com/products.html>.

