

December 2019

# HEALTHCARE HIGHLIGHTS

The Rural AHEC Student Newsletter



## December's Healthcare Career Focus:

### Laboratory Technologist

Laboratory technologists perform medical and laboratory tests for the diagnoses, treatment, and prevention of disease. Lab Techs may work independently or as part of a team to collect, examine, and analyze samples. They are often also responsible for evaluating and interpreting results, acting as an important part of a patient-centered healthcare team. Laboratory technology requires a bachelor's degree, whereas laboratory technicians have an associate's degree.

### What might I do as a Laboratory Technologist?

Collect blood or tissue samples from patients in such a way as to prevent contamination of samples

Conduct chemical analyses of body fluids, such as blood or saliva, using microscopes or automatic analyzers to detect abnormalities or disease and record findings

Evaluate the results of tests using special mechanical or electrical devices

Collaborate with other professionals to deliver high quality, patient-centered care

Set up, maintain, clean, and test sterility of medical laboratory equipment

Prepare solutions or reagents to be combined with samples, following standard formulas/experimental procedures

Choose a specialty, such as histotechnology, immunology, microbiology, or cytotechnology



### How do I become a Laboratory Technologist?

- Take Biology, Chemistry and Math in High School
- Obtain a bachelor's degree in Medical Laboratory Science or obtain an associate's degree to become a **laboratory technician**
- Approved programs are listed at NAACLS website: <https://www.naacls.org/Find-a-Program.aspx>
- Take and pass a certification exam

**Average Salary:**  
**Laboratory Technologist**  
**\$65,000—70,000**

**Average Salary:**  
**Laboratory Technician**  
**\$50,000—53,000**

## **What is it really like to be a Laboratory Technologist?**

According to *the balance careers* (<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/what-is-a-medical-laboratory-technologist-526029>), employers expect the following from Laboratory Technologists:

- Ability to work both independently and as a member of a team
- Excellent computer skills, including strong keyboarding and Microsoft Office skills
- Ability to self-motivate and prioritize work
- Ability to adjust to off-shift, holiday, on-call, and weekend schedules
- Ability to deal with variable problems and multi-task
- Strong organizational skills



Tag along on a Medical Laboratory Virtual Tour at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGsGA7a5HN0>

Shadow a Medical Laboratory Scientist at Auckland Hospital in Australia as she shows a college student what a day in the life of a laboratory technologist is like: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_5yo31Pjx0c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5yo31Pjx0c)

***“The best laboratories... are well known for their searching, mutual questioning...”***

Bradley P. Fuhrman

***“There is a dire need to create awareness regarding proper and safe use of laboratory equipment... since it not only affects the workers but the people attached to them...”***

Abdul Qadeer Kahn

***“A scientist in his laboratory is not a mere technician; he is also a child confronting natural phenomena that impress him as if they were fairy tales...”***

Marie Curie

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*Please contact us if you have questions about healthcare career opportunities or educational pathways to healthcare careers!*

Western New York Rural Area Health Education Center (R-AHEC) is one of nine centers in the New York State Area Health Education Center (NYS AHEC) organization. Our mission is to improve health and healthcare through education.

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