

DIVERSITY

Genentech: Bridging the Gap Between Corporation and Community

by Danielle Miguel



Genentech, a pioneer in the field of biotechnology, is among a new group of firms seeking to dramatically improve medical technology. But perhaps most impressive is the company's success in building strong community ties.

✔ **INSIGHT** | NOTE 25 Nov 2015

Hybrid industries have formed in the midst of the technological boom that has characterized the early years of the new millennium. One of these industries – biotechnology – has given rise to several corporations seeking to dramatically improve medical technology. Modern biotechnology companies have advanced the way in which

healthcare has adapted to the changing needs of society. One company in particular has taken advantage of new medical research to improve their offerings. That company is Genentech.

Genentech, a pioneer in biotechnology, is located in the industrial city of South San Francisco. The company recently merged with the world-renowned healthcare group Swiss Roche. Since the 1970s, Genentech's research of medical tech has resulted in the development of over twenty various medications treating conditions from hepatitis C to kidney cancer. They also have stringently maintained their values of passion, courage, and integrity through an ongoing industry push to redefine the meaning of health care.

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You may think that a typical day at Genentech looks like this: scientists, hard at work, in pristine white coats, restlessly working to produce the next big synthetic drug. However, there is more to the company than just R&D. Genentech approaches biotech through several industry outlets. These include maintaining a strong relationship between corporate and community cultures, linking the company's internal and external values, and exploring the intersections between health and tech. Genentech has also incorporated in its work an emphasis on diversity and inclusion, mentorship, and accessibility as mediums for innovation.

Outside of business affairs, the company readily engages its members and the communities it serves in voicing their opinions on the company's progression. This allows for public participation in creating internal change. Genentech has also developed a series of Diversity Network Associations (DNA) to reach out to underrepresented groups working in biotech, including women, veterans, the LGBTQ community, and racial minorities. They also invest in mentorship programs, particularly Gene Academy, which provides low-income elementary schools with Genentech mentors to encourage STEM education and instill academic passion and interest within underprivileged youth. The company's Access to Care Foundation ensures that Genentech remains accessible to the public. It aids patients who lack health care plans, have high co-payment rates, or have been rejected by their own plans, by providing medicine free of charge to those qualified.

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Programs like these point to why Genentech has received over thirty awards and recognitions, including a ranking in Forbes’ top 100 companies to work for. They have also ranked high on the Corporate Equality Index’s Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality. Genentech deserves to be lauded for their use of their powerful corporate position to advocate and serve their communities, as well as their partnership with said communities to bring innovation, progress, and perspective to their services and products.



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