

The pharmaceutical industry can change rapidly as startups, acquisitions and new challenges keep the industry innovating. Amy Ranta, site quality head at Thermo Fisher Scientific in High Point, North Carolina, has been through several of these transitions in her career, but wanted to keep growing. Consequently, Ranta found her career's next giant leap with [Purdue's Master of Science Biotechnology Innovation & Regulatory Science \(BIRS\)](#) program.

"I felt like I had been in a quality position before, but I didn't grow up in quality and was lacking in knowledge that my other colleagues had already grasped. I didn't have the opportunity to learn quality concepts before because I joined at a more senior level."

During her time with the program, Ranta was living and working in Ohio. She enjoyed the trips to Purdue for the in-class weekends and the opportunities to meet other people paired with online flexibility.

"I feel like I completed the program fairly quickly, but I like to get things done. It was tough to manage my time with my kid, work and home life, which is why I enjoyed the flexibility. If something would have happened in my personal life and I needed to take time off, I know I could have asked for help."

Ranta appreciated that the coursework and lectures incorporated real-life examples that were easy to relate to her job and past experiences.

"One of the benefits I saw was I could directly correlate every school project to some real-life project at work. Because I was able to practice with the school project, it helped me understand the real-life project better and I could build better project plans based on the information and tools from school."

"I think finishing the course work and presenting the student-directed project to leadership was something that helped me develop and get this opportunity that I have now. People knew the work I put in to go to school. It's not easy to go to school while you work and right before the final semester, I changed jobs to a very demanding operations position. That move wasn't easy, but I think the program helped me to get this opportunity."

She reflected that initially, she was nervous to go back to school, but the program helped renew her interest to keep learning, professionally and personally.

"The program increased my desire to learn new things and opened up opportunities to do that through books, audiobooks and other resources. I now take more time to self-reflect and I'm better at asking questions to better understand something."

"Don't be afraid to go back to school even if it's been a while. Don't be afraid to go do it."