

Resource**Work Voices #6****Paweena Lizarraga – Lab Assistant**

It is helpful to view one segment at a time

Context

Paweena Lizarraga came to the USA from Thailand in 2006 and trained at [City College of San Francisco on the Bridge to Biotech program](#) where she received her laboratory certification. She explains that this one year course offers the necessary mathematics and science to prepare her for a career as a technician and lab assistant, and stresses that it is not necessary to have a science background for the course. It does help however to love science and scientific questioning, as clearly she does.

Paweena works now as a lab aid at The Gladstone Institute's new research facility located at the [UCSF campus in Mission Bay](#). She loves her work in stem cell research, and talks really positively about job opportunities in the biotech field in companies, government jobs or working for research institutes in academic institutions.

Preview activities/Introductory questions

Warm up questions

Where is Thailand?

What is biotechnology?

Are you interested in science?

What type of science? Technology? Engineering?

Vocabulary

Cells, microscope, cardiovascular, biotechnology, laboratory, research, résumé, assistant, lectures.

Focus questions

- What kind of education did Paweena start with?
- Did she have a background in science? Is it necessary?
- What training did she receive?
- What is her job title?
- What tools does she use for her job?
- With the biotechnology certificate, what job opportunities are there? Where are they?

Discuss responses.

Post viewing

Research

a Training courses

- Research the [City College of San Francisco on the Bridge to Biotech program](#).
- Find other training programs like this one in the Bay Area.
- Find the information you would need about each program in order to decide to apply for it.

b Job opportunities

- What kind of biotech companies are there in the Bay Area? Give examples.
- Research two companies or organizations and write a paragraph about each one describing what they do.
- Investigate the range of positions.
- Explore the pay rates in different positions.

Summarize findings for a and b in two paragraphs to share with the class

Reflection

- Do you think Paweena likes her job?
- What kind of personal qualities would work well for this job? List the qualities you would need.
- Is this a job you would be interested in?

Write a short reflection paragraph in response to these questions

Contact assignment

Interview someone who works in the health field in a job that interests you. Record the interview if possible.

Post it to your class blog – if you have one.

Further resources

- **Health Education Resources for ESL Educators** www.kqed.org/healtheducation
- [City College of San Francisco on the Bridge to Biotech program](#).
- **Biotech Careers & Training** - regional programs and online resources for exploring biotechnology careers.