

STEM BUILD @ UMBC Frequently Asked Questions

BUILD Training Program

1. What is the BUILD Training Program (BTP)?

- The BUILD Training Program is one of several components of the NIH-funded STEM BUILD at UMBC Initiative. The BTP is an undergraduate success initiative and research study investigating ways to enhance the diversity and success of students who have the goal of pursuing baccalaureate degrees in STEM fields. Specifically, the BTP is a comprehensive program of financial and programmatic support for select students pursuing STEM degrees and planning careers in biomedical research.

2. Who is eligible to apply for the BTP?

- Invited students who are pursuing targeted degrees in STEM, and who are specifically interested in careers in the **biomedical research field**, are encouraged to apply to the BUILD Training Program.

3. What benefits does the BTP provide to students?

- In addition to financial support (please see “Financial Aid Questions” section for support details) the BUILD Training Program provides programmatic support with requirements that include extensive advising, special programming, career exploration, a series of group research opportunities, and academic support.

4. What are the BTP targeted majors that qualify students to be eligible for the BTP?

- BTP Trainees must declare and maintain majors in Biochemistry, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Chemical/Biochemical Engineering, Mathematics and Statistics, Mechanical Engineering, Molecular Biology, Psychology B.S.

5. Do students who are interested in pursuing a medical/health profession (i.e. M.D., Dentistry, P.A. etc.) qualify for the BTP?

- Students who are interested in pursuing a medical/health profession are not disqualified from applying or being accepted into the BTP. However, it is important to understand that BTP was funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to help students to successfully complete targeted STEM degrees and enter the **biomedical research field**.

6. What is required of a student who is accepted into the BTP?

- Expectations of students in the BTP include but are not limited to: documented status as a U.S. Citizen or Permanent Resident, maintaining a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0, maintaining full-time enrollment at UMBC (a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester), living in UMBC campus housing as assigned, engaging in ongoing advising and mentoring with BTP staff members, participation in special BTP coursework, practicums and/or badging opportunities, and required attendance at programmatic activities. BTP Trainees are also required to participate in six-week

(online & on-campus) summer bridges with residency on campus. Please note that the program requirements are subject to change on a yearly basis.

7. If a student is accepted into the BTP do they have to live on campus?

- Yes, if a student is accepted into the BTP they must live in assigned UMBC campus housing for the entirety of their participation in the BUILD Training Program. BTP Trainees are required to live in the STEM Living and Learning Community for the entirety of their first year at UMBC, and also may request to live in the STEM LLC in subsequent years. After the first year of residence in the STEM LLC, BTP Trainees may opt to live in other approved UMBC campus housing.

8. Can students who are invited to join the BTP also join another scholars program at UMBC (i.e. the Meyerhoff Scholars Program, Center for Women in Technology Scholars Program, etc.)

- No, students who are being considered for other scholars programs at UMBC may apply to BTP but they are no longer eligible for BTP if and when they are offered a scholarship from another UMBC scholars program.

9. How can students apply to the BTP?

- The STEM BUILD at UMBC initiative is open to invited students only. Students invited to apply will be sent a printed letter via US mail and an electronic invitation to apply to participate in the STEM BUILD at UMBC initiative. Invitations to apply are sent in the late winter or early spring before they enter into UMBC.

10. How are students accepted into the BTP?

- Invited students are asked to fill out an online application. The applications are then evaluated to identify eligible candidates who will benefit from BTP support and who agree to participate in the initiative. These candidates are randomly sorted into one of three groups for potential selection to a limited number of openings in each group. It is important to understand that the selection and notification process is influenced by the UMBC housing deadline. The three groups are:

Group 1: BUILD Training Program (BTP)

Group 2: Preferential Admittance to the STEM Living and Learning Community

Group 3: "Control" Group

STEM Living and Learning Community (LLC)

1. What is the STEM LLC?

- The STEM LLC is one of ten UMBC campus housing opportunities and represents the largest LLC at UMBC. The STEM LLC is focused on first-year STEM academic success. The goals of the STEM LLC are to develop intentional connections and relationships among students majoring in STEM, expose students to other STEM majors, encourage peer mentoring, promote career exploration, and provide opportunities to develop leadership skills.

2. Where is the STEM LLC located?

- The STEM LLC is located in Patapsco Hall on UMBC's campus.

3. How can students apply to live in the STEM LLC?

- All entering freshmen with STEM majors are eligible to apply using UMBC's Living and Learning Community application process - visit <http://reslife.umbc.edu/academic-success-living-and-learning/living-learning-communities/stem/> for the application and more information. Students accepted into STEM BUILD at UMBC Groups 1 and 2 have guaranteed placement into the STEM LLC.

4. How are students accepted to live in the STEM LLC?

- Invited students are asked to fill out an online application. The applications are then evaluated to identify eligible candidates who will benefit from BTP support and who agree to participate in the initiative. These candidates are randomly sorted into one of three groups for potential selection to a limited number of openings in each group. It is important to understand that the selection and notification process is influenced by the UMBC housing deadline. The three groups are:

Group 1: BUILD Training Program (BTP)

Group 2: Preferential Admittance to the STEM Living and Learning Community

Group 3: "Control" Group

- Students with confirmed acceptance into STEM BUILD at UMBC Groups 1 and 2 have guaranteed placement into the STEM LLC and will be notified of their STEM LLC acceptance by STEM BUILD staff.
- STEM BUILD at UMBC staff will work with staff from the Office of Residential Life to fill the additional openings in the STEM LLC according to LLC procedures. Notifications of STEM LLC housing assignments will be made by ORL staff following the summer notification schedule for all LLC communities.

5. What benefits does the STEM LLC offer students?

- STEM LLC residents will receive non-monetary support in the form of optional programmatic activities, additional advising, and academic support.

BUILD Control Group

1. What is the BUILD Control Group?

- The STEM BUILD at UMBC initiative is a student success program and research study that uses a randomized control methodology for selection of participants. Students selected into Group 3, the BUILD Control Group, are crucial to the success of the STEM BUILD at UMBC investigation because they help ensure that the overall study is a true exploration into the effectiveness of a variety of student success measures. Randomized control studies help increase the confidence that outcomes obtained are the result of the planned interventions rather than other causes.

2. How can students apply to the BUILD Control Group?

- The STEM BUILD at UMBC initiative is open to invited students only. Students invited to apply will be sent a printed letter via US mail and an electronic invitation to apply to participate in the

STEM BUILD at UMBC initiative. Invitations to apply are sent in the late winter or early spring before they enter into UMBC.

3. How are students assigned to the BUILD Control Group?

- Invited students are asked to fill out an online application. The applications are then evaluated to identify eligible candidates who will benefit from BTP support and who agree to participate in the initiative. These candidates are randomly sorted into one of three groups for potential selection to a limited number of openings in each group. It is important to understand that the selection and notification process is influenced by the UMBC housing deadline. The three groups are:

Group 1: BUILD Training Program (BTP)

Group 2: Preferential Admittance to the STEM Living and Learning Community

Group 3: "Control" Group

4. What benefits does the BUILD Control Group offer students?

- Students assigned to the BUILD Control Group will receive UMBC monetary incentives for participation in evaluation activities. As members of the control group, students will provide a valuable role in the study and will be encouraged to access the many venues of support that are available to all UMBC undergraduates. Students will be asked to complete annual surveys, and to take part in focus groups or interviews about their college experience. Control group members receive a \$50 UMBC incentive at the time the first survey is completed with additional incentives offered for additional evaluation activities.

Financial Aid

1. How much financial support will STEM BUILD at UMBC provide to students?

- If a student is accepted into one of the limited number of openings in Group 1 - the Build Training Program portion (BTP) of STEM BUILD @ UMBC - they will receive 60% tuition remission and mandatory fees on a yearly basis for a portion of their residency at UMBC*.
- Students accepted into the BTP are eligible to receive a 12-month stipend that can be applied toward living expenses, which may include campus housing and required summer activities†.
- Students accepted into the STEM Living and Learning Community or BUILD Control Group will **not** receive any financial support other than small incentives that may be given for completion of evaluation surveys.

*This is a NIH grant funded program, therefore the period of time that a student admitted into the BTP will receive financial support is dependent upon the year that they are admitted into the program. The period of financial support can range from one academic year to four academic years.

†The stipend amount that students admitted into the BTP is subject to change on a yearly basis.

2. If a student who has received financial support in the form of a UMBC merit scholarship and is selected as a BUILD Training Program Trainee, is that student able to receive the merit scholarship support combined with BTP financial support?

- No, UMBC merit awards **cannot** be combined with the financial support awarded to BTP students if they are accepted into the BTP. Awards are not “stackable”.
- If the student is awarded a UMBC merit scholarship upon their admission to UMBC and is also accepted into the BTP, the student may resume their general merit scholarship after the BTP financial support has ended provided that they still meet all the terms and conditions outlined in the merit award agreement, including minimum GPA requirements and it occurs within the original four-year time-frame for merit award support.
- Every effort will be made by the financial aid office to maximize the benefit to the student.