Medical Laboratory Professionals Week Promotional Guide

April 22-26, 2019
**BACKGROUND**

Medical Laboratory Professionals Week had its beginnings in 1975 under the auspices of the American Society for Medical Technology, now known as the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS). In subsequent years, other organizations have served as cosponsors and campaign supporters.

The following organizations are co-sponsoring this year:

- American Association of Blood Banks (AABB)
- American Association for Clinical Chemistry (AACC)
- American Association of Pathologists’ Assistants (AAPA)
- American Medical Technologists (AMT)
- American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS)
- American Society for Cytopathology (ASC)
- American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP)
- American Society for Cytotechnology (ASCT)
- American Society for Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics (ASHI)
- American Society for Microbiology (ASM)
- Association for Molecular Pathology (AMP)
- Association of Genetic Technologists (AGT)
- Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL)
- Clinical Laboratory Management Association (CLMA)
- Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI)
- College of American Pathologists (CAP)
- National Society for Histotechnology (NSH)

Currently, there are more than 250,000 practitioners of clinical laboratory science in the United States. Since the development of this career group in the 1920s, the clinical laboratory science professional has played an increasingly vital role in the diagnosis and prevention of disease. Today, the clinical laboratorian is a key member of the health care team.

As team members of one of the largest industries in the United States, the dedicated efforts of laboratory professionals often go unnoticed by the general public, as well as by the very institutions employing their services. With the public demanding the assurance of quality health care and professional accountability, organizations representing practitioners of this critical science have a responsibility to ensure that the public is well informed about clinical laboratory competency.

Beyond meeting the public need, the profession will be well served in its quest for recognition through the celebration of Medical Laboratory Professionals Week, and the individual practitioner’s sense of self-worth will be increased. Further, by working together on such a project, the various professional groups within laboratory practice will reinforce the sense of unity and purpose necessary to further the goals of all laboratorians. Each laboratory organization sponsoring MLPW assigns a staff coordinator who is in charge of assisting their members in promoting the week.

### MLPW OBJECTIVES

- **To recognize the vital contributions made by those professionals engaged in clinical laboratory science to health care in the United States.**
- **To recognize the professional dedication of the practitioners of clinical laboratory science to the health care consumer.**
- **To educate the public, government and private sectors about the key role played by the clinical laboratory professional to the health care consumer.**
- **To enhance the image of clinical laboratory professionals in the public and private sectors.**
Medical Laboratory Professionals, American Medical Technologists (AMT) and all the co-sponsors will be celebrating Medical Laboratory Professionals Week (MLPW) April 22-26, 2019.

Please join AMT in promoting this important event that recognizes medical laboratory’s vital role, contributions and efforts in health care and help us begin raising awareness of the profession today.

If you are planning to recognize this event, you’ll need to start early! This promotion kit will serve as your step-by-step guide that will help make your celebration a success.

It includes:

- Suggested timelines and tasks
- Event ideas
- Template documents, such as press releases and proclamations, all of which are ready for your use
- Logo items for purchase
- Fun, interactive games and contests

Please join AMT and Medical Laboratory Professionals across the country in celebrating Medical Laboratory Professionals Week. If you have any questions or special requests, please contact AMT at: ccasey@americanmedtech.org.

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Website: www.americanmedtech.org
CHECKLIST

☐ Choose a coordinator/chair for the Medical Laboratory Professionals Week. Provide direction as well as inform the chair of resources available from the AMT website (www.americanmedtech.org)

☐ Coordinator/chair selects a committee of two-three people.

COMMITTEE TO DO LIST

☐ Gather information
   ❖ What clinical laboratory science issues need to be addressed?
   ❖ Who is your audience?

☐ Decide how many and what kind of events/activities to plan. Promotion ideas/suggestions are included in this packet.

☐ Develop a budget.

☐ Develop a timeline.

☐ Make a list of all those who might be interested in hearing about your celebration, including individuals or groups within your own work setting, community leaders, local media, governor/mayor, local employers, and other healthcare providers, such as hospital public relations directors.

☐ Schedule an open house with your hospital administrations office.

☐ Send out letters to the governor/mayor requesting a proclamation (template included with this guide) for the week.

☐ Send out a press release to the media (template included with this guide) announcing your activities. Make sure to include a contact name and number.

☐ Send information to the “Calendar of Events” sections of your local newspapers and other community venues (e.g., the library).

☐ Develop and send out notices/brochures to all others on your list. The material should include a list of activities planned and a contact person’s name and number.

☐ Promotional items are available from AMT’s website, www.americanmedtech.org, or at https://www.jimcolemanstore.com/amtweek/ or by calling 847/963-8100.

☐ Take pictures at events to mark the week and help with promotion the following year.

☐ Let AMT know how you celebrated the event (ccasey@americanmedtech.org). Include pictures and we’ll post them on Facebook and our website. AMT will sponsor contests...so visit the website often for updates.

☐ Send thank you letters or notes to people who helped with the events/activities.
RECOMMENDED TIMELINE

January
- Choose a contact person/chair for the Medical Laboratory Professionals Week
- Form a committee of two to three people
- Meet to begin planning for MLPW. Review the promotional kit. Assign someone to contact the schools and other healthcare providers in the area before the next meeting to see what they are doing for MLPW.
- Meet again to continue planning. Develop a budget and assign tasks, such as:
  1. Developing the promotional notices/brochures
  2. Contacting the media
  3. Sending out letters to the governor and mayor requesting a proclamation for the week
  4. Sending out promotional notices/brochures to local community newspapers and venues
  5. Ordering promotion items
  6. Planning an open house and other activities and events
  7. Picture taking at the events
  8. Writing the wrap-up and thank you notes

February
- Review plans for an open house, activities and events
- Develop promotional notices/brochures
- Finalize the mailing list
- Send out a proclamation request to the mayor/governor, press release, and listings to the local newspapers and other community venues for inclusion in “Calendar of Events” sections
- Order promotional items (allow three-five weeks production time)

March
- Mail notices of events/activities
- Make sure that all daily newspapers are contacted no later than the last week in March
- Review all details and finalize any last-minute promotion or event details

April
- Make sure all promotional items have arrived
- Confirm all open house, activities and event details to ensure volunteers know what to do
- Get everyone excited about the week

Week of MLPW
- Ensure everyone is doing their designated duties
- Communicate often during the week, get everyone involved, and most of all, have fun!

May
- Meet to recap the week. Obtain feedback from volunteers on the events/activities.
- Do a write-up on what went well, what you would do again, and what didn’t work. Also, make sure you put down suggestions from others on activities/events for next year.
- Send thank you notes to all volunteers and any donations or in-kind gifts you received.
- Send AMT the same report along with any pictures for publication.
**Promotional Ideas Medical Laboratory Professionals Week**

- Post information on Medical Laboratory Professionals Week on your facility’s website or provide information for your internal newsletter.
- Place banners, posters, etc. within your workplace/school in high-traffic areas to help celebrate the week.
- Order promotional items and have everyone wear them during the week.
- Develop a short quiz, crossword puzzle or other game about medical laboratory professionals and award prizes to the winners.
- An effective way to promote the laboratory’s role in the delivery of health care services is to open the hospital laboratory to visitors. An open house may be arranged through the hospital’s administrator or public relations department.
- Celebrate with your colleagues, your organization or others in the community by sponsoring a food-related function (picnic, potluck dinner, hot dog stand, ice cream social) or an activity (such as a softball or volleyball game).
- Send out flyers/brochures to the local community and to your health care facility.
- Send out press releases to the media, proclamation requests to the mayor/governor and listings to the local newspapers.
- Take photos of medical laboratory professionals you work with, students or other medical laboratory professionals in your local community to help promote the week or the profession in general.

*If you have other innovative ideas to share, please contact AMT at ccasey@americanmedtech.org.*

*Good luck and let’s have some fun!*
Ideas on hosting an open house

1. Laboratories can open their doors to house staff, ambulatory patients, community leaders, and school groups during lab week.
2. Holding an open house is a relatively simple process. With sufficient pre-planning, the rewards far outweigh any disruption of scheduling.

Planning for this event should include determining open house hours, personnel schedules, tour routes and schedules, publicity, information and perhaps refreshments.

3. An open house allows other health professionals in the institution to gain a better understanding of the complexities of laboratory science. The increased respect that can be gained should improve working relationships among hospital departments. Group tours for pre-college students may generate an interest in health care careers while serving an educational purpose.

4. Most hospital laboratories are busy places. If possible, set aside an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon during at least one day of the week. The best hours and days should be determined by analyzing peak work periods.

5. A minimum of two knowledgeable laboratory professionals should be recruited as tour guides. The individuals selected should be able to provide information in layman’s terms about the basic laboratory procedures.

6. Consider developing a brief handout or poster which describes the activities of the hospital laboratory.

The information piece but might contain the following information:

- Volume of tests
- Number of personnel
- Types of tests performed
- Educational requirements of personnel
- Laboratory structure and management
- Instrumentation
- Quality control
- Laboratory accreditation
WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

**Newspapers**

1. Send a press release to all local papers no later than the last week of September. If using the press release provided, be sure to include your name and phone number in the space provided for the contact.

2. Be sure to send a press release to hospitals and schools for their newsletters well before the publication deadline.

3. If an editor should follow-up be prepared to provide further information about medical laboratory professionals and their vital role in healthcare.

4. Include a picture (or logo) with the press release whenever possible. Keep in mind the picture most likely will not be returned.

**Television & Radio**

Using television and radio media can be a very effective public relations tool for promoting MLPW.

Personal contact with individual television/radio stations is paramount. Since the project is a promotional week of recognition for a profession, the material which you provide stations is considered “public service.”

All television/radio stations are required to set aside a percentage of their broadcast time for public service programming. This includes recognition of community interest projects, discussions of issues of interest to the public, and recognition of organizations serving the public. Because of this requirement, most television/radio stations are receptive to bona-fide groups sponsoring worthy community projects.

**Hints on Obtaining Public Service Time**

1. Contact the station’s program director or public service director and make an appointment to meet with him/her.

2. Explain that MLPW is being recognized and informing the public about the role of medical laboratory professional will be of interest to the station’s viewers/listeners.

3. Ask if the station will schedule use of the MLPW logo/theme, which recognizes the week.

4. Give the station three to four week’s lead-time if possible.
PROCLAMATIONS

Mayoral or gubernatorial proclamations are interesting promotional items that require little time to obtain in view of the benefits that are realized. Elected public officials generally welcome the opportunity to participate in such events.

Procedures for arranging a proclamation signing ceremony vary among states and cities. A general outline is given in the following paragraphs. If these procedures do not apply in your state or local situation, government staff can be helpful in pointing you in the right direction.

Publicity is very vital as you begin your MLPW activities. It will serve as a great opportunity to tell the media why MLPW is so important and what activities will be happening in your area.

TO ARRANGE A PROCLAMATION SIGNING

1. Obtain the telephone number of the mayor or governor's office. Call as far in advance as possible because elected officials have busy schedules. Be flexible in setting the proclamation signing.

2. When you call the official's office, say that you wish to talk to someone about requesting the mayor or governor sign a proclamation for Medical Laboratory Professionals Week.

3. Introduce yourself and include your name, title, and employer. Please tell the person: “Medical Laboratory Professionals Week will be observed nationally the week of April 22-26, 2019. We would like to ask the (mayor/governor), to sign a proclamation designating that week as the Medical Laboratory Professionals Week in this (city/state). I would like to send a letter explaining the week and provide suggested wording for a proclamation. I called to ask you the proper procedure.” The respondent will then tell you to whom the letter should be sent. Make sure you get the full address and correct spelling of the person’s name. Send a letter to the name given. A sample letter is shown below.

4. Mark a date on your calendar (about two weeks in the future) to follow-up by phone if you have had no response. When the person responds, offer to meet with the person in advance of the signing.

5. Once a date has been set, determine whether newspapers, TV or radio stations will be contacted by their office. If not, invite the media to attend. Prepare press releases and background information on MLPW to be distributed to the media, either in advance of the ceremony or at the actual signing.

6. If the governor or mayor's official photographer will not be present, request that one of your members take pictures. Use the photos in your state society newsletter and send to the AMT national office to post on your state society website.

7. Be prepared to provide the mayor or governor’s press secretary with the necessary information about MLPW.

8. After the ceremony, send a thank-you note to the (mayor/governor), as well as the person who helped arrange the signing. This helps to establish a good relationship for the future.
EXAMPLE OF A PROCLAMATION LETTER

Dear ____________:

Medical Laboratory Professionals Week will be observed nationally on April 22-26, 2019. This week recognizes the contributions of the laboratory personnel whose efforts help give our nation the best possible health care.

I am the Medical Laboratory Professionals Week Coordinator for (state/city/district). I am writing today to request the week of April 22-26, 2019 to be officially recognized in (state/city). I am requesting that (mayor/governor) participate in a ceremony at (his/her) office to sign a proclamation declaring a celebration of the week.

The wording for a suggested proclamation is enclosed. I have also included a schedule close to the actual week during which it would be appropriate to hold the ceremony.

Please let me know if this schedule includes a convenient time for the (mayor/governor). I look forward to hearing from you regarding the approval of the proclamation and a reserved day and time for the signing. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me, as I will be happy to answer any questions you may have. I appreciate your interest. Thank you.

Sincerely,

(Your name)
(Address)
(Telephone number)
SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the health of all Americans depends upon educated minds and trained hands; and

WHEREAS, the practice of modern medicine at the exacting standards we now enjoy would be impossible without the scientific tests performed daily in the medical laboratory; and

WHEREAS, maintenance of these standards and progress toward improvement in the quality of laboratory services depends on the dedicated efforts of professional clinical laboratory science practitioners; and

WHEREAS, through this dedication the medical laboratories of the United States have made a vital contribution to the quality of health care;

NOW THEREFORE, I, (name), Mayor/Governor of the (City, State) of (name), do hereby proclaim the week of April 22-26, 2019 as:

MEDICAL LABORATORY PROFESSIONALS WEEK

and urge all citizens to recognize and support the vital service provided by laboratory practitioners for the benefit of all citizens.

IN WITNESS, WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the (city/state) of (name), to be affixed this (day) of (month), 2019.

(Name of Mayor/Governor)
Medical Laboratory Professionals Week is celebrated
April 22-26, 2019
“LABORATORY PROFESSIONALS GET RESULTS”

YOUR CITY, STATE — The clinical laboratory professional is a key member of today’s health care team. Laboratory professionals have the skills to unlock important medical information that is pivotal to the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disease.

Every day, nurses, physicians, and other medical workers depend on laboratory professionals to perform tests on bodily fluids, interpret the results, and help provide a complete picture of a patient’s health. Using modern biomedical equipment and complicated analysis, laboratorians can detect the presence of cancer, identify infectious viruses and bacteria, and measure glucose, cholesterol, or drug levels in blood. Without this precise and valuable information, medicine would simply become guesswork.

Laboratory professionals often work in hospitals, physician offices, or private clinical laboratories, performing laboratory tests and monitoring the quality of their results. Others are employed by university or industrial research laboratories to seek solutions for medicine’s many unanswered questions. And these professionals are increasingly found outside the traditional laboratory, participating in community health activities, conducting environmental testing, or serving in the Peace Corps.

Medical Laboratory Professionals Week (MLPW) began in 1975 under the auspices of the American Society for Medical Technology (now the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science). Along with American Medical Technologists, numerous organizations participate in the event as co-sponsors and campaign supporters.

In addition to MLPW activities headed by national groups, numerous hospitals and clinical laboratories around the country will hold celebrations to benefit the general public as well as laboratory professionals. These events are designed to recognize laboratories and laboratory professionals, enhance their image, and educate the public, government and private sectors about their role in health care.

Whatever the setting — behind the scenes or out in your community — laboratory professionals are by your side, working as key members of your health care team. From April 22-26, 2019, please join these professionals in celebrating Medical Laboratory Professionals Week and their vital role in promoting and protecting your health.

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About AMT: American Medical Technologists is a nationally recognized nonprofit certification agency and professional membership association representing over 80,000 individuals in allied health professions. Since 1939, AMT has been helping its members meet the challenges of their professions and fostering their professional and personal growth. Besides Medical Assistants and Medical Administrative Specialists, AMT certifies the following: Medical Technologists, Medical Laboratory Technicians, Dental Assistants, Phlebotomy Technicians, Medical Laboratory Assistants, Allied Health Instructors and Laboratory Consultants.