



National Society for Histotechnology  
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## Christie Gowan – Chair, Public Relations Committee

### **Q. Tell us about yourself and where you work.**

**A.** I graduated from a NAACLS approved histology program in 1984 and sat for my boards in the same year. During my long career I have worked in Clinical, research, veterinary, hard tissue/plastics, tissue banking, supervising, managing and Mohs. I am currently serving as the president of the Florida Society of Histotechnology, working as a Mohs tech for Riverchase Dermatology and am Chair for the PR Committee for NSH.

### **Q. What have been your challenges and highlights over the past few years?**

**A.** My biggest challenge over the past few years was going from management to bench. I have had a great career but wanted to donate more time to supporting my profession. In doing so, I have been able to serve as president of the Florida Society and devote more volunteer time on the national level.

### **Q. How has volunteering helped you build upon your successes and/or addressed your challenges?**

**A.** Volunteering has opened the door for the next level for me. It allows me to work with individuals who have so much to offer. The Histology profession is at a crossroad and I hope that our volunteering promotes and ensures the success and recognition of our skillset and contributions.

### **Q. What advice do you have for others who would like to volunteer?**

**A.** I would advise everyone to volunteer at least once to get a feel for the experience. There are so many ways you can volunteer. Whether you're an introvert or an extrovert there is an opportunity for you to contribute.

### **Q. How did you become involved in the field of histology (what drew you to the field)?**

**A.** I had worked as a phlebotomist at All Children's as well as an interpreter for the deaf in Florida. We had moved to Austin, Texas and I walked into St David's Hospital seeking employment as a phlebotomist. They did not have an opening but asked me how I felt about histology. I was hired on the spot to work as a histology aid. I fell in love with the profession and began seeking ways to become certified. My husband was in his last year as a graduate student at UT Austin and I commuted to UT San Antonio to attend histology school there.

### **Q. What important skills should people have if they wish to pursue a career in pharma?**

**A.** Working in Pharma requires a different set of Quality rules. In Clinical settings you are governed by CLIA rules and regs whereas in Pharma you are working with GLP (Good Laboratory Practices) rules and regs. These principles are designed to assure quality and integrity of non-clinical laboratory studies that are intended to support research that is regulated by government agencies (FDA). As a Histotech, you



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will be required to know these rules and be prepared to work in environments that may include animal studies.

**Q. What is your favorite aspect of your job?**

**A.** Aside from the science of Histotechnology and the day to day work of a clinical setting, I truly love the troubleshooting aspect of the job. We have so many areas where things can fail and there is such a sense of accomplishment when you can discover the cause and make the corrections. I also like the teamwork aspect of a large lab.

**Q. When you are not at work, what are your passions/hobbies?**

**A.** My passions are reading, doing Tai Chi, working with clay, going to the beach and spending time with my grandchildren.

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