



# The Pennsylvania Newsletter

Official Publication of the Pennsylvania Society for Clinical Laboratory Science  
"Your Professional Organization for over Sixty Years"

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## President's Message

My job as a technical representative for a major diagnostics manufacturer takes me to different hospitals—sometimes several in one day. This time of year always brings the question "what is your company doing for us for lab week?"



It seems that in most institutions, National Medical Laboratory Week has become nothing more than a food fest supported by the vendors, laboratory management, and/or the staff. The one week of the year that is designated as THE week to get the word out to the public about what we do and our importance to diagnosing patients, and we choose to have parties inside the laboratory rather than getting out of the lab to educate the public and our co-workers.

I spent many years working in laboratories and the story was no different in my place of work than others. I usually was head of the "Lab Week Committee" and would organize tours and displays for the hospital. Why do we limit the "open house" to one week in April? I constantly hear that "no one knows what we do in the lab"—so why aren't we inviting nurses or respiratory therapists down to the lab? What a great public relations campaign it would be for the lab to have a "nurses" week or "RT" week during which representatives of those departments would be invited to the lab for a special one-on-one tour. Most of the employees of other departments only know where to drop off a specimen.

What about educating members of other departments, such as housekeeping? Bet they have little idea of what goes on other than generating lots of trash and biohazardous material for them to clean up. Taking a little time showing these folks what we do might actually encourage someone to go to college

part time to pursue a degree in Laboratory Science or certificate in phlebotomy.

Have any of you ever been called a "vampire" when collecting blood? Did you say anything to correct the patient? I would never let an opportunity go when in this situation. I would say "Mr. Patient—I am not a vampire. I am a clinical laboratory scientist. Vampires do not need 5 years of college to collect and process your blood tests". Worked every time!

Please use EVERY DAY to let people know how important your work is—not just during National Medical Laboratory Week. You are all important members of the health care team and deserve the recognition.

by **Barbara Snyderman,**  
**PSCLS President 2004-2005**

**Celebrate National Medical  
Laboratory Week  
April 24-30, 2005**

## Reader Opinion POLL #3

**What does your Laboratory do  
to celebrate National Medical  
Laboratory Week?**

Email your response with "Lab Week" in the subject line to [bsnyderman@comcast.net](mailto:bsnyderman@comcast.net) or mail to:

Barbara Snyderman, President PSCLS  
546 Dowington Court  
Harrisburg, PA 17112

## PSCLS Member Profile

by Sharon Strauss



When I was a student in the School of Medical Technology at The Reading Hospital & Medical Center, I was invited to attend a local meeting of the Lehigh Valley Chapter for Medical Technology. I don't even remember if it was one of their monthly educational meetings or if it was one of their Board of Directors meetings, but I do remember being very impressed by the professionalism and dedication of those active members. Little did I know at that time how that one meeting would determine the path of my career and professional activities many years later.

At that meeting and subsequent ones I attended, many items of business regarding local activities, state activities, and national issues were discussed. Workshops and future meetings were planned. Changes to bylaws were discussed and debated for hours. Being a student, I felt like I was a peon among all of those experienced professionals. I was so in awe of them. It was all very exciting to be a part of those activities. Even though I was timid and did not participate verbally very much, I just soaked in all of the knowledge I could. I never imagined that one day I would hold some of the same offices as those active members.

That year the Lehigh Valley Chapter was involved in planning the state meeting which was being held in the Poconos. My hospital program participated in the yearly Student Bowl which was held in conjunction with the meeting. I was also the chapter student rep to the governance activities. Although I was not involved in the planning of the meeting, it was exciting to see the meeting come together after all of the members' planning. Seeing so many professionals from across the state come together for a few days of educational sessions, governance and fun activities, made me want to be part of this organization even after I graduated.

I think what really got me hooked was when a coworker started talking about attending a national meeting which was being held in Denver. How I wished I could go! Being a student and then a new graduate just starting a job with little vacation, I knew there was no way I would be able to get off to attend one of these meetings. I guess I first looked at it as a way to travel and see the country, so 2 years later when the meeting was in St. Louis, I decided that I would go. I was hooked! I think part of the attraction was being a part of something so much larger than what I experienced in my small world at my job. That was my first meeting in 1980 and I

have not missed a national meeting since. Attending the yearly national meetings allows me to recharge my batteries and to be refreshed by coming in contact with so many dedicated professionals from across the country

I slowly became active on the local level in a number of different ways, on committees, helping set up meetings and workshops, and holding local offices. I saw some of my fellow local members start to attend and get involved in state activities and, of course, they dragged me along. I became involved on the state level in many different capacities including a term as president. After many years, I recently served on the national level as a member of the ASCLS Awards Committee for two terms, the last 2 years as Chair of that committee.

Over the years, I have received much more than I have ever given to our organization. I believe that the organizational abilities, knowledge and confidence I developed through my involvement in committees on the local, state and national levels allowed me to attain the position of Program Director of our School of Clinical Laboratory Science, and then microbiology supervisor in my laboratory. I believe that ASCLS gave me the drive to continually further my technical knowledge throughout my career. Professional contacts that I have made across the country through networking have been invaluable. I often think that if I ever had to move, I would most likely have contacts in my new location. Much of who I am today professionally is due to those mentors who first introduced me to and got me involved in our professional organization. We all have the ability to mentor new professionals coming into the field. Just think of the impact that you can have on someone's career!

## Reader Opinion Poll Results #2

**Would you chose Clinical Laboratory Science as your profession if you had to do it all over again?**

**100% of returned polls agreed that they would indeed select Clinical Laboratory Science if they had to do it all over again.**

## PSCLS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING JANUARY 29, 2005 MOTIONS

The meeting was held at Reading Area Community College.

**Motion 1.** by Sandy Neiman: I move that the agenda be approved as amended. Seconded by Bill Hunt and passed by board/.

**Motion 2.** by Sandy Neiman: I move that the Board of Directors of PSCLS approve that the addendum to the minutes of November 13, 2004 be added to the original minutes. Seconded by Judy Hoover and passed by the board..

**Motion 3.** by Bill Hunt: I move that the PSCLS Board of Directors accept the Treasurer's report covering 9/1/04 to 12/31/04 and the Scholarship & Award report covering 9/1/04 to 12/31/04 and file for audit. Seconded by Sandy Neiman and passed by board.

**Motion 4.** by Ruth Negley: I move that the Board direct the treasurer to reinvest the scholarship fund CD maturing in March for 1 to 2 years. Seconded by Brooke Slick and passed by board..

**Motion 5.** by Brooke Slick: I move to extend the PSCLS awards deadlines to March 1 only for the year 2005. Seconded by Bill Hunt and passed by the board..

**Motion 6.** by Brooke Slick: I move to transfer the remaining amount of the Mercedes Cole Scholarship Fund to the Dolby Scholarship Fund. Seconded by Bill Hunt and passed by the board.

**Motion 7.** by Ruth Negley: I move that \$350 for expenses in the Federal Government line item of the budget be designated for expenses for Judy Hoover and Carolyn Snyder to attend ASCLS Legislation Symposium and for them to give a full report at the next board meeting. Seconded by Sandy Neiman and passed by the board..

**Motion 8.** by Bill Hunt: I move that the PSCLS Board of Directors (including officers, board and all student board representatives) be reimbursed for the PSCLS 2005 Annual Meeting at the rate of one day reimbursement for each board meeting attended during fiscal year 2004-2005 excluding the Spring Board meeting. Seconded by Brooke Slick and passed by the board..

**Motion 9.** by Megan Conklin: I move that the PSCLS Winter Board of Directors Meeting adjourn. Seconded by Bill Hunt and passed by the board..

When the entire minutes of the meeting are approved by the PSCLS Board of Directors at the next Board Meeting, the minutes will be available on the PSCLS Web Site.

### Mercedes Cole Scholarship Award



Left to right is program director Jean Buchenhorst, Winner Rustin Smith and Barbara Snyderman, PSCLS President.

Mercedes Cole was Program Director of the Medical Technology program at Rolling Hill Hospital until her death in 1986 from breast cancer. She was President-elect of PSMT at the time. Mercedes had been general chair of the 1985 50th anniversary meeting of PSMT as well as serving the society in many other areas. PSMT honored her memory by establishing a scholarship in her name, which was supported by members, friends and family members. This was the final award of the scholarship.

 **Join the  
M-G-M Campaign!**

 **Be an ASCLS Star!** 

*Every laboratory professional deserves the opportunities of  
the*

***VOICE-VALUE-VISION***

*of ASCLS membership!*

*That's why we are inviting you to participate in the ASCLS Member-Get-A-Member (M-G-M) Campaign. The goal of the M-G-M Campaign is to increase our membership by asking each of you to share how much ASCLS membership means to you both professionally and personally with at least one laboratory professional. Every member receives the benefits that you enjoy as an ASCLS member-*

- ▶ *CLS Journal*
- ▶ *ASCLS Today*
- ▶ *Members-only discounts on publications*
- ▶ *Savings on conference registrations*
- ▶ *Membership in state and regional organizations*
- ▶ *Current information about legislative/regulatory issues*
- ▶ *An instant network of laboratory professionals*

***So, spread the VOICE-VALUE-VISION of ASCLS  
to your friends and colleagues- They should be in-  
cluded, too!***

## President - Elect's Message

by Ruth Negley



First, I'd like to say what an honor it is for me to serve as President-Elect of this organization. After graduating from the Medical Technology Program that I attended 11 years ago (wow, has it been that long?), I never thought I'd be in this position. I was the quiet person who never talked or participated in anything. You can imagine how I felt when performing my first venipuncture. I was sick! Well, I made it through, and I did eventually get used to speaking in front of people after doing it daily for years.

I joined PSCLS as a student, but let my membership expire shortly after. When I received the renewal form in the mail, I thought to myself, hmmm, what really happens to this money that I give them, and what do they do for me? So I did not renew my membership. At the time, I was working as a bench technologist in a small community hospital. I worked as a bench technologist for the next 7 years and attended graduate school part-time in the evenings. About the same time that I graduated, I was offered a job at Harrisburg Area Community College as Program Director of the MLT Program. In this position, I found that I needed to be informed of what was happening in the profession and to meet new people. Our Program's survival depends on finding clinical sites for the MLT students. So with this in mind, I rejoined PSCLS just four short years ago.

I was a member of PSCLS for about a year when I received a newsletter from them requesting volunteers to serve in leadership. I thought to myself... well, I'm pretty busy, but I'm going to check this out and find out what is involved, so I gave them a call. I was told that a good entry-level position would be to serve on the Board of Directors. I would be expected to attend and participate in 3 to 4 Board meetings a year, and would attend the PSCLS Annual Spring Meeting in April. Well, I thought, I can do that. So I began to attend these meetings. I didn't know what to expect with a Board Meeting, but it sounded like it promised to be tedious. Boy was I wrong. I found that I actually enjoyed them. We are a small group of people with a variety of backgrounds and interests. We make all the decisions and do all of the work for the organization. The day is typically spent tending to business, but also catching up with acquaintances. And of course, always involves food of some kind. Give me some chocolate and I'll be there! And so here I am, three years later, getting ready to serve a term as President.

I'm sharing this with you as a testimony that anyone can join in and be a part. If I can do it, anyone can! I am a strong advocate of the statement that you get what you put into it. I encourage all of you to be involved with PSCLS at some level. If you don't have the time to attend meetings and participate in leadership, at least become a member and attend the Annual Spring Meeting. We welcome new members and new voices. What I got out of this Professional Organization was exactly this: I met many other laboratory professionals state-wide, I have attended countless continuing education sessions, I have met many speakers who present at national meetings, I have kept up with what is going on in our profession, I participate in making decisions for the organization and for the profession, and I have attended the ASCLS national meeting. I have learned a lot, and I have been able to be excited about this profession. I recently heard someone say that they would not recommend this field to anyone. I am going to say to those people: What are YOU doing for this profession? Do you belong to any professional organizations? Do you participate in any continuing education? Do you volunteer to be an advocate of the profession at high school career fairs? Do you take every opportunity possible to educate others about what you do? Are you excited about what you do? If you are not, it is time for you to make a change. And you can do this by joining and participating. I urge you to give one of us a call or email or visit the Web site at [www.ascls-pa.org](http://www.ascls-pa.org) to find out how.

## PSCLS 2005 Annual Meeting

by Carolyn Snyder

**PSCLS, PSSAMT & PABB 2005 Annual Meeting  
May 10-12, 2005  
Harrisburg East Holiday Inn**

Once again PSCLS in conjunction with PSSAMT and PABB is proud to host the 2005 Annual Meeting. This year the meeting is at the Harrisburg East Holiday Inn. Having been an integral part of the 2004 meeting in Valley Forge, I know how much everyone enjoyed the venue at the Scanticon. We are proud to announce that the same type of venue will be available in Harrisburg at the 2005 meeting. All morning and all afternoon breaks have become so famous that they will be a part of this years meeting. The staggered starts and lunches will allow for more availability at times for breaks and lunches. The lunches will be those wonderful buffets with plenty of food for all attendees.

The Vendor Bags have become a trademark of the PSCLS Annual Meeting and once again each attendee will leave with one in hand.

There will be many interesting seminars, Chemistry with David Plaut, Body Fluids with Mary Beth Helfrich, And CSI: Cumberland County, just to name a few. **Remember to save the dates!**



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Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 to in-  
sure uninterrupted service**

## **Coming Events**

**PSCLS Board of Directors' Meeting**

**May 10, 2005**

**2005 PSCLS Annual Meeting, Harrisburg**

**May 10-12, 2005**

**The Pennsylvania Newsletter**

**The official publication of the**

**Pennsylvania Society for Clinical Laboratory Science**

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