Amy Lavelle, Ph.D., is Director of Labs (Molecular Genomics) at Pharmaceutical Product Development (PPD), part of Thermo Fisher Scientific. She received her doctorate in human and molecular genomics from Virginia Commonwealth University, School of Medicine in 2009. She started her contract research career as a molecular scientist at Commonwealth Biotechnologies, Inc., and, after receiving her doctorate, began at PPD in the Immunochemistry Research and Development Department, focusing on large molecule bioanalysis. There, she moved from principal investigator to associate director, managing a team of research scientists supporting ligand binding assay transfer, development and validation of novel biologics, particularly antibody-drug-conjugates, and commercial and novel biomarker GLP-like validations and non-GLP qualifications. Recently, she transitioned to director of the Molecular Genomics Department to focus on development, validation, and analysis of PCR assays for cell and gene therapies and mRNA-based therapies. Lavelle is also part of a cross-functional Cell and Gene Therapy Task Force, focusing on strategy for PPD. Lavelle’s expertise in regulated bioanalysis has resulted in a number of publications and presentations, most notably focused on immunogenicity and cell and gene therapy.

As a member of AAPS, Lavelle has served on the Women in Pharmaceutical Sciences (WIPS) Community (chair, 2021–2022), volunteered on the Career Development Committee (2020–2022) and is a member of numerous communities. She has also volunteered as an Abstract Screener and currently serves as an editor for *Pharmaceutical Research*.

Passionate about supporting women in the sciences, Lavelle is an executive sponsor for her local Women’s Empowerment Business Resource Group (BRG) chapter as well as regional co-lead for Thermo Fisher Scientific’s Women’s Empowerment BRG, covering North and South America.

**Why are you interested in serving AAPS in the capacity of member-at-large and how has your experience prepared you to lead AAPS?**

“Although I am newer in my career and not a well-known name, my role at a contract research organization has allowed me the opportunity to meet and learn from so many in the industry and my time with AAPS has only expanded this network of colleagues. Day to day, I work with my team and our sponsors to strategize, execute, and succeed on their therapeutic programs, striving to achieve our common goal of delivering lifesaving drugs to patients. My experiences with AAPS, whether it be through volunteering, attending conferences, or posting questions to community boards, has furthered my expertise in my field benefiting me, my team, and my sponsors. Sharing these benefits of the AAPS community is a significant opportunity as member-at-large.

“As a member-at-large I will also bring a fresh perspective and outlook to AAPS. In my time with AAPS, I am most proud of highlighting the work that specifically female scientists bring to our organization. AAPS has been a place where I have been able to focus programming on women, students and those looking to positively impact their careers. Personally, it has been a place where I have met leaders in my field, made connections with colleagues I never would have had the chance to meet otherwise, and found a scientific community that is an open and encouraging forum for questions and advice. If elected to be a member-at-large, I can continue to make an impact...
on AAPS. I can introduce others to the advantages I’ve experienced being a member of AAPS. I can continue to make connections, not just for myself, but for others.

“The mission of AAPS is to advance the capacity of pharmaceutical scientists to develop products and therapies that improve global health, which really means we are a community of people looking to make a difference in the world. Feeling supported and recognized is a key element I’ve found AAPS provides to its members, and we, therefore, feel empowered to make that difference. As member-at-large, I would work to make certain this message is heard by all members while ensuring diverse and inclusive programming and promoting new and innovative ideas that embody the core values of AAPS. While my day job has granted me the experience to develop as a leader and collaborator, I see my work at AAPS as my ‘yay’ job that allows me to expand my influence and grow our AAPS team.”