

## Lab Professional for a Day Contest Guidelines

This contest will allow young students who are interested in medical laboratory sciences to get a hands-on experience in the lab. By having students enter the contest with an essay and using a judging system, you can narrow your winners by entrants that seem highly motivated and have potential to be a future lab professional. See some of the tips below to help you prepare for a successful contest.

### Get Permission

- Speak to your lab manager/director to get permission to hold the contest and have students come into the lab. Find out all the information you will need to allow visitors in the lab.
- Contact your Health Authority for final authorization. You will be using your hospital/lab name in a very public manner so full support of the Health Authority is important. It will also help when looking for support from others (i.e. sponsors or media).
- Recruit the help of your hospital's communications department. These are professionals that deal with promoting and creating awareness within the community. They will be helpful in getting your contest known by sending information to their media contacts. By working together, they can tailor the message you want to the right audience.
- Talk to the School Board(s). Depending on the age group you are targeting, you may need permission from more than one board. They will direct you to the best means of distributing information to the students. That might mean you calling each principal to gain permission.
- Prepare a one page flyer advertising the contest, rules and prizes to distribute to the schools. Once the school (or board) gives you permission, you can deliver your flyers to the schools directly, the staff should distribute to students.

### The Contest

- Entry in the contest is a short essay that could include personal experiences with lab results that made a difference to their life or that of a loved one.
- Set up a panel of 3-4 judges made up of different professions (MLT, MLA, Director, Educator, etc.). Have your judges read each submission and determine their choice for winners. Determine your own judging point system so it's not completely subjective.
- Notify the winners and arrange a date/time for their lab visit. Ensure they have the appropriate paperwork they need to fill out (confidentiality forms etc.) before they come for the visit.

### The Visit

- Contest winners should be able to spend a few hours in the lab, learning about sample collection, testing and procedures. Try to make their experience as interactive as possible, a truly unique opportunity.

- Take pictures! You'll want to share this experience with your Health Authority or even the media. Your guests might also want a memento from the day.

#### The Follow-Up

- Once your contest is over, consider submitting a follow up on the winners and their lab experience to your local newspapers or radio stations. Again, you can use your communication department's resources for this.
- Send a thank you to everyone that helped with the contest including managers, administration etc. Use your winner's stories as proof of its success. This may also help get the contest up and running smoothly again for next year.