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Local Laboratory Professional to Lead National Conference on Disaster Preparedness

Laboratory professionals from across the country will learn how to prepare for disaster – be it Midwest floods or the West Coast wildfires – when they participate in an audio conference led by Syracuse’s Gina Potenza, director of Information Systems at Laboratory Alliance of Central New York. The audio conference is scheduled for 2-3:30 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 25.

Potenza will lead the 90-minute audio conference teaching how to create an effective disaster preparedness program that focuses on the business critical functions that must still operate during a disruption of any kind; natural or man-made. Laboratory representatives will be taught how to ensure that such a program is adequately resourced, proven, and tested; kept current and up to date; and improved on a regular basis.

“Preparing to cope with a disaster—or with any event that interrupts the business of a laboratory—is a necessity that should be accepted as a cost of doing business,” explains Potenza. “The question for labs is not if it will face a major crisis event, but will the company’s disaster plan hold when crisis hits. Many organizations do not consider how to best prepare themselves until it’s too late.”

Employing a business continuity plan will reduce impacts to a company’s customers and stakeholders, while making the organization strong, competitive and better able to react to surprise events. It also allows the organization to seize business opportunities that arise, and implement new initiatives. If an organization can recover from a disaster it can more likely handle smaller challenges.

Potenza will cover the following information in her presentation:

- Outline the best ways to ensure a laboratory is prepared to deal with a disaster.
- Present an in-depth overview of the value of a business continuity program to the laboratory, its clients, and stakeholders.
- Detail how to prepare staff for the issues and risks that can arise in any large-scale emergency.
- Teach the strategies needed to get started with the development of a business continuity program.

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Potenza, a Certified Business Continuity Planner, leads the Business Continuity Program for Laboratory Alliance in her role as director of Information Systems. She has been working in the field of information technology and business continuity since 1997 and has her B.S. in Information Management from Syracuse University as well as an M.S. in Telecommunications from the SUNY Institute of Technology in Utica, N.Y. She is an active member of the Albany Chapter Association for Contingency Planners and the Business Continuity Planning Workgroup for Healthcare Organizations (BCPWHO). She has presented on the topic of business continuity to both the ACP, at a national BCP industry conference and for regional Clinical Laboratory Management Association (CLMA) chapters. Potenza joined Laboratory Alliance in November 2003.

The audio conference is sponsored by *WASHINGTON G-2 REPORTS*, an independent news and information service company specializing in topical and analytical newsletters; compliance, business and financial reports and guides; and programming for providers of diagnostic testing and related medical services.

Covering the healthcare industry since 1979, *WASHINGTON G-2 REPORTS* offers reporting and analysis of legislative, regulatory, legal and business affairs directly affecting the operations and finances of its clients in the United States, Puerto Rico, Canada and overseas.

Laboratory Alliance is jointly owned by St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center, Crouse Hospital and Community General Hospital. The company serves the three hospitals and non-hospital clients including long term care facilities and the majority of physician offices in central and upstate New York. It also serves as a reference laboratory for regional hospitals. The company's main laboratory is located in Electronics Business Park in Liverpool, NY. Laboratory Alliance employs over 430 people and performed over eight million tests in 2007.

Potenza, her husband, Frank, and their two sons reside in Radisson.

For more information, contact Anne Marie Anne Marie Mullin, vice president, business development and marketing at Laboratory Alliance at (315) 461-3036 or by e-mail to annemariemullin@lacny.com. For more information about the conference, visit www.g2reports.com/audioconferences/1072.html.

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