

Proudly serving lab professionals at all stages of their careers

Winter 2020  
Volume IX, Issue 1

American Society for Clinical Laboratory Sciences  
Oregon Constituent Society Newsletter

# The Centrifuge



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On the web:

<http://asclsoregon.org/>

On Facebook:



## WHAT IS A MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNOLOGIST?

Clinical laboratory technologists and clinical laboratory technicians perform tests to analyze blood, urine, body fluids, tissue, and other substances.

Not only do they just perform the tests needed, but they may also be involved in other duties such as validation, quality control projects, inventory, maintenance of laboratory equipment, and documentation revisions just to name a few.

There are many hats that we often fill sometimes, but knowing behind every "sample" is a person just like us, anxiously waiting for their result whether it be a routine or STAT.

There are many types of clinical laboratory technologists such as:

- Blood bank technologists or immunohematology technologists
- Clinical chemistry technologists
- Cytotechnologists
- Immunology technologists
- Microbiology technologists
- Molecular biology technologists

## Solving Today's Medical Mysteries Medical Laboratory Scientists

Thursday, February 27 at 7pm | Tuesday April 7 at 7pm | Wednesday, June 24 at 7pm

To learn more, attend one of their information sessions at:  
27500 SW Parkway Ave., Wilsonville, Oregon 97070

## LET'S TALK TECHNICAL!

Test Utilization by Jennifer Hayes, MLS (ASCP)<sup>CM</sup>  
Laboratory Director, Oregon State Hospital



I am very active in the arena of test utilization, which is how the lab (and providers) can most effectively use a lab test. The goal is to select the right test for the right patient at the right time which will give results that can correctly be interpreted. There is a lot being said in that statement! First, laboratorians need to look at the “right test” piece which can assist in over- and under-utilization. Both overutilization and underutilization can be harmful. Underutilization (not ordering the correct test) leaves patients at risk for a misdiagnosis, delay in diagnosis, inappropriate treatment, and longer length of stay. An area in the lab that often experiences underutilization is coagulation. Overutilization of lab tests is very costly and the results can lead to possible improper interpretation and treatment because they were not the appropriate tests to begin with. Laboratorians can support providers with proper test utilization at the beginning of their request: Order Entry.

### Practices that can assist are:

- Reviewing the available test menu to make ordering the correct test an easier task
- Build evidence-based reflex testing
- Add clinical education messages (pop-ups) to frequently mis-ordered tests
- Review monitored test utilization metrics frequently with ordering providers; this is a valuable moment for engaged experts in their field to share their knowledge
- Prior to making drastic changes in the Order Entry field, seek input from key stakeholders

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*“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” – Henry Ford*

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## SUCCESS STORY #1

Decreased test overutilization (Ex: Vit D down 78%). Providers met with lab staff and discussed what would be acceptable Vit D testing/screening criteria for Oregon State Hospital. Examination Vit D ordering habits revealed a large amount of population based screening orders. If orders are placed for a Vit D and they do not meet the criteria, the provider is notified that the test will not be collected and they are advised to follow up with either the Chief of Medicine or the Chief of Psychiatry for exceptions (we have had no exceptions to date). This went live in 2019 and we have currently reduced Vit D overutilization testing by 78%.

## SUCCESS STORY #2

Increased test ordering in underutilized areas (Ex: built coagulation testing cascade; prior to build, 100% of tests were not completely ordered). Our facility does not often have the need to order coagulation tests or panels. Over the last 2 years, it was noticed that providers were not ordering complete workups for patients with coagulopathies, meaning testing for thrombotic risk/bleeding risk was not complete. Since having patient consent for genetic testing can be tricky in a psychiatric setting, our team (Lab, pharmacy, and medical providers) met and created a testing algorithm for patients that can and cannot give consent for testing (Ex. Factor V Leiden and prothrombin 20210 mutations).

## SUCCESS STORY #3

Created evidence-based testing algorithms, ensuring patients receive appropriate testing at the right time (Ex: PSA Screening Reflexes, decreased inappropriate testing 95%, increased underutilization testing 100% in high risk patients.). A review of PSA Screening ordering habits revealed many providers ordering Free and Total PSA's on low risk patients with the vast majority of Total PSA being within normal range. The reflex test was discussed with the medical staff and met with great approval. By building reflex testing, we reduced Free PSA orders by 95%.

## SUCCESS STORY #4

Created a Diagnostic Management Team Consult (Ex: genetic consults for appropriate orders and understandable results and ID & Sensitivity consults). These DMT consults consist of a variety of specialized experts (laboratory, pharmacy, reference lab specialists, dieticians, infection preventionist, providers...) that meet to discuss the need for a lab test or the interpretation of a lab result. At this point, DMT consults are performed on an as needed basis at Oregon State Hospital, but many other organizations perform DMT meetings routinely to review lab orders that enter their system or lab results that were generated from within their organization.



## ASCLS-OR FIRST MEETUP! WINERY GALORE

ASCLS-OR presents the first ever meetup which was held on October 6, 2019.

This meetup was to gather fellow laboratorians while enjoying the fruits of microbiology done best at Oregon.

These lovely ladies went to three wineries, St. Innocent Winery, Willamette Valley Vineyards, and Ankeny Vineyards.



Left to Right: Laura Sage, Jennifer Hayes, Rachelle Barrett, Laurie Ryther, Tina Miles, Tiffany Mach



## ASCLS-OR SECOND MEETUP! HOPWORKS BREWERY

Because the first ASCLS-OR meetup was so successful, there had to be a second one. ASCLS-OR presents the second meetup which was held on December 7, 2019.

What a way to show the appreciation for our favorite fermentative microbe, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*!

Membership not required! Just look at how many people showed up! A great group of alumni, professors, students, recent graduates from everywhere.

Have an idea of where or what to do for the next meetup? Email us at [ascls.oregon@gmail.com](mailto:ascls.oregon@gmail.com)



## DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL SPOTLIGHT!

Jesse Bower, MLS (ASCP) SBB and Blood Bank Specialist at Samaritan Health

He has worked for Albany General Hospital for 17 years and will be transitioning into managing the blood bank at Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center this next year. Jesse is a graduate from OIT/OHSU MLS program and has worked in Oregon his whole clinical career.

**Katrina:** Hi Jesse,

Thank you so much for being willing to be interviewed. The main scope of the interview is to show the perspective of a rural hospital MLS. I want to get your ideas on how your clinical experience evolved and what challenges are in the future. You're a great local tech and you have a unique perspective that I'd like to highlight in this interview.

**Katrina:** How did you find out about the MLS field?

**Jesse:** I graduated in Zoology from Oregon State. I always pictured myself doing something outdoors or with wildlife. The jobs were few and far between, and paid so little, so when I was finally ready to work I decided to look around. I sort of stumbled into the OIT program after someone suggested I look into the laboratory science field. It was a great fit for me!

**Katrina:** What motivated you to pursue this career?

**Jesse:** One story stands out in my mind. Once when I was overseas, someone needed medical attention. I happened to have a first aid kit, and I was able to help them. It was all very minor, but I remembered feeling a strong sense of reward at being able to help someone, even in a small way. That feeling stuck with me, and made me want to go into a medical profession. The lab and blood bank is a great combination of science and helping people. On a busy day in blood bank, I still get that little feeling of helping others.

**Katrina:** Why did you specialize in blood bank?

**Jesse:** Blood bank did not come easy to me in the OIT program. But I could tell that the immunology really interested me. It seemed like such a direct way to be involved in helping others – blood is pretty darn important! After working as a generalist for a about 5 years, and still being unsure of myself in blood bank but liking it, I decided to get my SBB. It was a tough two years, but it was worth it. Getting that deeper foundation in blood bank helps me to be more confident in blood bank and more sure of things when weird stuff comes up, as it always does.

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**Katrina:** You've been an MLS for 17 years, what are the biggest changes you've seen in the lab? (technology, process, automation, complexity, etc... )

**Jesse:** In blood bank – automation for sure. We got an Echo in 2010, and it really makes things so much safer and easier. Add to that barcode scanners, a good blood bank LIS, barcoded patient armbands, interfaces and improved policies and things really are a lot less stressful in blood bank. I can't imagine being on paper!

**Katrina:** If money wasn't an issue, what instruments/technologies would you bring into your hospital lab?

**Jesse:** I would probably send more samples out for molecular testing for phenotypes in blood bank. They talk about matching units and patients based on doing full phenotypes on both using molecular. That would be amazing...but not realistic at our smaller lab.

**Katrina:** What is the biggest professional challenge you've overcome?

**Jesse:** I would say my fear of blood banking. Some days can be stressful, but I don't fear it like I used to. Once you understand the "rules of the game" it all tends to make sense.

**Katrina:** You're an amazing trainer and you've taught MLS students on rotation for over a decade, myself included. Do you have any advice on teaching, or words of wisdom you'd like to share?

**Jesse:** Thank you! One thing that comes to mind is my own struggles in blood bank early on. I try to put myself in the shoes of a new graduate, and I remember how overwhelming I felt and how intimidating it was. So with that in mind, it helps me frame things in a way that I hope is patient and clear. Also – I try to ask the students lots of questions, even the easy ones. This helps make sure they are tracking, and that they know more than maybe they realize.

**Katrina:** Working as an MLS is stressful, what do you do to relax and recharge?

**Jesse:** I enjoy running and traveling (when I can). I am a foodie and always like to try new foods or restaurants.

**Katrina:** Would you like to be more active in ASCLS? Do you think other techs within your healthcare system would like to be more active?

**Jesse:** I haven't kept up well with ASCLS and what is happening at a national level. I'd like to know more and I think my coworkers would as well.

We thank you Jesse Bower for being an amazing mentor to our future ASCLS professionals!



## PCC MLT GRADUATES

The PCC Department Chair, Dr. Teresa Wolfe, received an ASCP Program Director's grant late this summer. That grant was used to purchase a microscope camera and will help enhance several of the MLT courses (namely hematology, microbiology, and urinalysis). Everyone was eager to be able to use this equipment to help students in their learning.



Credit: Portland Community College taken by MercoLocal

The PCC MLT program admitted 24 students for the first year Fall 2019 academic year. This is the largest class admitted in the past several years. There are currently 18 students in the second year cohort on track to graduate in June 2020,

The PCC MLT program will have their college program review in March 2020 and the department has been hard at work preparing for this upcoming event. Program review is a required assessment piece by PCC administration in preparation for NWCCU accreditation of the college. The event which occurs every 5 years includes presentations by MLT faculty, staff, students, alumni and advisory committee members.

An invitation will be sent out and all are welcome to attend! If you would like to do a presentation on how the PCC MLT program has benefitted your organization or laboratory, please contact the MLT Program Director, Dr. Teresa Wolfe  
**[teresa.wolfe@pcc.edu](mailto:teresa.wolfe@pcc.edu)**



## OIT MT GRADUATES

On Saturday December 14 2019, 42 new Medical Lab Science graduates entered the region's workforce after graduating from a rigorous bachelor's degree program at Oregon Institute of Technology, "Oregon Tech," and Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU). The Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) program has a stunning job placement rate of nearly 100 percent within three to six months of graduation. Many graduates are offered immediate positions from their externship sites. Graduation was held at the Oregon Convention Center. Commencement address was given by beloved retiring Microbiology Instructor **Dustin Brown**. Outstanding Medical Laboratory Science Student chosen by her fellow students and faculty was awarded to **Katrina Holcomb**. Outstanding Scholar award for demonstrated academic excellence chosen by the faculty was awarded to **Doug Molzahn**. Twelve scholarship recipients were celebrated. The staff thanks **Kathy Gordy** for her contribution of the student slide show.



OIT is now accepting applications for class of 2021. Meanwhile, Faculty and staff are busy at work on some exciting new projects that will enhance the learning experience for their students. An

Open Electronic Resource for hematology, an on Campus Simulated Laboratory, student participated study habits research and development of an online MLT to MLS bridge program, to name a few.





## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Rachelle Barrett MLS(ASCP) SBB, Instructor, OIT-OHSU MLS Program



Firstly, I want to thank you our new Centrifuge Editor Fiona Lao for putting together this valuable communication. The second quarter of the 2019-2020 ASCLS term will be filled with celebrations of accomplishments as ASCLS members work on their special projects in promotion of the profession.

In furthering the goal of making connections and networking, the local chapter has organized a series of Meetup events. The first of which took place at Central Oregon Wineries, the second at a family friendly Brewery in Portland, the third upcoming will be a kickoff for lab week. Let us know on Facebook where you want this event to be held.

Regarding the goal of professional development, a list of national conferences have been included in this publication. Please let us know on the Facebook page if you know of others that our members would be interested in. There are many blogs and podcasts of scientific interest. Lets make ourselves a community of learners by sharing your favorite Medical Laboratory related podcasts or blogs on the Facebook page or the Oregon State Connect page.

Our Oregon State Board is busy at work updating our ByLaws and Policies, our Website communication page, and formalizing the applications processes for Betsy Baptist scholarship and new Board Members.

Our National organization is busy at work collecting data on membership and the state chapters. This data will support plan development for where the resources of the organization need to be focused. On the national level if you are interested in advocacy on the legal front, our chapter has an open Government Affairs position. Apply ASAP by contacting any board member with a paragraph about why you are interested in the position.

If you know of anyone doing amazing promotion of the profession in your community. Let us know. They might even qualify for one of the Nationally recognized awards given out at National Conference in June.

Thank you for continuing your membership with ASCLS. We are the science behind the medicine. Now go out there and tell the world that.



## BETSY BAPTIST

In 2012, beloved Laboratory Science professional and teacher, Betsy Baptist, set up a scholarship to assist future laboratory scientists in achieving their career goals. This scholarship, administered by ASCLS-OR will be granted to the student in Oregon who best demonstrates active participation in the professional organization and whose goals include continuing work with the professional organization, preferably in Oregon. Monetary need will not be a factor in the decision.

### Scholarship Eligibility Guidelines:

1. Applicant must be a member of ASCLS-OR
2. Applicant must be admitted to a laboratory science program
3. Applicant must fall into one of the following professional categories:

Category	Description
A	Previously certified professional in the laboratory science field returning to school to advance professional by seeking a degree from one of the Oregon based programs
B	Current student of any full time Laboratory Science Programs located in the state of Oregon
C	Oregon resident working professional enrolled in an online program seeking a degree in Laboratory Science

## ASCLS NATIONAL AWARDS

Each year the Society presents awards to the state, regional, and national level. Regardless of what part of the ASCLS you have contributed, there is an award or scholarship available. Below are the list available to apply due February 15:

- Ascending Professional Leadership Award
- Developing Professional Leadership Award
- Lifetime Achievement Award
- Society Website Award
- Society Publication Award
- Scientific Research Award
- Scientific Assembly Professional Achievement Award
- Theriot Award

For more information on any of these awards and scholarship, visit [ascls.org](http://ascls.org) or contact [awards@ascls.org](mailto:awards@ascls.org)

# Events Calendar: 2020



Event	Date	Location
ASCLS National Awards Nomination	February 15	
NAACLS	February 27-29	Florida
Legislative Symposium	March 16-17	WA, DC
Medical Laboratory Professionals Week	April 19-25	
ASCLS-OR Lab Week Meetup	April 18	TBA
ASCLS-OR Developing Professional Board Application	May 1	
National Meeting	June 28 – July 2	Kentucky

## JOB POSTINGS

**Job: Full Time Microbiology Instructor**

**Location:** Oregon Institute of Technology, Wilsonville OR

Please contact [ryan.brown2@oit.edu](mailto:ryan.brown2@oit.edu) for more information

**Job: Medical Laboratory Technologist**

**Location:** Adventist Portland, Portland OR

**Shifts:** Full Time Variable, Per Diem Variable, Full Time Temp Variable

Please contact [fionalao21@gmail.com](mailto:fionalao21@gmail.com) for more information

**Job: Medical Technologist**

**Location:** Veteran Affairs, Roseburg, OR

**Shift:** Full Time

Please contact [fionalao21@gmail.com](mailto:fionalao21@gmail.com) for more information



If you are interested in becoming more involved in ASCLS-OR, please contact president **Rachelle Barrett** at [ascls.oregon@gmail.com](mailto:ascls.oregon@gmail.com)

If you have an announcement, article or essay you would like to contribute to *The Centrifuge*, please submit it for publication. Please send ideas and submissions to Editor in Chief **Fiona Lao** [ascls.oregon@gmail.com](mailto:ascls.oregon@gmail.com)

The Centrifuge is published three times a year by ASCLS-OR for the Oregon Clinical Laboratory Science community.

**Editor in Chief:**  
**Fiona Lao**

**Associate Editor:**  
**Rachelle Barrett**

**Assistant Editors:**  
**Amanda Stafford & Lauren Kaemingk**

Please welcome our ASCLS-OR Leadership 2019-2020 board and other volunteers. We hope to continue the tradition of representing the profession and providing educational opportunities to Oregon and the Northwest.

If interested, we do have an open leadership position in **Government Affairs**. This is an especially great opportunity for those just graduated or for someone looking to gain involvement.

### ASCLS-OR Leadership, 2019 - 2020

President	Rachelle Barrett
President-Elect	Laura Sage
Past President	Patty DeTurk
Developing Professional (formerly Student Representative)	Katrina Holcomb
Treasurer	Tiffany Mach
Secretary	Maja Chloupkova
Ascending Professional (formerly New Professional)	Mariah Alanis
Bylaws Chair	Maja Chloupkova
P.A.C.E. Chair	Emily Barbur
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Facebook Administrator	Laura Sage
Communications Committee Chair	Laura Sage
Centrifuge Editor in Chief	Fiona Lao
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