

Industrial prizes

Severn Trent Laboratories' manager wins Agilent's largest promotional prize

Agilent Technologies Inc. announced that Michael Flournoy of Severn Trent Laboratories Inc. (STL) is the grand prize winner of Agilent's Lab Makeover Sweepstakes, winning an Agilent 1200-Series HPLC system paired with a new Agilent 6410 Triple Quadrupole LC/MS system, valued at \$275 000. This unprecedented promotion was designed to celebrate the largest multi-platform launch in the history of Agilent's Life Sciences and Chemical Analysis business: the 1200-Series LC and the 6000-Series LC/MS portfolio. "I've never won anything on this scale, and at first we were skeptical that we had won a

complete LC/MS system with no strings attached," said Flournoy, operations manager at STL's Sacramento, Calif., facility (STL Sacramento). "It took a phone call from Agilent account manager Cameron George for me to realize that we'd actually won the grand prize, as I'd filled out an online application a few months ago and hadn't given it another thought."

The winning lab selected the Agilent 1200 Series Rapid Resolution Liquid Chromatography (RRLC) configuration and the Agilent 6410 Series Triple Quadrupole MS, with plans to use the system to test for traces of explosives, chemical warfare materials,

perchlorate and other specialty analytes. "One of our older LC/MS systems is due to be replaced in six to nine months, so the timing is great," said Karla Buechler, STL Sacramento laboratory manager. "We already have a place for the Agilent system right next to a competitive system, and it will be fun to do an actual side-by-side comparison."

Agilent will be awarding another Triple Quadrupole or QTOF LC/MS system in a similar sweepstakes for Europe in November 2006.

<http://www.agilent.com>

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Corlux depression drug fails late-stage trial

Shares of Corcept Therapeutics plunged 74% to 93 cents after the company announced that its Corlux depression drug failed the first of three late-stage trials. While the data demonstrated that 30.5% of the volunteers taking Corlux responded to the therapy – a relatively good rate compared to existing depression thera-

pies, 28.6% of the people taking a placebo responded as well. The therapy also failed two secondary endpoints in the study for psychotic major depression. "There was an unusually high placebo response rate in this trial," noted Robert L. Roe, M.D., Corcept's president and head of development. "At Day 56, for example, ap-

proximately 80% of the patients in both of the arms of the study were responders as measured by a 50% improvement in BPRS PSS score." Data from the second Phase III trial is due out next month with the third study coming in late this year or early next.

<http://www.ap.org>