

## ASCLS Today Article

### **ASCLS Leadership Academy**

**By: Lynn Ingram**

The ASCLS Leadership Academy gathered for its first classes at the ASCLS Annual Meeting in San Diego on July 15-17<sup>th</sup>. Developed in response to concerns that members were not stepping into leadership positions at the state level, the Leadership Academy planned the year-long program to equip participants with the skills necessary to serve ASCLS constituent societies in the immediate future and, later on, at the regional and national level. Three face-to-face meetings and six conference calls are planned for the year as well as group projects and other assignments. Curriculum topics include leadership styles, communication, mentoring, team building, motivation, public speaking and presentation skills, writing skills, and strategic planning. The group will meet prior to the Legislative Symposium in March, 2008 and again at the ASCLS Annual Meeting in Washington, DC in July, 2008 and will ‘graduate’ at that time.

This year’s class members represent nine of the ten ASCLS Regions and have varying levels of experience in our profession and ASCLS. Each one is dedicated to improving their professional lives by preparing themselves to step into leadership roles. By the end of the 2007 Annual Meeting the participants were ready to meet the challenges for the year. Meet the participants of the First Class of the ASCLS Leadership Academy:

**Sharon Bobryk: ASCLS-MI**

Sharon works at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, MI in the Blood Bank. She has been a member of ASCLS since 2004 and served as the ASCLS Student Forum Chair and ASCLS FYP Director. She is an energetic young professional ready for the next challenge.

“Ever since my first state meeting, I have always said, ‘becoming an ASCLS member has been one of the best decisions I have made to date.’ I love being part of the ASCLS community; the staff, members, and students have become a second family to me. Becoming part of the ASCLS Leadership Academy and learning the skills I need to become a successful leader in the society gives me the chance to give back to ASCLS all it has given me. True, it may mean an hour less of personal time or sleep, but it is well worth the time giving back to the society. The ASCLS Leadership Academy is the perfect opportunity to learn from the best in the society how I can make a difference in my future leadership positions.”

**Shawn Clary: ASCLS-IL**

Shawn joined ASCLS in 1995 and currently serves as the Lab/X-ray Coordinator at the Oncology Hematology Associates of Central Illinois in Peoria, IL. She served this year as the Program Chair for the ASCLS-IL Spring Meeting and is looking forward to additional leadership positions.

“I will use the knowledge gained from this experience to become a stronger voice for ASCLS. I hope to gain the skills I need to influence others to join the society and become active. Last year, I was asked to run for ASCLS-IL State President. I declined the

nomination because I felt I lacked the experience and confidence to fill such an important role. I know that the Leadership Academy will give me the knowledge to confidently run for that office in the future. This experience will also teach me more about ASCLS and additional roles I might fill in the future.”

Chris Einspahr: TACLS

TACLS leaders were happy to recommend Chris for the Leadership Academy. He has been a member since 2005 and works at UT-MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

“I plan to use my Leadership Academy skills in service to the Texas Association of Clinical Laboratory Scientists. Currently, I hold the appointed position of Finance Chair, but would welcome the opportunity to serve the Board in other capacities. I sincerely believe that with the skills and □knowledge gained from taking part in the Leadership Academy, I will be well prepared to assume the responsibilities associated with serving the state association. I would much prefer to be involved in brainstorming solutions to issues instead of sitting on the sidelines and accepting the status quo. Learning the leadership skills offered by the Academy will not only allow me to make significant contributions toward solving problems like these, but will give me the abilities needed to lead these efforts.”□

Vanessa Johnson: LSCLS

Vanessa is the Program Director at the Overton Brooks VA Medical Center School of Clinical Laboratory Science in Shreveport, LA. A member since 1998, she enthusiastically models professionalism for her students and will serve as LSCLS President-Elect this year.

“I have preached to my students for the last 6 years about getting involved, so I decided it has to start with me. I believe the Leadership Academy will help me grow into a better leader, not only for my state society, but also on local and national levels. I would also like to have the opportunity to be mentored by leaders from all levels in ASCLS. I know the knowledge and guidance they can give will prove to be very valuable assets. Leadership Academy will be an excellent opportunity for me to gain knowledge of all levels and areas of leadership in ASCLS.”

Michele Lachance: ASCLS-PA

Described as a ‘sure shot’, ASCLS-PA heartily recommended Michele for the Leadership Academy. Michele works at the Penn State Hershey Medical Center and serves as an adjunct instructor at the Harrisburg Area Community College phlebotomy program. She has been a member of ASCLS since 2005.

“The Leadership Academy will be a wonderful way for me to learn more about ASCLS and the role that I can play as a member. I joined ASCLS just to “give it a try”, and I found that I thoroughly enjoy the people in my state society as well as the duties I have performed to date. My first national meeting was a wonderful experience, and I met warm, honest individuals who are committed to the growth of our chosen profession. I felt at home. I cannot imagine not being a part of this for the rest of my life. This Academy will also aid in developing the strengths and skills needed to perform at a higher level within my state constituent and at the national level, and will also aid me as I

progress through my career and employment. I want to some day be an effective leader, yet I have never had any training in becoming one. I hope that the Leadership Academy will teach me the skills and give me the courage and strength that I need to reach these goals. I can only see a lifetime of benefit from participating in this endeavor.”

Susan Lopez: ASCLS-SD

Susan is the Laboratory Manager/Director at the Avera Brookings Medical Clinic in Brookings, SD. She has been an ASCLS member since 1996 and has served in several positions at the state level. She is looking for additional leadership skills to boost her confidence as she takes on the President-Elect position in SD.

“I want to be involved in ASCLS at both the state and national levels. The knowledge gained from the Leadership Academy would help me develop skills that I currently lack. The curriculum would allow me to be an involved and knowledgeable member of ASCLS as well as a better laboratorian. One of the things we keep stressing to fellow laboratorians is that our voice has to be heard in order for our profession to be recognized. I want to be a bigger part of that. The knowledge and experience gained from the curriculum would give me the tools I need to accomplish this.”

Stephanie Mihane: ASCLS-CO

Stephanie has worked in many positions as she climbed the career ladder from CLA to CLT to CLS. She currently works at Kaiser-Permanente in Littleton, CO. She has been a member of ASCLS since 1991 and is beginning her year as President of ASCLS-CO.

“It would be an honor to be chosen as one of the ten Clinical Laboratory Scientists to attend the first ASCLS Leadership Academy. The Academy would allow for the continuation of my professional education and career, as well as, quench my insatiable ‘love of learning’. I was first introduced to ASCLS, formally ASMT as an MLT enrolled at the University of Iowa to complete my B.S. in Medical Technology. Some 30 years later, I am still as passionate about the profession as ever. The Academy would be an excellent opportunity to network with fellow future ASCLS leaders and prepare me to hold office regionally and hopefully, nationally, allowing me to continue my commitment and ensure my passion for the profession and my career in a constructive and meaningful manner.” □

Rebecca: ASCLS-TN

Rebecca works at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis, TN and is currently serving on the ASCLS-TN Board of Directors and as President-Elect of the Memphis Chapter of ASCLS-TN. A member since 2002, she served as ASCLS-TN Student Forum Chair and as ASCLS Student Forum Vice-Chair in 2004-2005.

“After my introduction to ASCLS at the beginning of MT school, I noticed things that attracted me to the organization. Throughout the state of Tennessee and on the local Memphis level, the members of ASCLS seemed to have relationships with each other that will last a lifetime, not just a sense of community, but of family. After becoming as involved as a full-time student could, I felt that ASCLS was not just something amazing that I had the opportunity to participate in, but it was something that I had an OBLIGATION to be a part of for the survival and success of my new profession. I have a

great desire to be an integral part of the continued survival and success of ASCLS. I know that learning how to be the kind of leader that our organization needs is very important.”

Barbara Russell: ASCLS-GA

Barbara is an Assistant Professor and Program Director of the Clinical Laboratory Science Program at the Medical College of Georgia. A member since 2002, she has been active at the state level as a member of their Board of Directors and President-Elect. Barbara was not aware of ASCLS for many years and is excited to become an active participant now.

“I believe that strong leaders are a necessity for strong organizations. I believe that the tools needed to become an effective leader can be learned and that through the consistent use of these leadership tools, effective leaders can emerge. It is my desire to become a strong effective leader. As a leader in ASCLS-GA, I want to increase membership, increase the visibility of our profession in the state, increase the organization's political involvement so ASCLS professionals can have a say in the bills that are created which govern our profession, and I want to create a mentoring program for the development of future leaders within the profession.”

Angela Wallace: ASCLS-TN

Angela accepted her first leadership role in ASCLS as Student Forum Chair for Region III in 2004-2005. She currently serves as President of the Memphis Chapter of ASCLS-TN and President-Elect of ASCLS-TN. She was instrumental in the reactivation of the Memphis Chapter in 2005. Angela works at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, TN.

“I want to expand my knowledge of ASCLS and gain the tools necessary to be an effective leader in the organization. We are at a crucial point in the life cycle of the society, with the current leadership preparing for retirement and the pool of new talent slowly dwindling. I truly love my job and the profession, and am willing to do whatever is necessary to ensure that the society continues to promote the vision its creators had 75 years ago.”