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For Immediate Release

October 21, 2011

**APHL and GWU Host Fifth International Institute
for Public Health Laboratory Management in Namibia**

Silver Spring, MD – The Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) and the George Washington University (GWU) School of Public Health and Health Services will hold their fifth International Institute for Public Health Laboratory Management on October 24-November 4, 2011, in Windhoek, Namibia. GWU and APHL will partner with the Polytechnic of Namibia to present the Institute outside of the United States for the first time.

The Institute is designed to build a cadre of senior laboratory professionals who can lead the development of public health laboratory systems in resource-constrained countries. The program offers training, networking and professional development opportunities and also fosters regional and global country collaborations and partnerships between expert institutions and national laboratories in developing countries. Since its inception in 2007, over 100 students from 21 countries have completed the two-week course.

The curriculum follows international health priorities, including surveillance and detection of disease outbreaks; HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis initiatives such as the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR); and public health prevention programs. The laboratory's function in controlling infectious diseases is also considered as part of a national health plan.

“Our public health laboratory management seminar offers training by top notch faculty who share practical skills and tools for strengthening laboratory systems. Participants can readily apply this information upon return to their home countries,” said Ralph Timperi, APHL's senior advisor of laboratory practice and management and the Institute's co-director. “Participants value the opportunity to share country experiences and join in regional networking.”

A strong public health laboratory system is critical to addressing international health challenges; however, efforts to build strong systems have been historically underfunded.

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The Association of Public Health Laboratories is a national non-profit located in Silver Spring, MD, that is dedicated to working with members to strengthen governmental laboratories with a public health mandate. By promoting effective programs and public policy, APHL strives to provide public health laboratories with the resources and infrastructure needed to protect the health of US residents and to prevent and control disease globally.

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