The Masters Cooperative (Co-Op) Education Program offered through INBT, now in its fourth year, has continued to see growth in student and company participation. Unlike traditional master’s programs that offer a course or research-based curriculum, the Co-Op offers a third choice of working full-time with a company in a field of the students’ choosing for six months. During that time, students receive a salary and earn college credit toward their degree.

The Co-Op provides students the opportunity to apply engineering theories they learn in class to industry work in a professional setting, and to gain skills no textbook can offer. They are matched with a project related to their field and interests, which could include pharmaceuticals, biotech products, specialty materials and chemicals for products, systems engineering, and more.

Since expanding the program last year to include mechanical engineering students, Luke Thorstenson, the INBT Director of Corporate Partnerships, has amassed a vast list of training opportunities for students in the surrounding Baltimore area and along the East Coast. The program continues to offer opportunities to students in the Materials Science and Engineering Department and Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering Department.

This collaboration between the company, school, and the students benefits all involved. The students jump start their career with valuable experience, companies have access to a new pool of applicants and receive assistance on projects, and the school strengthens its bond with their counterparts in industry. INBT hopes to see the Masters Cooperative Education Program continue to grow, recruiting more students and expanding to new fields of research and the list of participating companies.