



## President's Message

Jerry  
Singleterry

First, I would like to give thanks to Lindsay Hengesbach and the Annual State Meeting planners. The committee did a wonderful job implementing a memorable State Meeting. The location remains a perfect setting for our state society to network and learn from one another. The speakers were well thought out and the number of subjects covered were impressive and specific to the laboratory needs. If you have not had the opportunity to attend a State meeting, please begin plans to attend the annual event in 2020 at the Radisson in Kalamazoo, April 15th – 17th.

Second, I would like to speak about privacy. It is a subject that can stir great emotion, especially if sensitive information about an individual is obtained and used maliciously. Use of private information is a breach of confidence or the breaking of rules. Privacy is closely related to confidentiality. Our code of ethics states **“Medical Laboratory Professionals maintain strict confidentiality of patient information and test results”** (ASCLS, “duty to patient”, para 3). I believe this is true and not the concern I wish to address. The concern is for the temptation to access information not related to our position within the organization. The Electronic

Medical Record (EMR) provides easy access to a plethora of information. In fact, the EMR is becoming easier and easier to use and integrate with our laboratory systems. This ease of use may cause us to forget the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). In the laboratory the patient's EMR is protected under this law. We all have the right to privacy and confidentiality when it comes to our health information. Every organization has a rule regarding access to the information in the EMR.

Let's look at a couple examples. If your family member had blood work drawn a few days ago and they ask you for results, can you open their EMR and view their lab results? No, unless you have expressed written permission logged with the organization from that family member. Accessing their EMR is in direct violation of HIPAA. Here's another scenario, If you were to access your own EMR from a workstation would there be any issues? In this situation, there is a HIPAA violation not because you are accessing your own files, but that you are an employee that is accessing a file that you don't have express permission to. You do have rights to this information, but it should not be from your work station. The best advice is not to do it, play it safe and go through the proper channels.



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# Medical Laboratory Professionals Week 2019

## How Did You Celebrate?



This year's MLPW was April 21 through 27.

If your laboratory had any special events you'd like to share, please send them to the editor's email [pfgu3@aol.com](mailto:pfgu3@aol.com) for inclusion the next edition of ASCLS Newslinks.



**American  
Society for  
Clinical  
Laboratory  
Science  
Michigan**

### ASCLS-Michigan *Newslinks*

A bi-monthly publication of the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science - Michigan. Deadlines for articles are the 20th of Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, & Dec. Articles must have name of author. Anonymous letters will not be published. The editor reserves the right to edit all materials submitted for publication. Articles appearing in *Newslinks* represent the opinion of the author and may not represent the opinion of the society.

**Membership:** Join ASCLS-Michigan by visiting the ASCLS web site:  
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#### Non-Member Subscriptions

(\$10 annually) should be made payable to ASCLS-Michigan and sent to:  
ASCLS MI Treasurer  
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Bath, MI 48808

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ASCLS-MI Districts & Committees: no fee for announcements, ads or any other relevant and necessary forms of information. 10% discount for ASCLS members.

**ASCLS-MI Leadership:** Visit our web site at [www.ascls-michigan.org](http://www.ascls-michigan.org)

for a complete listing and contact information for all ASCLS-MI board members and a wealth of other information on the Society.

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# Clinical Laboratory Science

A focus on what is happening in our profession

Featuring articles from Scientific Assembly Chairs.

Materials from all members are also welcomed. Submit to editor. See page 2 for details.

**What's up with**

**that "tude"?**



## **A foray into managing behaviors versus attitudes.**

**Kristina Martin, Feb 5 Scientific Assembly**

**(Laboratory Administration/QA/QC/Regulatory/Industry/Consultants)**



From a young age we're taught to maintain a positive attitude, get rid of a bad attitude, or change your attitude. We often do not distinguish between an attitude versus a behavior; however the two can have drastically different connotations. I recently attended a leadership course where we explored the differences. During this exploration, I discovered that acknowledging behavior rather than attitudes when dealing with staff can benefit difficult conversations. It also has value in our everyday relationships. The main difference between an attitude and a behavior, is that the former is typically a subjective opinion, whereas the latter is documentable and objective. Generally speaking, behaviors will be specific and have more details, while attitudes are phrased in a more general manner.

Take for instance the statement of telling someone they have a bad attitude. For one it will provoke the recipient to become defensive, secondly it does not indicate what was unacceptable, and lastly the statement does not prescribe what should be done differently in the future to circumvent further negative feedback. I will be the first to admit that calling out the difference and putting it into actual practice can be challenging. In order to be successful with this method you must have self-awareness and be intentional with your conversations or written feedback. That being said, the more you practice the more natural it will become. It is also important to use this method for all staff, not singling out particularly challenging ones. In addition, at some point in our career we all need this level of feedback to grow professionally. We should be open to accepting it graciously and thanking the person who provides us the opportunity to grow.

In the case of work performance expectations, a manager might call out a staff member for not completing the number of safety report entries that is typical of other staff. It would be easy to judge the person and state that they're unable to keep up with the workload, however a more productive conversation with that staff member might help to better understand what is preventing them from being productive. For instance, is that staff member assigned other duties? Perhaps they are more experienced and receive questions from other staff, thus interrupting the data entry. Another option might be that they don't fully understand the best method for

entering the data, and finally there’s always the option that they spend hours at the water cooler chatting it up with other employees. Regardless of the reason, there will never be resolution if the supervisor does not address the specific behavior with that staff member. The issue will persist and can ultimately decrease morale for the other staff who feel like the workload distribution is unfair. The best way to understand this concept is with real examples to compare and contrast. The table below illustrates common examples that could be encountered. See if you can spot the small nuance in the different styles of providing feedback.

Attitude	Behavior
Jack lacks attention to detail.	In the last month Jack has mislabeled three patient specimens.
Andrea is an excellent technologist.	Andrea has passed her annual competency assessments with a score of 100%.
Shirley is rude.	Shirley hung up the phone when talking to Julie while she was still asking a question.
Brian can’t handle the workload.	Brian is expected to process at least 20 safety reports a day and only completes one.
Jill is friendly.	Every day Jill greets staff with a “Good Morning” and smile as they start the work day.
Tom is a troublemaker.	With the recent management change Tom went to various staff members and made statements that were false. Other staff indicated this created a sense of anxiety & mistrust surrounding the change.

Whether you’re addressing an issue with staff in the moment, or you’re in the process of providing a performance evaluation, addressing behavior rather than attitude will be advantageous. It allows the manager to effectively communicate what change they want to see, while simultaneously allowing the staff member to have a tangible example of their behaviors that need to change in order to be a successful employee.

## Addressing the MLS Workforce Shortage: What Grand Valley Is Doing

Jeanne Stoddard, MHS, SM (ASCP)<sup>cm</sup>  
Jenna Koelsch, GVSU MLS student



Laboratory workforce shortage concerns are not new to those affiliated with the laboratory profession. Clinical laboratory professionals and educators alike are aware that the need for Medical Laboratory Scientists is at an all-time high as the number of jobs available exceeds the number of scientists completing programs and becoming nationally certified. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, predictions for medical and clinical laboratory technologist jobs show increases of 14% between 2014 and 2024 ([www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)). This estimate may be low if you take into account the professionals who will be leaving

their jobs, along with additional new positions that will need to be filled. Current reports indicate that laboratory personnel are working harder due to an increase in testing volumes combined with laboratory staff vacancies. Sign on bonuses and other incentives, once unheard of, are becoming commonplace in order for laboratories to be able to entice new employees to fill their many vacant positions.

Factors contributing to the MLS workforce shortage crisis are multifaceted, and originate from aspects related to clinical laboratories and educational insti-



tutions alike. The aging laboratorian staff and subsequent retirements, an older population requiring more testing, the development of more and more sophisticated molecular tests, plus the difficulty in acquisition of clinical placements for educating students and MLS program closures due to the high cost of laboratory training are among a few of the reasons for the workforce shortage. Further, the cycle of working short staffed contributes to employee stress in the clinical setting, which further affects the ability to attract new individuals to the profession. Susan Smith, the senior director of laboratory operations at Spectrum Health Regional Laboratories in Grand Rapids, Michigan has stated that, "Over the last year we have seen 46 requisitions filled for vacancies in the MLS area. The positions were filled internally 17 times and 29 were hired from outside of our organization. Without working closely with our MLS partners at Grand Valley State University we would have had significant challenges in keeping the laboratories operating efficiently and appropriately staffed." Compounding the staffing turnover at Spectrum Health has been a 6% increase in workload in the form of service/testing volumes in their laboratories. This is evidence that the personnel shortage is felt in Michigan where we have the benefit of 13 accredited programs (9-University accredited and 4-Hospital accredited) that graduate new Medical Laboratory Scientists annually, and the situation is even more dire in other less fortunate states where there are few or no accredited MLS programs.

While the shortage is recognized, solutions are not always evident. It is clear that the shortage needs to be addressed now and from multiple directions. Innovative thinking and creative strategies will need to be implemented in both clinical laboratories and MLS educational programs if positive changes in the workforce are to be achieved. At the ASCLS-Michigan meeting in April, Susie Zanto presented on the workforce shortage and in her talk she indicated that everyone should be asking: "What can you do"? Grand Valley State University's MLS program has taken on the challenge to improve the number and quality of MLS professionals it graduates in an effort towards addressing the shortage locally by implementation of the following changes:

- 1) Increased the number of MLS students admitted to the program from 20-24 (20%)
- 2) Increased the number of laboratory clinical placements for our students (20%)
- 3) Participated in additional community outreach education and recruitment events
- 4) Analyzed predictors of success from those admitted to the GVSU program to reduce student attrition



[Click here to view recruitment video noted in article](#)

GVSU has garnered commitment from the GVSU College of Health Professions and University Provost for financial support to accommodate the increase in our student admission numbers from 20 to 24. This support includes a recent approval of requested funding increase for supplies and consumables necessary to teach our additional students effectively. GVSU has also recently worked closely in collaboration with Spectrum Health's Regional Laboratories to create a unique clinical placement schedule where more students could be placed and trained with the same amount of resources. In order for the increase in student numbers to be successful, it needed to include additional placement spots without increasing the workload burden for the already busy laboratory personnel and without diminishing the quality of the students' clinical training experience. Students now spend time rotating between shifts and laboratories to attain the most positive and appropriate learning, in which repetitive practice with routine testing takes place in one facility and more complex and less common testing is performed in another lab. The number of student placements was increased 67% within the Spectrum Health System (and 20% overall) with this arrangement. An additional advantage to the new schedule is that students experience and thus understand the difference in workflow from first shift to second and third shifts and often recognize their own value and preference for either the smaller or the larger hospital lab environment.

Recruitment for students to enter the health careers is competitive and MLS continues to be a lesser known profession. Therefore, in addition to the normal high school and college student recruitment events available at Grand Valley, GVSU's MLS program has participated in an innovative Summer Health Activities and Professions Exploration (sHaPe) camp. The camp curriculum offers free access to underserved populations through community partner donations, and is taught by Grand Valley's College of Health Professions' faculty. The program and core curriculum is designed to educate middle school age

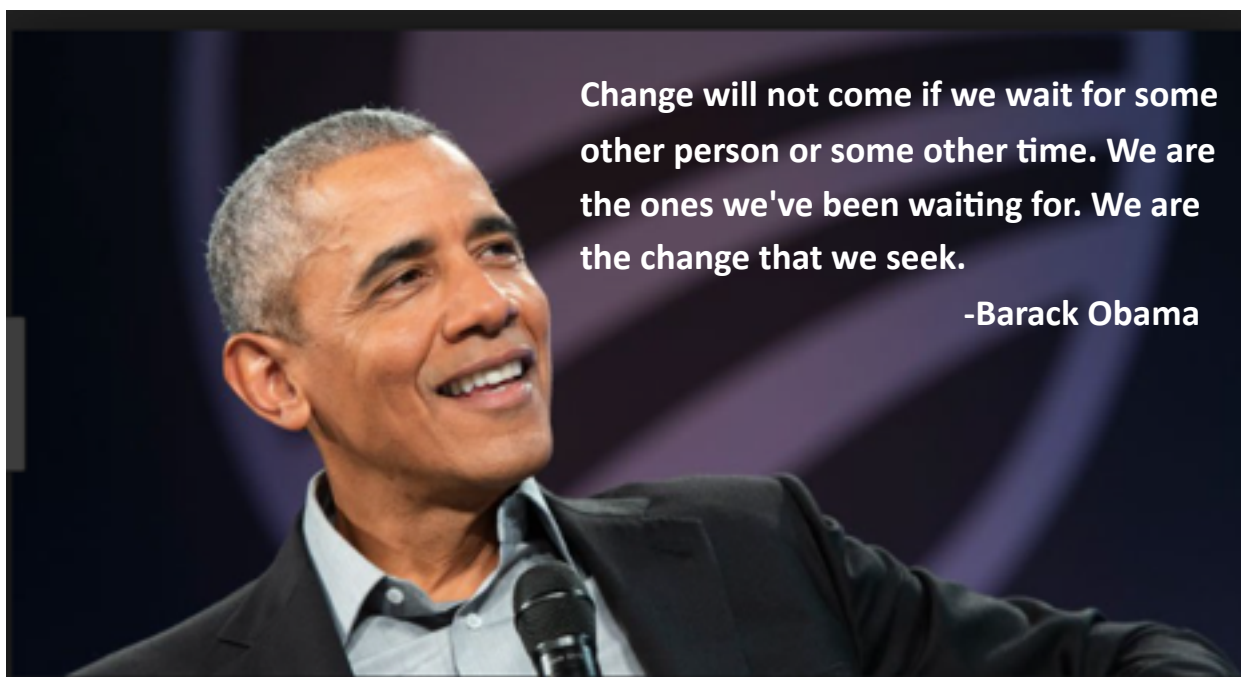
students and introduce them to degrees offered by GVSU in the allied health professions. Through this camp experience, these students become aware of the "discovery" degree of MLS, as well as practice hands-on simulated testing in the laboratory. In addition to the sHaPe camp, students at GVSU created a new recruitment video in 2018 that has been very effective in generating interest for the MLS profession during recruitment events. Recently at a College of Health Professions' health career showcase, after viewing the video, two senior faculty colleagues voiced that they were happy to finally understand what we actually do in MLS. This video won the American Society of Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS) 2018 Membership Video Contest.

Finally, the national laboratory personnel shortage combined with the rigor of Medical Laboratory Science course of study makes it imperative for MLS programs to select students with characteristics that will reduce attrition, ensure success, and lead to quality graduates. Most programs use academic record, including pre-requisite course grades, and overall grade point averages to determine entrance qualifications. Attrition range for both acceptance into the MLS program and completion is between 10-20% at Grand Valley. GVSU looked at eight years of student data in order to determine predictors of student MLS program success. Success was defined by graduation from the MLS program, plus passing of the national ASCP certification exam (BOR/BOC). Grades in pre-requisite science courses, MLS professional courses, gender, and other related determinants were used in the analysis. The original goal was to increase retention in the MLS program; a subsequent outcome was prediction of the student attributes that would best lead to successful program completion. Although at-

trition is low once students begin the program, any loss is critical as it equates to fewer graduates for GVSU and fewer professionals to fulfill the vacancies in the field. Evaluation and interpretation of calculated p-values demonstrated that grades in Introductory Chemistry and Human Genetics were the most significant for success. Comparison of students who took higher-level science courses to those who completed the general required coursework also suggested the higher level courses contributed to an increase in success of passing the certification exam (BOC). Conversely, course grades that had previously been given the highest regard and the most consideration for student acceptance into Grand Valley's MLS program, such as Immunology and Anatomy & Physiology, did not show statistical significance or appear to correlate directly with overall program success. While this preliminary research is promising for prediction of student success, further analysis of the data needs to be accomplished in order to predict the prerequisites and student attributes that will be best for successful Medical Laboratory Science program completion.

As change occurs in our profession, not only in the way we perform our work, but also with the way our personnel are educated and trained, we need to continue to monitor and seek answers that will increase the number of professionals and alleviate loss of qualified and proficient Medical Laboratory Scientists. I believe that a familiar Barack Obama quote summarizes what we need to consider when we think about the MLS workforce shortage:

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."



**Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.**

**-Barack Obama**



**APRIL 10 - 12, 2019  
KELLOGG CENTER  
EAST LANSING, MI**

**ASCLS MI ANNUAL CONFERENCE**  
IT'S IN OUR BLOOD

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# 2019 Annual Meeting Awards Ceremony - Part 1

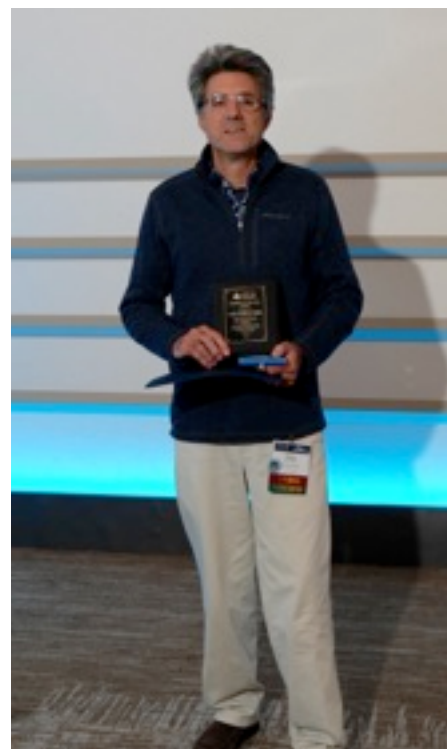
*Editors note: Many thanks to awards chair **Alicia Kuzia** for all of her work in making this year's awards ceremony a great success. I am also grateful to **Ric Benson** for photography. Look for additional awards, including the Lifetime Achievement Award in the next edition of Newslinks.*



## MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD (formerly CLS of the Year)

This award is given to the individual who best exemplifies service to the profession, organization, and the community. **Dan deRegnier** is this year's winner because of the hard work and dedication he gives the society, especially behind the scenes. He is a huge advocate for students and does marvelous work on the ASCLS- MI website.

His nomination letter explains: " Dan is a great asset to ASCLS, ASCLS-MI, and the medical laboratory profession. He is the Webmaster of the ASCLS-MI website and works diligently to keep it updated. His work on the website has been recognized at the national level. He has served on the ASCLS-MI BOD as District 2 Representative, the Ad Hoc Communication Committee, and on the Committee of Education and Initiatives at the national level. He is a dedicated and respected professor at Ferris State University and is held in high regard by all. He is enthusiastic in showcasing his students accomplishments. He has also previously been recognized for his service within ASCLS by being awarded the Key to the Future Award, Donna Duberg Mentorship Award, and the Pam Agren Inspiration Award."



## PAM AGREN INSPIRATIONAL AWARD

The Pamela Agren Inspiration Award is given to a person for their outstanding "behind the scenes" activities of a person. Often this person benefits the society greatly but doesn't always get recognized or highly publicized. This year's winner was **Ric Benson**.

When Ric received his award he had many kind words to say about the meaning of this award. Many people were thankful for his kind words and thoughts of Pam Agren. Ric is always seen helping wherever he can and taking many pictures to document and display what everyone does for ASCLS. He is well deserving of this award with all of this hard work behind the scenes.





## DONNA DUBERG MENTORSHIP AWARD

The Donna Duberg Mentorship Award is given to the person who best exemplifies characteristics of mentorship, and the ability to guide others in the profession. This year's recipient was **Stephanie Rink** from Oakland University.

Donna Duberg was and still is a mentor within the society of ASCLS. Stephanie has been a part of the society for 10 years and has assisted every single one of us in this room into making ASCLS-MI what it is today. She is well deserving of this award.

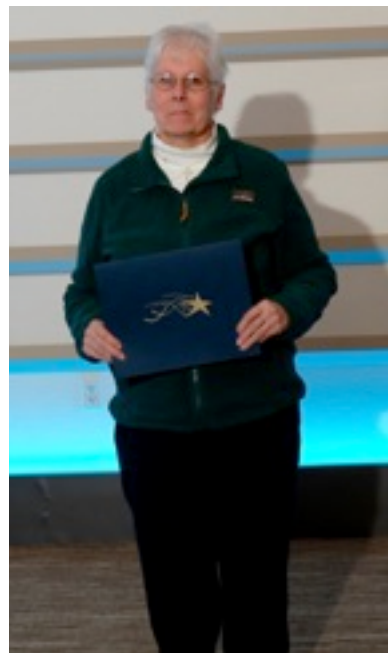
## KEY TO THE FUTURE AWARD

Given to a professional, who within the last 3 years is new to the profession or has recently become involved in activities related to the society. This recipient exhibits key leadership qualities to benefit the society in years to come. The recipient of this award was **Darby Naheedy**. As Key to the Future she exhibits all the attributes that we need in our professional society for the future. She has participated in leadership since being a student member. (photo not available)

## ASCLS-MI PRESIDENTIAL AWARD

The Presidential Recognition Award is given when the president feels someone's contributions to the profession are so outstanding that special recognition demands to be given. This year **Carey Loveland** is the recipient of this award.

She has served Society in various ways and was especially helpful this year. This year's president, Jerry Singleterry, shared how much Carey assisted and kept him on track this year in his very important role.



The next edition of Newslinks will feature 2019 Annual Meeting Awards Part 2 and include the Lifetime Achievement, Omicron Sigma, Martha Roulund, Mock Exam, and Poster Contest Winners





### **Becky Potter, Nominations Chair**

The 2019/2020 Board of Director Elections are complete, and the results are in! Thank you to everyone who took the time to vote for your new leadership and representatives on the board. We had a ballot return of about 28%, which is on par for most years. I would love to see it reach 30% next year, so please vote and encourage your fellow members to vote next year.

A huge thank you also to the members on the Nominations Committee for recruiting candidates and to everyone who decided to run. I hope you all continue to be involved in our great society in the future.

Here are the new members for the 2019/2020 ASCLS-MI Board of Directors:

President Elect: John Ko

Secretary: RJ (Ric) Benson

New Member/New Professional Director: Nichole Leasher

Government Affairs Committee: Meighan Sharp

Nominations Committee: Kristin Landis-Piwowar (Chair-Elect) and Lindsey Foos

District 1 Representatives: Becky Potter, Michelle Russell, Mariane Wolfe

District 2 Representatives: Sandy Cook, Sarah Pelton, Amber Sims

District 3 Representatives: Sarah Beatty, Caitlyn Crone, Alicia Kuzia

**Congratulations to those elected and thank you to everyone who voted!**



# Delegates to the National ASCLS Meeting

Becky Potter, Nominations Chair



**2019 Joint Annual Meeting**  
June 23-27, 2019 | Charlotte, North Carolina

The 2019 ASCLS National Meeting will take place June 23-27th in Charlotte, North Carolina. Each year, the State Societies send delegates to the meeting to represent each state for the governing body and various other events. Each state is allowed 4 automatic delegates that consist of members from the

Board of Directors. These Delegates are:

President: Jerry Singleterry

President Elect: Stephanie Rink

NM/NP Director: Kyle McCafferty (proxy for Megan Caterino)

Student Forum Representative: Rachel Schaferly

Depending on the size of membership for each state society, additional delegates can also be elected to attend the meeting. For 2019, ASCLS-MI was able to elect 5 additional delegates to accompany the group. Those Delegates are: **Sarah Beatty, Caitlyn Crone, Lindsey Foos, Kathy Hoag, and Romy Selzer.**

Thank you for voting and to our 2019 Delegates for representing ASCLS-MI at the national meeting!

## 2019 Annual Meeting - Supporting Community

ASCLS-Michigan members are very generous individuals. When the call is put out each year to support a local charity at our annual meeting we respond. This year the attendees of the ASCLS-Michigan Annual Conference gave over \$650.00 to support the **Michigan State University Community Music School**. ASCLS-Michigan agreed to match \$250.00 for a grand total of \$861.02 donated to this great organization. This money will help the school continue music therapy programs, purchase new music, repair instruments and provide community programming. This cause is near and dear to me because I have son that is legally blind. The teachers at the community music school have helped him learn percussion and he now plays in his school's junior high band. In addition, he has gained confidence and has achieved success when he was told that he could not.

**There's still time to donate. You can use this web link to support the MSU Community Music School:** <https://cms.msu.edu/give/index.html>

**A big thank you to everyone that donated.**

Lindsay Hengesbach, M.S., MB(ASCP)CM  
Past President ASCLS-Michigan

[Click here to watch a video on this wonderful program!](#)





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