

ABCNEWSLETTER

CURRENT EVENTS AND TRENDS IN BLOOD SERVICES

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2020 #21 June 12, 2020

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Introducing ABC Ignite Rounds: "Nimble Is the New Normal"

With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to challenge the blood community, America's Blood Centers (ABC) is hosting three "Ignite Rounds" with the theme "Nimble Is the New Normal." These virtual events are free to ABC member blood centers and aim to answer the question, "how do we increase blood inventories under the new reality we face?" The first in the series of three brainstorming sessions will take place on June 17th at 4 p.m. EDT.

With these sessions occurring ahead of the Medical Directors (MD) Workshop and Summer Summit, ABC intends for the series to be a way to ignite conversation and spark new ideas for operating in the new reality of COVID-19. We envision the conversations and ideas being the catalyst for change, while serving as a primer aimed at helping our member blood centers navigate these challenging times through the development of content and resources that lead to impactful solutions discussed in further detail during the 2020 MD Workshop and Summer Summit.

The "Ignite Rounds" are open to all blood center employees to ensure a cross-functional lens. Please mark your calendars and plan on joining the conversation. Come prepared to think creatively and share ideas that could potentially help your blood center and the industry pivot to not only survive COVID-19 but to thrive in the new reality. Each of the three planned sessions over the next month will examine a different aspect of the equation:

- expanding collection capacity;
- appropriate blood utilization in a pandemic; and
- increasing donor availability.

<u>Registration</u> for the first event is now open with the details available within MCN 20-060. Dates for future sessions are below with registration details for the latter two future events coming soon.

ABC Ignite Rounds: Expanding Blood Center Collection Capacity

June 17, 2020 | 4:00 pm EDT Click here to register.

ABC Ignite Rounds: Appropriate Blood Utilization in a Pandemic

June 24, 2020 | 4:00 pm EDT

ABC Ignite Rounds: Increasing Donor Availability

July 8, 2020 | 4:00 pm EDT

(Source: MCN 20-060, 6/12/20)

Dates Announced for 2020 Virtual ABC MD Workshop and Summer Summit

After careful consideration, America's Blood Centers (ABC) decided to transition the 2020 ABC Medical Directors (MD) Workshop and Summer Summit to a virtual event. Please mark your calendars as the Summer Summit will be held on July 14th and 16th, while the MD Workshop will take place July 21st-22nd. We believe this ensures the safety of our attendees and staff while continuing to offer opportunities to network and discuss the most pressing issues facing the industry. Reimagined as a virtual experience with two separate events taking place over four days total, ABC envisions this format providing flexibility for attendees' schedules without sacrificing the knowledge sharing and benefits of peer to peer discussions that are a hallmark of in-person meetings. Registration and program details will be released soon. Thank you for your patience during this process, and for your continued support of ABC.

RESEARCH IN BRIEF

Is Convalescent Plasma to Treat COVID-19 Effective? A study published in JAMA "aimed to "evaluate the efficacy" of convalescent plasma (CP) when "added to standard treatment [as] compared with standard treatment alone for patients with severe or life-threatening COVID-19." It included "[p]atients recruited from [seven] medical centers [in China]." The standard treatment consisted of "antiviral medications, antibacterial medications, steroids, human immunoglobulin, Chinese herbal medicines, and other medications." "The primary end point was time to clinical improvement within a 28-day period...Clinical improvement was defined as patient discharge or a reduction of two points on a six-point disease severity scale." The investigators described [s]econdary clinical outcomes as "28-day mortality," "duration of hospitalization," and "conversion of nasopharyngeal swab viral PCR results from positive to negative." "The study included 103 patients with "[There were] 23 patients in the CP group and 22 patients in the control group [who] had severe COVID-19, and 29 patients in [both] the CP group and the control group [respectively, who] had life-threatening COVID-19...The median interval between the onset of symptoms and randomization was 30 days." "The investigators found "no significant difference in the primary outcome of time to clinical improvement within 28 days: 51.9 percent (27/52) in the CP group vs 43.1 percent (22/51) in the control group (P = .26)...There was no significant difference in the secondary outcome of 28-day mortality (15.7 percent in the CP group vs 24.0 percent in the control group; P = .30). Additionally, they discovered "no significant difference in the secondary outcome of time from randomization to discharge (51.0 percent in the CP group vs 36.0 percent in the control group were discharged by day 28(P = .12)...At24, 48, and 72 hours, the rates of negative SARS-CoV-2 viral PCR in the CP group were all significantly higher than that of the control group (P = .003 at 24 hours; P = .001 at 48 hours; P < .001 at 72 hours)." An accompanying editorial notes, "the trial was terminated before it reached its targeted original sample size of 200 patients... Consequently, the study was underpowered and many comparisons between the CP group and the control group were not statistically significant." The editorial also states that CP use "was associated with some clinical improvement in severely ill patients, but not in critically ill patients." It concludes that "the first randomized clinical trial of CP in COVID-19 showed no statistically significant benefit in clinical improvement at 28 days or mortality among all randomized patients, but does provide an important signal of possible benefit in the subgroup of severely ill patients."

Citations: Li, L., Zhang, W., Hu, Y., *et al.* Effect of Convalescent Plasma Therapy on Time to Clinical Improvement in Patients with Severe and Life-threatening COVID-19 A Randomized Clinical Trial. *JAMA*. 2020. 10.1001/jama.2020.10044.

Casadevall, A., Joyner, M.J., Pirofski, L.A. A Randomized Trial of Convalescent Plasma for COVID-19—Potentially Hopeful Signals. *JAMA*. 2020. Doi. 10.1001/jama.2020.10218.

Contributed by Richard Gammon, MD, Medical Director at OneBlood









INSIDE ABC

The programs and services described in the Inside ABC section are available to ABC member blood centers and their staff only, unless otherwise specified.

ADRP Webinar: Strategies to Offset Donor Recruitment Challenges

<u>Register</u> today for the Wednesday, June 24th ADRP webinar entitled "Strategies to Offset Donor Recruitment Challenges." This webinar, sponsored by Terumo, will take place at 1 p.m. EDT and will feature discussions on how Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center uses Terumo's KPI Dashboard "to drive efficiencies in collection of apheresis products. Pete Lux, director of Donor Services at Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center will present with the goals of demonstrating:

- how to use data to drive and improve collections;
- how to mobilize Trima to start a donor program before opening a bricks and mortar donor center; and
- how to use incentives for Donor Services and Donor Recruitment teams.

ADRP subscribers may register for free and non-subscribers can participate for \$25.

(ADRP Announcement, 6/5/20)

Upcoming ABC Webinars – Don't Miss Out!

- **ADRP Webinar: Strategies to Offset Donor Recruitment Challenges** − June 24th from 1 − 2 p.m. (EDT). Register <u>here</u>.
- **ABC SMT Journal Club Webinar** August 10th from 2 3 p.m. (EDT). Additional details coming soon.
- **ABC QA Education Webinar** August 18th from 3 4:30 p.m. (EDT). Additional details coming soon.

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ABC advocates for and advances policies that promote the role of independent blood centers in providing life-saving blood products and recognize the continuous need for a safe and robust blood supply. ABC exists to advocate for laws and regulations recognizing the essential role that independent blood centers play in the healthcare system; promote partnerships, policies and programs that increase awareness about the need for blood donation; and serve as a thought-leader in the advancement of evidence-based medical and scientific solutions related to health and safety.

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WORD IN WASHINGTON

Rep. Kendra Horn (D-O.K.) donated blood last week with America's Blood Center member Oklahoma Blood Institute to do her part ensuring the nation's blood supply while raising awareness of the ongoing need for blood donation. "Our state is critically low on life-saving blood as a result of the pandemic," said Congresswoman Horn according to KFOR News 4. "Donating blood is an easy way [to] show up for our neighbors. As our state continues to reopen, our hospitals and healthcare providers will need more lifesaving blood donations. Thank you to the VA, our veterans, and the Oklahoma Blood Institute for leading the Roll Up Your Sleeves campaign to give back during the COVID-19 crisis. If you're able, please make an appointment to donate



Photo courtesy of KFOR News 4

blood." Oklahoma Blood Institute President and CEO John Armitage, MD added, "[w]e are so grateful to Congresswoman Horn for supporting patients in Oklahoma and for encouraging constituents to do the same. We must ensure a robust blood supply as summer approaches and hospitals perform more surgeries, critical treatments, and procedures. Oklahoma Blood Institute provides lifesaving blood products to VA hospitals and facilities in our state, and we proudly support our veterans and military."

(Source: KFOR News 4, Oklahoma Congresswoman Horn donates blood to help fulfill urgent blood need, 6/5/20) ♦

PEOPLE



Be The Match® has <u>named</u> **Amy Ronneberg, MBA** as its next chief executive officer (CEO). Ms. Ronneberg had been serving as acting CEO following the departure of Randal Mills, PhD in February. Ms. Ronneberg joined the organization in 2013 and previously served as the chief financial officer and chief of staff. "As a cancer survivor, I have personally felt what many other cancer patients and their loved ones encounter every day. My experience, the patients we serve, and our outstanding, dedicated employees are my motivation," said Ms. Ronneberg in a news release. "I am deeply honored to be selected to lead this organization and look for-

ward to further advancing our commitment to providing equal outcomes for all. The recent pandemic has put a spotlight on healthcare inequalities, and we are uniquely positioned to address one glaring disparity that is affecting ethnically diverse patients—that is the ability to find a matching donor. I look forward to leading our team in diversifying the registry and delivering more life-saving treatments to patients of all backgrounds." Board Chair David L. Porter, MD added, "Amy has the perfect blend of business experience, passion, and health care expertise to lead Be The Match®. She likes to say, 'patients first, employees always.' I applaud her commitment to carrying out our mission and putting people first. Ms. Ronneberg received a Master of Business Administration degree from Capella University, Minneapolis, Minn. and a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. In her new role, she will also be responsible for Be The Match BioTherapies®.

(Source: Be The Match® News Release, 6/10/20) •







MEMBER NEWS

America's Blood Centers member **OneBlood** (Orlando, Fla.) <u>announced</u> this week that it has "reached a definitive agreement" with American Red Cross (ARC) to create ARC-One Soultions, LLC. The new regulated software company will be a "joint venture" that aims to bring added flexiblity to the management of each organization's blood supplies through the use of the software platform currently know as Regulated Software Application or "RSA." ARC-One Solutions will leverage the existing software platform and intends to "offer" licenses for use to other blood providers.

"The Red Cross is committed to continuous innovation to ensure efficient and modern management of our blood supply," said Chris Hrouda, president of Red Cross Biomedical Services, in a news release. "This software will allow flexibility to adapt to the needs of our valued donors and hospital partners to ensure lifesaving blood is readily available for patients." OneBlood President and CEO Bud Scholl added, "What makes RSA so unique is that it can be customized to fit the business needs of the blood center." OneBlood "transferred ownership" of RSA to ARC-One Solutions in April as ARC continues preparations to begin using RSA "for manufacturing and distributing its blood products." Both OneBlood and ARC will operate independently "to collect, process and deliver blood products to their respective hospital partners."

(Source: OneBlood News Release, 6/8/20) •

Blood Bank of Hawaii received a \$250,000 contribution from The First Hawaiian Bank Foundation to assist with its "Aloha for Hawaii" campaign. "Through this generous donation, Blood Bank of Hawaii is adapting the way we currently collect and provide blood — improving our transportation and logistics and replacing our aging fleet," Kim-Anh Nguyen, MD, CEO of Blood Bank of Hawaii, said according to *Pacific Business News*. "It will also help us to prepare for future public health needs, to implement innovative initiatives like Covid-19 Convalescent Plasma, new tests and therapies for emerging infections, and transfusion technologies to enable the new medical treatments developed and used in Hawaii's hospitals." First Hawaiian Bank Foundation President Cameron Nekota added, "Blood Bank of Hawaii is a vital community resource, working to ensure that our blood supply is safely replenished during this pandemic. This [campaign] has truly been a way for our community to join together in showing our aloha for Hawaii."

ABC Calendar of Events

ABC offers a variety of meetings, workshops and virtual opportunities for education and networking as well as participation in ABC business. The <u>calendar of events</u> includes annual and summer meetings, board meetings, workshops, and webinars, and details will be updated as confirmed. We look forward to your support and participation!



GLOBAL NEWS

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau hinted that a revised blood donation policy for men who have sex with other men (MSM) could be announced "very soon," according to a report from CTV News. "Our decisions from the very beginning have always been anchored in science and data. From the very start when we took office, we made significant changes to shorten the wait times, but they were still unacceptable," said the Prime Minster Trudeau to CTV News regarding the country's MSM deferral. He added "[t]he policy on MSM blood donations has long been discriminatory, but we know...the safety of our blood supply is something that we have to anchor in science." Currently, Canada has a 3-month deferral period for MSM as several research initiatives are underway to examine "potential changes to donor eligibility rules and alternative screening approaches for blood and plasma donors," according CBC News. The news organization spoke to Catherine Lewis of Canadian Blood Services who stated that, "We recognize that being turned away from donating blood can leave a donor feeling hurt and rejected, especially because blood donation is a purely altruistic gift. And this can be compounded when we're engaging with a group that has experienced longstanding marginalization and stigma related to their sexuality. The research required to generate evidence-based changes to the eligibility criteria for blood donation is ongoing, and we hope to see further changes to the eligibility criteria for men who have sex with men in the upcoming years." This comes as government officials continue to discuss the merits of the deferral.

(Sources: CTV News, <u>Trudeau says blood donation ban policy change coming 'very soon'</u>, 6/12/20; CBC News, <u>NDP renews push to get Trudeau government to end 'homophobic' blood donor policy</u>, 6/5/20)

COMPANY NEWS

Grifols announced on June 11th that it has begun production of its anti-SARS-CoV-2 hyperimmune immunoglobulin therapy. This treatment is derived from the convalescent plasma of recovered COVID-19 patients using their antibodies to combat the disease. Grifols anticipates initial doses of the therapy to be available in July. According to the announcement, they are the first company to "start production" of an anti-SAR-CoV-2 hyperimmune immunoglobulin solution. "[T]he production of this potential anti-COVID-19 passive immune therapy [is] part of a collaboration agreement with U.S. government entities, including the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), among other healthcare agencies. The agreement also encompasses the development of preclinical and clinical trials required to determine treatment efficacy."

(Source: Grifols News Release, 6/11/20)

Hologic, Inc. and Grifols are partnering to expand COVID-19 testing capacity in Spain. The collaboration allows Grifols to sell its Procleix® SARS-CoV-2 assay in Spanish molecular diagnostic testing labs. "As the global demand for testing continues to increase, this collaboration agreement will make the test available to a wider range of laboratories across the country, significantly increasing the capacity of COVID-19 testing in Spain," said Jose Yebra, general manager for Italy, Spain, and Portugal at Hologic, in a news release. "Our combined efforts will enable a faster, more widespread adoption of high volume, high throughput testing." Gregorio Alcantarilla, director Division Diagnostic Iberia at Grifols, added, "[t]esting for the presence of the virus continues to play a significant role in Spain's continuous fight against COVID-19. Our collaboration with Hologic will enable us to support a wider range of laboratories across the country in meeting the demand for these tests over the coming weeks and months."

(Source: Grifols News Release, 6/10/20)

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CALENDAR

Note to subscribers: Submissions for a free listing in this calendar (published weekly) are welcome. Send information to <u>newsletter@americasblood.org</u> or by fax to (202) 899-2621. (For a more detailed announcement in the weekly "Meetings" section of the newsletter, please include program information.)

2020

July 14th & 16th. ABC Summer Summit (Virtual). More details coming soon.

July 21st – 22nd. **ABC Medical Directors Workshop (Virtual).** More details coming soon.

Sept. 9. 10th Annual Symposium Red Cell Genotyping 2020: Visionary Solutions, Bethesda, Md. More details available here.

Sept. 10. **39th Annual Immunohematology and Blood Transfusion Symposium, Bethesda, Md.** More details available here.

Oct. 3-6. **2020 AABB Annual Meeting, Baltimore, Md.** More information available <u>here</u>.

Nov. 22-24. **2020 ADRP Conference, Phoenix, Ariz.** More details available here.

2021

June 25-26. 64th Annual California Blood Bank Society Annual Meeting, Santa Clara, Calif. More details available here.

Sept. 15-17. 4th European Conference on Donor Health and Management, Hamburg, Germany. More details available here.

We Welcome Your Letters

The *ABC Newsletter* welcomes letters from its readers on any blood-related topic that might be of interest to ABC members. Letters should be kept relatively short and to the point, preferably about a topic that has recently been covered in the *ABC Newsletter*. Letters are subject to editing for brevity and good taste and published after editorial review. Please send letters to the Editor at newsletter@americasblood.org or fax them to (202) 899-2621. Please include your correct title and organization as well as your phone number. The deadline for letters is Wednesday to make it into the next newsletter.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Classified advertisements, including notices of positions available and wanted, are published free of charge for a maximum of three weeks per position per calendar year for ABC institutional members. There are charges for non-members: \$139 per placement for *ABC Newsletter* subscribers and \$279 for non-subscribers. A six (6) percent processing fee will be applied to all credit card payments. Notices ordinarily are limited to 150 words. To place an ad, e-mail: newsletter@americasblood.org

POSITIONS

DS Collections Operations Director – Oklahoma Blood Institute (Tulsa, OK). This position will provide leadership and direction over all aspects of the Donor Services collection team for both mobile and fixed site operations. It is responsible for assessing, developing and implementing strategic plans to achieve donor services objectives and goals. Create a friendly competitive environment to motivate staff to achieve high system wide

standings on all key performance metrics (loss rates, errors, 2RBC conversion, Global Blood Fund, etc.). Conduct routine meetings to communicate organizational vision, updates, and changes and recognize outstanding staff performance keeping morale high. Maintain adequate staffing levels. Make frequent visits to both fixed

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POSITIONS (continued from page 7)

and mobile collection sites. Actively participate in internal and external assessments/inspections including corrective action plans and effectiveness checks as needed. Track and monitor inventory and collection goals, which include whole blood, automation rates, and WB conversion data. Analyze data and make adjustments to increase productivity. This includes working closely with recruitment to ensure projections are met. Prepare and manage department annual budgets. Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in management or medical field. Minimum of five years' leadership/management experience, and valid driver's license. Salary: Competitive salary and excellent benefits package. How apply: http://obi.org/careers/.

Account Manager. Blood Assurance is seeking an Account Manager who can develop and service group accounts in the Nashville, TN territory. Primary job responsibilities include calling on current and potential blood drive accounts, coordinating with operations teams to book blood drives that meet blood supply goals and developing relationships with community and organization leaders to support our life-saving mission. Travel within the region will be required. Qualified candidates will have three to five years prior related outside sales experience and possess professional verbal and written communication skills, computer skills, influential communicative skills, and negotiation skills and have ability to multi-task while working independently to consistently meet blood product goals. A bachelor's degree is preferred. Blood Assurance offers a competitive base wage with incentive plan and benefits, including a 401K retirement plan. Qualified candidates, please apply online at www.bloodassurance.org. Blood Assurance is an Equal Opportunity Employer and a Tobacco Free Work Environment.

Director of Quality Assurance. Blood Assurance is seeking a Director of Quality Assurance to work in our downtown Chattanooga facility. The Director monitors the facility's compliance with all applicable standards and regulations and is responsible for the oversight of all activities relating to product quality. Determines appropriate Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) exist for all manufacturing procedures and staff is appropriately qualified, trained, and competent. Evaluates reports of manufacturing errors and accidents, customer complaints, and variations from SOP's. Ensures records provide a complete and accurate history of all work performed. Audits all manufacturing systems to ensure compliance with applicable regulations and to identify opportunities for improvement. Determines new or revised processes are validated and equipment is appropriately qualified and validated. Qualified applicants should possess: Bachelor's degree with major in biological science or related field. Five years of experience in blood banking, biologics manufacturing or regulations and compliance. Extensive knowledge of AABB, FDA, CLIA, OSHA, and state Departments of Health requirements. Knowledge of quality control, SOP development, and auditing skills. Certification by American Society of Quality as a Certified Manager of Quality and Certified Quality Auditor desirable. Qualified candidates are encouraged to submit an online application at www.bloodassurance.org. Blood Assurance is an EOE and Tobacco Free Workplace.

Outside Sales Representative/Event Planner (Fort Smith, AR). Account Consultants must develop new partnerships with targeted decision makers in community organizations, educational & religious institutions and businesses to gain support in meeting the needs for volunteer blood donors. Responsibilities include organizing and promoting blood donation events; assessing, developing and implementing strategic/tactical plans to achieve recruitment objective/goals. She/he is expected to develop a customer-focused culture that will result in successful community partnerships and donation awareness. Identify opportunities for growth within current group base and facilitate a plan to achieve growth percentage for total unit collection within territory. Book recurring blood drives for the following year. Develop and maintain relationships with key accounts. Give presentations in order to promote blood collection. Identify and provide feedback on issues regarding customer needs/requirements, customer issues/concerns and satisfaction, competitor activities/strategies, etc. Interact effectively and professionally with team members and all internal/external contacts. Qualifications: Associate/Bachelor's degree preferred, one to three years sales related experience, public speaking/presentation experience preferred, excellent communication skills, and valid driver's license with access to vehicle. Salary Range: Competitive salary, commission plan, and excellent benefits package including health, dental, vision, and life insurance, 401(k), paid time off, and holiday pay. How to apply: http://arkbi.org/careers/.

Blood Bank Technologist/Serologist I. Innovative Blood Resources is seeking a Blood Bank Technologist /Serologist I in St. Paul, MN! Join our team today and start making a difference in the community and saving lives! Precisely and accurately performs and interprets technical procedures to satisfy referrals and requests. Completes all ancillary duties including reporting of test results, sample processing, reagent preparation, and record keeping. Serves as consultant regarding resolution of patient testing, assists in development of new procedures, and participates in continuing education. Laboratory work includes donor testing, platelet management, proficiency surveys, reagent preparation, and serology. Requirements: Medical Technologist with ASCP certification or bachelor's degree in biological science with

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POSITIONS (continued from page 8)

equivalent experience. Zero – 2 years of relevant technical and service-related experience. Blood banking experience preferred. Schedule: Three 12 hours shifts: Sun, Mon, Tues (3rd Shift -36 hours), Benefit Eligible Position. View full job descriptions on innovativeblood-resources.org/careers/

East Coast Account Manager/Senior Product Specialist (Macopharma USA). Macopharma is a worldwide, leading and innovative Health Care Company specializing in the fields of Transfusion Medicine and Biotherapy. For more than 40 years, Macopharma has achieved continuous growth and success in these fields. In all our activities, we focus on the improvement of human health outcomes. This position is responsible for developing and maintaining relationships that lead to sales of blood bank filters, equipment, and related products. Travel is required three to four nights per week. Must live near a major airport in Eastern United States. Key responsibilities include: Develop and implement strategies to maintain and/or expand sales within an assigned territory; territory and account management to include forecast of product usage. Provides reports on the budget and sales activity for a given period of time. Interfaces with the customer on a regular basis to understand the customer's

overall objectives and requirements. Provides post implementation support to assigned accounts / customers with the assistance of support staff. Serves as a point of escalation for issues or activities that the customer encounters during product utilization and ensures the resolution of customer problems/complaints. Prepares and conducts technical/product presentations and demonstrations. Participates in trade shows by representing the organization and sharing information on products. Required experience: Bachelor's degree from four-year college or university. Minimum five years' experience in the blood banking/medical device or related industry. Minimum three years proven sales success. Please send resumes with salary criteria to: roxane@macopharmausa.com. No phone calls.

Transfusion Lab Supervisor. Join Florida's leading blood bank, OneBlood, as a Lab Supervisor in Northwest Florida (Tallahassee, FL). Bring your leadership, technical expertise, and management experience to support the transfusion testing procedures on patient and/or donor samples. Qualified candidates should possess five+ (5+) years in a clinical laboratory, preferably blood banking environment, including one (1) or more years' experience in supervision and management experience, as well as a valid and current Florida Clinical Laboratory Technologist license in Immunohematology or Blood Banking; Supervisor license strongly preferred. To apply and view a complete Job Description of this position, visit www.oneblood.org/careers. OneBlood, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Vet/Disability. ◆