

## **CAPHLD *LabAspire* Public Health Laboratory Assistant Director Fellowship Program 2020-2021**

The Lab Aspire Public Health Laboratory Assistant Director Fellowship Program, sponsored by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Office of the State Public Health Laboratory Director (OSPHLD), CDPH Laboratory Field Services (LFS) and the California Association of Public Health Laboratory Directors (CAPHLD), trains and prepares qualified professionals to direct local California Public Health Laboratories. The Lab Aspire Assistant Director Fellowship is open to postdoctoral level candidates with Public Health Microbiologist (PHM) certification, and California Public Health Laboratory Managers or Supervisors with four or more years of supervisory experience after PHM certification. Assistant Director fellowships are typically two years, but actual completion time depends on the Fellow's experience, background and successful completion of program requirements.

### **Mission**

The Lab Aspire Assistant Director Fellowship Program is designed to help experienced professionals complete their final requirements to qualify for Public Health Laboratory Director positions in California. The fellowship provides the required supervisory experience for the fellow while providing workforce capacity to the Public Health Laboratory community.

### **Program Specifics**

The Lab Aspire Assistant Director Fellowship provides experience in administrative and technical skills needed to lead a public health laboratory for doctoral candidates, and doctoral education opportunities for experienced managers. Fellows work full-time in local California Public Health Laboratories as Assistant Laboratory Directors. Each Fellow is assigned to a sponsoring Public Health Laboratory or group of laboratories for the duration of the fellowship. Fellows work in sponsoring Public Health Laboratories to gain an understanding of the Public Health Laboratory system and how it relates to communicable disease, prevention, surveillance and control. Training includes regulatory requirements, laboratory budgeting and finance, laboratory administration, safety, quality assurance, technical problem solving, personnel and networking with public health partners. Program training may also include rotations at other health departments, clinical or public health laboratories, and related programs. Sponsoring Public Health Laboratories are responsible for supervising their Fellows training and progress in completing program requirements. Fellowships renew every year. Fellows will be required to take board examinations and meet program benchmarks to continue in the program.

### **Lab Aspire Assistant Director Fellows are trained for a vital leadership role in Public Health**

The California Public Health Laboratory system is comprised of the State Public Health Laboratories and 33 local Public Health Laboratories. Each laboratory requires a qualified Public Health Laboratory Director to assume administrative and technical responsibility of laboratory operations. The Lab Aspire Assistant Director Program provides a fundamental foundation for aspiring Public Health Laboratory Directors and has successfully trained candidates to assume

leadership roles at both the local and state Public Health Laboratory levels. Public Health Laboratory Directors provide public health leadership for labs that are the forefront of laboratory diagnostics.

*“The Lab Aspire Program was instrumental in helping me gain the experience I needed in order to meet the qualifications to become a Public Health Laboratory Director in California. The program offered opportunities to gain additional technical and supervisory experience necessary for board certification, and work with experienced mentors who guided me throughout my learning experience, and beyond.”*

**Zenda Berrada, PhD, D(ABMM), PHLD (ABB)**  
**Chief, MDL, California Department of Public Health**

### **Program Benefits**

Fellows receive annual compensation that may include benefits and an allowance for professional development. Sponsoring laboratories are responsible for supplementing the stipend as necessary for their local jurisdiction. Fellows may be placed as contract employees, or sponsoring laboratories may choose to request grant funding to support existing internal candidates.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

The Lab Aspire Assistant Director Fellowship program is open to US citizens and permanent residents. **Applicants must possess a California Public Health Microbiologist (PHM) certificate and either a Doctoral degree (PhD, DrPH, ScD, MD, DO, or DVM) in a scientific discipline such as biology, microbiology, chemistry or medicine; or a Masters degree in a scientific discipline such as biology, microbiology or chemistry and a combination of 4 or more years of California Public Health Laboratory Manager or Supervisor experience by the program start date.** For those who possess a Masters degree and are accepted into the program, will then simultaneously apply to the DrPH Program at the University of South Florida in order to complete the requirement for a doctoral degree. Fellows will be working in a laboratory environment which may require certain immunizations and respiratory protection. Fellowships renew every year. Fellows will be required to take approved certification boards for Laboratory Directors of High Complexity Testing, such as the American Board of Bioanalysis (ABB) or American Board of Medical Microbiology (ABMM) and meet program benchmarks to continue in the program. CDPH-LFS will assist with the laboratory compliance component by reviewing Fellows’ qualifications for board eligibility.

**For more information about approved certification boards for Laboratory Directors of High Complexity Testing:**  
[https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Legislation/CLIA/Certification\\_Boards\\_Laboratory\\_Directors.html](https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Legislation/CLIA/Certification_Boards_Laboratory_Directors.html)

### **Application Process**

Application forms and instructions are available on the California Association of Public Health Laboratory Directors (CAPHLD) website, [www.CAPHLD.com](http://www.CAPHLD.com) or by request from [CAPHLD.LabAspire@gmail.com](mailto:CAPHLD.LabAspire@gmail.com) and [Hnusrat@sfsu.edu](mailto:Hnusrat@sfsu.edu). Applicants should submit electronic applications and materials to [CAPHLD.LabAspire@gmail.com](mailto:CAPHLD.LabAspire@gmail.com) by the application deadline.

**The application deadline for fellows and sponsoring laboratories for the 2020-2021 program is May 1, 2020.**

Only complete applications will be reviewed. Applications will be reviewed by a panel representing CDPH-OSPHLD, CDPH-LFS and CAPHLD Committee members, which may contact Fellowship candidates and sponsoring laboratories for additional materials and interviews as needed.

#### **Assistant Director Fellowship Applications**

The Assistant Director Fellowship application includes a narrative statement, a letter of recommendation and references, curriculum vitae, copies of licenses and certifications, copies of official transcripts from all degree-granting institutions, and proof of US citizenship or permanent residency. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all materials are received by CAPHLD by the application deadline. Applications that are incomplete or received after the deadline will not be considered.

#### **Sponsoring Laboratory Applications**

The sponsoring laboratory application includes statement of intent, documentation of laboratory certification, training plan, training budget and letter of support from the local health jurisdiction. The application deadline for sponsoring laboratories is also May 1, 2020. Only complete applications will be reviewed.

#### **Questions**

For questions, contact the LabAspire Program Coordinator, Dr. Hamida Nusrat at [Hnusrat@sfsu.edu](mailto:Hnusrat@sfsu.edu) or [CAPHLD.LabAspire@gmail.com](mailto:CAPHLD.LabAspire@gmail.com)