

# LAB SWAP EVENT

## A NEW MODEL FOR LAB WASTE REDUCTION

### BACKGROUND AND GOALS

Departments typically collect unneeded items from labs and coordinate transportation to Property Disposition. In some instances, environmentally-minded and frugal researchers seek opportunities to exchange equipment within their networks or take advantage of the [ChEM Reuse program](#).

While these approaches work well for occasional lab needs, a centralized event allows departments to display goods and "shop" for their labs.

#### THE GOALS WERE TO:

- Improve safety by clearing out lab space sustainably
- Help labs acquire free equipment and supplies
- Develop an efficient and engaging approach

### LOGISTICS

Formed a planning team:

LSA Facilities; Chemistry Department; Environment, Health and Safety (EHS); and the Office of Campus Sustainability (OCS).

Key steps included:

- LSA and OCS documented and facilitated transfer of property between labs within Chemistry and to other LSA departments.
- EHS provided technical and logistical support, including ensuring that donated equipment was safe and properly decontaminated.

### THE BIG DAY

Held in the Chemistry Building atrium.

Donated materials included thousands of pieces of glassware, consumable materials like tubes and filters, and lab instruments ranging from a mass spectrometer to centrifuges and hot plates.

**75 LABS SHOPPED**

**\$20,000 VALUE OF MATERIALS REHOMED**

**2,250 POUNDS OF LANDFILL WASTE AVOIDED**

This pilot supports U-M's sustainability goal of reducing waste sent to landfills by 40%.



"We received great feedback from the labs. One principal investigator remarked you could basically start a lab with the amount of equipment that was available for free."

**Jennifer Grover,**  
*Lab Safety Officer*



Researchers peruse gently used lab supplies they could claim for free if needed in their lab.

"With this event alone, we doubled the amount of lab material repurposed or reused on campus. We are looking forward to supporting other units interested in hosting similar events."

**Nicole Berg,**  
*manager of the ChEM Reuse program*



Sample of beakers and other high-value items that were available en masse.

GET INVOLVED: [ocs.umich.edu](https://ocs.umich.edu)

**M** | OFFICE OF CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY