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**Life Sciences High School Apprenticeship Training Program Graduates
First Class of Students**

WALTHAM and CAMBRIDGE – The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center and the BioBuilder Educational Foundation held their first-ever graduation ceremony for Life Sciences High School Apprentices at LabCentral in Cambridge today. Twenty-seven students from Boston and Cambridge have successfully completed an eight-week lab-readiness training program as part of the newly established Life Sciences High School Apprenticeship Challenge training program, the pilot year of which was funded by a \$50,000 grant from the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC).

The training, led by BioBuilder and hosted by MIT, has taught students from diverse backgrounds laboratory and professional skills that will prepare them for internship opportunities and eventual careers with local life sciences companies and research institutions. A number of the graduates will be placed in paid summer internships at institutions such as Massachusetts General Hospital and Cambridge-based life sciences companies such as AB Biosciences and Abcam. Intern stipends of up to \$2,880 (based on \$12/per hour for six weeks) will be reimbursed by the MLSC.

MLSC President and CEO Travis McCready said, “To ensure the ongoing strength of our life sciences workforce, we need to engage young people early and help them see the potential for careers in our state’s life sciences industry. We hope that through this rigorous new program, high school students from diverse backgrounds will gain increased scientific curiosity and scientific literacy that places them on the path to become our next generation of life sciences leaders. I congratulate the first-ever class of graduates that we recognized at today’s ceremony, and look forward to seeing the contributions they will make to the Massachusetts life sciences ecosystem.”

The eight-week training program received generous support from Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, which donated \$3,000 worth of lab books, and MIT’s Department of Biological Engineering, which provided lab and classroom space for the students. The Boston Private Industry Council, which facilitates the placement of Boston Public School students in internships

with companies such as Vertex and Genzyme, is assisting in the placement of Life Sciences Apprentices this summer. With the launch of this program, the MLSC is now supporting a pipeline of workforce training that spans from middle school through graduate school.

"The 27 students who participated in this inaugural year of the program were recommended to us by their teachers as students who demonstrated great interest and potential in science," said Natalie Kuldell, Ph.D., president and founder of BioBuilder Educational Foundation. "I found the students to be hard working, smart and creative – and every one of them is more ready for their future now than when they started eight weeks ago. Though the Apprenticeship Program is only one of several programs that BioBuilder is supporting, we view it as our local lynchpin, since it connects students from under-resourced schools in Boston and Cambridge with cutting-edge science, foundational engineering practice, and opportunities for meaningful work and professional advancement."

"My favorite part of the program was when I was working with a team on how to build a liver," said Jefferson Lopez Garcia of Boston, a newly minted graduate of the program. "I learned a lot of biology that I didn't learn in high school, and developed more laboratory skills. I think the most important thing I learned is how to communicate with people that I have never met before and actually make a scientific poster with them."

"I had the joy to be around the apprentices when they presented their impressive research in a poster session that we hosted here at LabCentral on May 9th," said LabCentral president and co-founder Johannes Fruehauf, M.D., PhD. "Their spirit of enthusiasm, curiosity, and wonder is infectious – and exactly why STEM programs like these are so important and effective. They not only help prepare the next generation of scientists, they help energize this one! LabCentral is proud to partner with BioBuilder and the MLSC. On behalf of all of LabCentral's staff and residents: congratulations to the graduates!"

About the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center

The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) is an investment agency that supports life sciences innovation, research, development and commercialization. The MLSC is charged with implementing a 10-year, \$1-billion, state-funded investment initiative. These investments create jobs and support advances that improve health and well-being. The MLSC offers the nation's most comprehensive set of incentives and collaborative programs targeted to the life sciences ecosystem. These programs propel the growth that has made Massachusetts the global leader in life sciences. The MLSC creates new models for collaboration and partners with organizations, both public and private, around the world to promote innovation in the life sciences. For more information visit www.masslifesciences.com.

About BioBuilder

BioBuilder bridges the gap between high school classrooms and university research by connecting the science and engineering done by professionals to the way these subjects are taught in high schools. By presenting authentic research questions in accessible, modular, and teachable form, BioBuilder fulfills its mission to spark interest, engagement and understanding in STEM fields. Conceptualized at MIT in 2007 by Dr. Natalie Kuldell and incorporated as a MA public charity in 2011, BioBuilder currently focuses on the emerging field of synthetic biology and brings investigative curriculum to high school students and teachers. Starting with 27 teachers in its first year, BioBuilder has grown rapidly to now involve more than 500 teachers in 40+ states and more than a dozen foreign countries. For more information visit www.biobuilder.org.

About LabCentral (www.labcentral.org ; twitter @labcentral)

A 28,000 square-foot facility in the heart of the Kendall Square, Cambridge, Mass., a biotech innovation hub, LabCentral is a first-of-its-kind shared laboratory space designed as a launchpad for high-potential life-sciences and biotech startups. It offers fully permitted laboratory and office space for early-stage companies comprising approximately 125 scientists and entrepreneurs. LabCentral provides first-class facility and administrative support, skilled laboratory personnel, a domain-relevant expert speaker series—as well as the other critical services and support that startups need to begin laboratory operations on day one. A private, nonprofit institution, LabCentral was funded in part by a \$5 million grant from the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, with support from its real-estate partner, MIT. Founding sponsors include Triumvirate Environmental and Johnson & Johnson Innovation.

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