

September 1, 2011

Dear Guidance Counselor:

I would like to introduce you to the Indiana State Association of Blood Banks (ISABB), an organization of medical laboratory professionals whose purpose is to:

- 1) Promote and foster the exchange of ideas, materials, and the dissemination of information relating to clinical laboratory services and more specifically, transfusion medicine and its technical methodology through education, publicity, and/or research
- 2) Maintain current awareness and encourage high standards of excellence
- 3) Foster, promote, and encourage state-wide extension of ISABB services and opportunities for continued growth.

We represent individuals from a variety of laboratories, hospitals, and blood centers in Indiana. We have been working recently to increase awareness of the field of laboratory medicine by reaching out to high schools in the state. In a recent survey of 4500 students enrolled in clinical science programs across the nation, 75% were not aware of the profession until after high school. We are trying to impact that statistic by providing a qualified laboratory professional to talk either in a "career day" setting, a targeted class such as biology or specialty classes targeting careers in healthcare, or with a small group of students who express interest in the field.

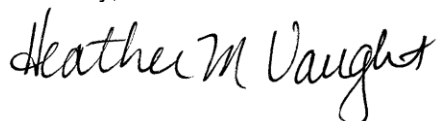
The US Department of Health and Human Services reports that by 2012, 138,000 laboratory professionals will be needed, but fewer than 50,000 will be trained. The American Society for Clinical Pathology reports that blood bank laboratories are experiencing the most severe shortages, with over 10% of staff positions and almost 19% of supervisory positions being vacant. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a job growth rate of 14% through 2018, which is higher than most fields in the country. The median annual wages for Medical Laboratory Scientists in May 2008 was \$53,500, with the middle 50% earning between \$44,560 and \$63,240. The top 10% of wage earners made more than \$74,680. At a time when we are constantly hearing about job losses, reduced salaries, and other indications of difficult economic times, these numbers should encourage your students that Medical Laboratory Science is an excellent field to begin their careers.

Medical Laboratory Scientists are highly skilled and trained individuals who help doctors make life-or-death decisions about patients, therefore this field is not right for everyone. Because many samples and tests require some degree of manual manipulation, the student should enjoy working with their hands. The ideal student should be very detail-oriented, since errors can result in unfortunate outcomes for the patient. Finally, the student should be self-motivated, as some jobs after their formal training may require working with minimal supervision.

If you would like to learn more about Medical Laboratory Science, please visit the website www.isabb.org/hsguidance.php. You will find links to the above references and a method to contact us if you are interested in having one of our professionals visit your school to talk with your students.

Thank you for your time. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Heather Vaught, BS, MLS(ASCP)^{CM}SBB^{CM}
ISABB Communications Committee Chair