STERLING SNAPSHOT

John Halloran

John Halloran is the Manufacturing Supervisor at Sterling's Germantown site, where he began his career before the facility was acquired by Sterling. Below, John speaks about his decision to pursue a career in the pharmaceutical industry and the site's GMP manufacturing capabilities.

Can you briefly describe your background and current role at Sterling?

After graduating from Marquette University bachelor's degree in chemistry and a minor in biology, I joined Alcami as a Night Shift Operator in the manufacturing department. My initial interest in the pharmaceutical industry stemmed from the diversity of its many challenges and opportunities, as I have always enjoyed problem solving. From adhering to regulatory guidelines, to meeting customer expectations, to navigating process changes and more, I knew that every day could present a new and exciting hurdle to overcome. Manufacturing, in particular, stood out to me because of its hands-on nature.

I continued in my role as Night Shift Operator for around five years, which were formative to my career development. During that time, I had the opportunity to work with a variety of different processes and pieces of equipment, gaining the skills and understanding I needed to ultimately take on a leadership role. I was promoted to Manufacturing Lead shortly before the site was acquired by Sterling in 2020, and then was promoted to Manufacturing Supervisor in 2022.

While my education and experience have given me a strong background in chemistry and manufacturing, the way I was raised has had an equally strong impact on my success. From a young age, my parents instilled in me a strong work ethic and care for others, values that are closely aligned with Sterling's. This has been integral to my ability to successfully lead the manufacturing team and effectively collaborate with others to consistently help customers meet their project objectives.

How do you navigate day-to-day challenges as Manufacturing Supervisor?

In my role, no two days are the same, which is one of the reasons I love what I do. The Germantown site offers a range of highly specialised manufacturing capabilities in support of high potency APIs (HPAPI), controlled substances and more. For example, HPAPI manufacturing necessitates a high level of containment, while controlled substance handling requires constant monitoring and stringent security measures.

Fast Facts

ROLE
Manufacturing Supervisor

JOINED STERLING
June 2016

EDUCATION
B.S. in Chemistry, Marquette University

SPECIALISATION
GMP manufacturing

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On top of that, things can change during manufacture, requiring us to adapt rapidly. For instance, customer priorities may shift, or our process improvement team may recommend steps to improve efficiency and yield. In addition to fostering flexibility in our processes, I am committed to providing our team with the support and guidance needed to navigate unanticipated changes together.

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Can you discuss the importance of collaboration in your role?

It is only through collaboration that we are able to combine our skills and develop best practices. The members of the manufacturing team come from a variety of backgrounds and bring a broad range of expertise to the table. When challenges surface, it is extremely beneficial to bring together our different areas of expertise to arrive at an optimal solution. We are constantly learning from one another and driving each other to be the best that we can. This is another one of my favourite elements of my role, as collaborating with and learning from others has enabled me to further develop my own skills while also helping our team succeed.

While my role does not involve a lot of direct customer interaction, our team is always working to ensure that customers' needs are met. This requires us to maintain a close line of communication with others across the organisation, from the Partnership Managers who are focused on understanding and meeting customers' key objectives, to the quality control team that makes sure we are maintaining high standards of quality and compliance, to the hazard evaluation team that affirms all processes are handled safely. Our entire organisation is focused on maximising our customers' success, and working together is a big part of making that possible.

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How do safety considerations impact your role?

Safety comes first in everything we do, and I take great pride in our department's health and safety record. We bring in new products on a regular basis, some of which involve compounds that we have never worked with before. This is why the hazard evaluation team is so important, as they take great care to understand and mitigate any potential hazards before they reach manufacture.

Our team's health and safety requires everyone to remain vigilant and vocal. If a hazard arises, we must know exactly what actions to take to keep everyone safe. We're also focused on continuous improvement. We often run numerous iterations of the same project, so if a concern arises the first time, the team can take measures to quickly resolve them for future iterations. It is always our goal to not only ensure that our customers' products are manufactured efficiently and effectively, but that our entire team is safe and healthy as well.

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Dudley, Northumberland, UK
+44 (0) 191 250 0471

Cary, North Carolina, US
+1 (919) 678 0702

Germantown, Wisconsin, US
+1 (262) 251 5044

Deeside, Wales, UK
+44 (0) 124 498

Ringaskiddy, Ireland, EU
+353 (21) 486 2000