



The Pennsylvania Newsletter

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"Your Professional Organization for over Sixty Years"

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President's Message



Life's Small Pleasures

by Ruth Negley
ASCLS-PA President 2005 - 2006

I recently had one of the most rewarding experiences ever when talking about my profession. A few months ago, my son came home from school with a note requesting volunteers to speak at his elementary school for career day. I don't volunteer much at his school because I'm just not good at coming up with games and activities, nor at baking fancy snacks. And believe me, there is plenty of help with that. You should see what they come up with at his school! So I decided that maybe this would be my opportunity to quell my guilty conscience and help out.

So I sat down to prepare a 15 minute presentation that I would be giving 11 times in a row. Now, to figure out how to bring it down to their level and harder yet, to make it interesting. I've given many career presentations, but never to a group this young. I decided a Power Point (PPT) presentation with lots of images would be best since it is probably not a good idea to bring my bugs into an elementary school. And besides, I didn't want to have to lug a bunch of equipment. So I made up a PPT presentation entirely of photos found on the Web, donned my lab coat and gloves and went to the school.

It went very well, once I learned to adjust the presentation a little for each age level. I had to remember that the first graders had to be told what a parasite was. And the 5th graders got bored quickly if I didn't keep things moving. I showed them photos of human infections and then the microscopic image of the causative microorganism. It seemed to satisfy the

science requirement and also make it relevant to every day life. The first image shown was a photo of a person's feet that were heavily infected with mold, and the next image was a microscopic image of Trichophyton. In just about every class, a hand would be raised and a child would tell the class that their father/mother/brother, etc has that infection. It was a hoot.

We looked at Taenia, sputum smears crowded with gram negative rods, Giardia, patients with small pox, thrush, and many others. They loved to search for the protozoans on the fecal smears, especially when they found out what it was they were really looking at! They learned at least 3 other names for poop that day. And it was fun to try to guess the one and only body specimen that microbiology does not accept....vomit!

Afterwards, I received thank you notes from one of the classes, written in duress I'm sure, but heartfelt none-the-less. Some of the notes said things like....."my favorite part was the athlete's feet", and "microbiology rocks". I guess that is kid-lingo for cool! I knew I must have done okay when my 8 year old told me that he thought mine was best, even better than the karate guy. You have to enjoy life's small pleasures when they come to you. What made me smile the most was something my son came home and said. Apparently the kids found out that I drive a VW Beetle and told him that his mother studies bugs and drives a bug. I never quite thought of that analogy before.

So if you ever get the chance, I urge you to take the opportunity to speak about what you do. It is so rewarding, and gives you a chance to get excited about the profession. It's really easy to make it interesting and fun. If anyone needs help with making up a presentation, give me a call or send me a note. My contact information is on the Web at www.ascls-pa.org, and click on Leadership.

ASCLS-PA Annual Meeting
King of Prussia
Scanticon
May 2-4, 2006
Program Coming Soon

PSCLS Member Profile

By Barbara
Snyderman



Many times I hear people ask “what’s ASCLS membership going to do for me?” Of course, there are a thousand answers to that one, but my favorite is—“You may get a benefit today, and you may get a benefit years from now. It’s all what you put in to it.”

I joined ASCLS (then ASMT) in the third of five years of college. My program directors were active participants at the local level, and our college had no organized activities for students. We were there to learn, the dean would often tell us!

My best friend and I went to a few local chapter education meetings and then decided to scrape together a few dollars to go to the national meeting in Atlanta, GA. I went to party—she was the serious involved one. I still remember the words of my program director: “You don’t see what I do, and I don’t see what you do!” We had a great time—seeing exhibits, going to parties and sightseeing. My classmate went to the student forum meetings while I went to continuing education meetings.

After that meeting, I attended another chapter meeting, where I met the PSMT President, Dezna Sheehan (now deceased). She was so impressed that I had funded my own trip to Atlanta that she asked me to be the next state student representative, and the rest, as they say, is history.

I have attended 27 more consecutive meetings of ASCLS and my state organizations since that first one in Atlanta. I have had the opportunity to serve on committees, as a student forum officer for two years, as a delegate, as President of PSCLS three times, a board member, and in many other capacities.

But what has the organization given me? Well, for starters, I met the manager for the first company I went to work for at a PSCLS meeting. He did a brief interview with me at the meeting and told me to contact him after I graduated. I was hired, and I immediately saw another benefit of membership—networking. I also made a contact in 1980 at a meeting that led to my current position as a technical representative (which I started in 1992).

I always made a point of discussing my ASCLS activity during interviews and letting the manager know how important my activity in the organization was and that I intended it to continue

Education has always been important to me, and the meetings have been a great source for learning. Going through exhibits, I had the chance to learn about new technology and bring that information back to my co-workers. I went to booths that were “outside” my clinical interest, just to keep up-to-date on other laboratory areas. Most times, I used my vacation time and own money to attend—I felt that it was that important to my career. Of course, the sessions and workshops I attended also added to my knowledge base about the laboratory.

As I attend the meetings every year, it’s like going to see family and the opportunity to see another part of the country. Maybe I would have traveled without ASCLS, but maybe not. Many of the people who are dedicated members also attend every year, so each meeting is like a great reunion with some business, continuing education and lots of fun.

I could go on and on, but that would take too many pages of the newsletter. ASCLS and ASCLS-PA have been a big part of my life and a great benefit. If I had to start over again, ASCLS would be at the top of the “to-do” list.

Celebrate National Medical Laboratory Week

By Mary Ann McLane Ph.D, Region II Director

One of our colleagues in this region, Kathy Glover, has come up with a wonderful idea for National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week this year. She wants her staff to adopt a lab staff from the areas affected by the fall hurricanes, to send them a gift box of goodies for that week (gift certificates to national chains, something vendor-sponsored, get lab week items, etc, etc...). I am beginning to get the names of contacts for such facilities, in Mississippi especially. If any of you would like to talk this up in your own facility and adopt one of these groups of lab colleagues, and make NMLPW be a special one, letting them know we're thinking of them, let me know. Many kudos to Kathy who came up with this wonderful idea!

(Contact any one of the editorial staff for information on how to arrange this opportunity to help our colleagues in that area. Adopt a Laboratory today. It will show how much pride we have in them and in our profession. Carolyn Snyder, Editor)

ASCLS/ASCP COLLABORATION



Reported by Mary Ann McLane, Ph.D, Region II

A core group of task force members from ASCLS and ASCP began working together in July. Over the past four months, they have made great progress in discovering overlap of our missions and values. Initial focus areas identified include support of state personnel licensure activities, working to increase recruitment into the profession, and partnering on educational seminars.

Speaking with one voice for both organizations on licensure issues will greatly improve the impact of the message and our chances of success. ASCLS has been active in this arena for many years. ASCP recently adopted a position in support of state licensure for laboratory personnel, and is becoming actively involved. ASCLS Government Affairs Committee members are working with the ASCLS Public Policy Commission to revise the ASCLS state licensure guide bill. This updated model bill will be available to state coalitions that are starting the process of drafting a licensure bill for their states.

Addressing the laboratory workforce shortage is a priority for both organizations. The career recruitment work group has identified several excellent tools that have recently been developed, but have not yet been used on a large scale. The Diagnostic Detectives CD developed in Michigan, Dade Behring's career recruitment video, and the career recruitment toolkit developed by ASCLS were identified as targets for an initial focus. This work group will direct their efforts through the Coordinating Council on the Clinical Laboratory Workforce (CCCLW) to develop strategies to get these tools widely distributed and put to good use.

Quality continuing education for the profession is a shared goal for ASCP and for ASCLS. Both organizations have encouraged their local and state leadership to work together whenever possible to deliver continuing educational seminars. A work group is gathering examples that can be shared of models and formats where collaboration on meetings has successfully been accomplished in many areas of the country.

The alliance that originated as a vision of the task force members must now be translated into actions. Both ASCLS and ASCP are committing resources to achieve their shared goals. Now our members have an opportunity to get involved by working together on many levels. These are exciting times that promise great results. Imagine the possibilities!

Representatives of the Board of Governors of the American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Registry (ASCP-BOR) met with representatives of the Board of Directors of the National Credentialing Agency for Laboratory Personnel (NCA) to discuss the possibility of forming a single certification agency. ASCP-BOR Chair, Pat Ellinger, Vice Chair, Cynthia Johns, and Executive Director, E. Blair Holladay, PhD. hosted NCA President, Kathy Doig PhD and Executive Director, Sheila ODeal at BOR Headquarters in Chicago, December 12, 2005. The representatives signed a Letter of Intent to explore the feasibility and desirability of joining the certification enterprises. Discussion centered around the structure and organizational values of each agency, identifying areas of agreement and differences that will be explored further in future discussions. Continuing discussions are scheduled.

ASCLS-PA ANNUAL MEETING

Plan to Attend

Educational talks are available for many areas of the Laboratory

When: May 2-4, 2006

Where: Scanticon, King of Prussia

Great Lectures

Great Food (All day long)

Vendor Bags with the latest and greatest information for laboratory personnel

Come Hear

Robert Christenson speaking on BNP

Suresh G. Shelat, MD PhD speaking on Thrombotic Thrombocytopenia Purpura

Marybeth Helfrich speaking on Body Fluids

Bryan Cobb PH.D speaking on Amplichip CYP450

Abbott POC speaking on NSTEMI Patients in the Emergency Room



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521 Mackin Drive
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002

Moving? Remember you can update all your membership information online at WWW.ascls.org

Or send your attached label and your corrected address to: ASCLS-PA, 521 Mackin Dr, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002 to insure uninterrupted service

Coming Events

ASCLS-PA Board of Directors' Meeting	January 28, 2006
2006 ASCLS-PA Annual Meeting, King of Prussia	May 2-4, 2006

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