

THE NEW PROFESSIONALS COMMITTEE E-NEWSLETTER

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Legislative Advocacy Explained: A Guide to the Annual Legislative Symposium *by Jonathan R. Gusilar*

A successful professional organization provides good representation and participation to influence a noble legislative process. Public policy advocacy can have a huge impact in the decision-making process of specific legislative proposals. The secret to public policy advocacy is building strong relationships, getting in touch with the right people at the right time to ensure that message is understood.

The Annual Legislative Symposium provides an organized community to multiply the influence of an individual effort, a very important lesson in professional lobbying. Having a personal relationship with the legislators provides a strong and meaningful lobbying strategy. A key approach to lobbying is understanding how a bill becomes a law and how committees and subcommittees work. Researching some background information regarding the particular bill or issue of concern provides a clearer idea of the topic, making public advocacy processes more effective. Also, having personal knowledge and expertise on the issue of concern is very helpful in communicating with legislators. Lobbying to a legislator who is opposing your position can be tough, but be very constructive diplomatic and support your position with facts and reliable research.

One of the most crucial lessons I have learned at the ASCLS-MI Legislative Symposium & Professional Advocacy Day is to contact the legislator ahead of time. Find out who your legislator is and make an appointment through their legislative assistant. They have access to the legislator's schedule, and, if the legislator is busy, can take the appointment in their place. Providing information via email or phone regarding specific concerns in advance will be beneficial when you meet with the legislator face to face.

Group cohesiveness is another key factor in successful public advocacy. However, one or two well-informed frontrunners would provide a more fruitful delivery regarding the issue rather than an overwhelming crowd rallying simultaneously for the same cause. Lastly, keep your presentation short. Legislators are almost always busy; maximize your time by preparing a 2-3 minute speech and always have a positive attitude to leave them with a great impression.

So be the voice of your profession! Let your voice be heard! Join the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS), Clinical Laboratory Management Association (CLMA), American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP), American Medical Technologists (AMT) and the Association of Genetic Technologists (AGT) at the 2014 Annual Legislative Symposium! Important issues and concerns include the CMS Medicare Lab Fee Schedule Project, Personnel Shortage, Fee Schedule Cuts and Molecular Tests Reimbursement.

Calendar of Events

CLEC
February 20, 2014
San Jose, CA

Legislative Symposium
March 17-18, 2014
Washington, DC

Annual Meeting
July 29-August 2, 2014
Chicago, IL

In this issue:

Legislative Symposium	1-2
Career Paths	2-4
Leadership Academy	4-5
NPC Committee	5
Get involved	6
NPC Message	6

Legislative Advocacy cont.

What: 2014 Annual Legislative Symposium

When: March 17-18, 2014

Where: Washington, D.C.

Registration Fee:

Postmarked by February 15: \$205

Postmarked after February 15: \$260

Legislative Symposium Schedule:

Monday, March 17:

07:30 AM: Registration, Continental Breakfast

08:00 AM- 05:00 PM: Sessions

06:00 PM: Wine Reception

Tuesday, March 18

07:00 AM: Breakfast

09:00-12:00 PM: Capitol Hill Appointments

12:30 PM: Departure

Accommodations:

Sheraton Crystal City

Rooms are held for the Legislative Symposium until February 22nd.

Single or double room accommodations are \$195 + applicable taxes.

For more information, visit the ASCLS website link:

<http://www.ascls.org/about-us/voice-your-opinion/legislative-symposium>

Medical Laboratory Science: A world of Possibilities *by Karen Larson*

From high school on, I knew that I wanted to be involved in a healthcare profession. I was fortunate enough to participate in a hospital internship that exposed high school seniors to all aspects of healthcare. I was able to see first-hand the life of respiratory therapists, pharmacists, biomedical engineers, surgeons, ER physicians, oncology nurses, and many other healthcare professionals. Most importantly though, I observed the life of the laboratory professional!

Once I started my college program, I quickly learned how much variety the laboratory field has to offer! When I began the laboratory specific coursework, everything started clicking for me. I'd found something I was passionate about! I know many of you have felt that same way, especially once you've started your clinical internship out in the real world. The varieties of career paths within the clinical laboratory profession are just as diverse as the number of specialties within our field. In no particular order, here are just a few of the numerous career paths you might be interested in exploring.

Research- Laboratory science and technology are constantly advancing. People with innovative ideas and scientific minds are always needed in research. If you like implementing scientific processes, are great at keeping detailed notes, and have a passion for learning and discovery, research might be for you! Some companies employing laboratory researchers are very small and just starting up, while some others are larger and already well established. Funding is something that may impact the longevity of a career in research. Research positions funded with grant money may end if the grant is not renewed or is only being funded for a set period of time. Some research companies are funded privately by venture capitalists, while other research positions can be found at academic institutions. Many laboratory science professors at larger universities also spend some of their time doing research.

Industry- There are many companies out there that manufacture laboratory instruments, reagents, phlebotomy equipment, and other supplies! Some of these companies, just to name a few, include Abbott, Siemens, Roche, BD. Laboratory related businesses offer jobs all across the nation. If you want to travel, becoming a sales associate might be of interest to you. Sales associates meet with laboratory managers and other personnel to promote their company's products. Many companies try to hire people who have already worked directly on the bench because they can more easily relate to the lab professionals, and are able to more thoroughly understand the science behind the equipment. Other industry jobs include product developers who help design and create new instruments, and field service analysts who work directly with labs both on and off site to troubleshoot instrument issues and perform complex maintenance.

Laboratory/Hospital Information System Technology- It is not uncommon for hospital laboratorians to be recruited to information system technology positions. Who better to develop and implement a laboratory information system (LIS) than those who have experience working in the laboratory? They already have a background in science and technology! Plus, they know exactly what a good LIS needs to include in order to keep the lab running smoothly and efficiently! This job offers many new challenges and can be a very exciting field as systems constantly become more advanced.

Management/Administration- There are a variety of positions in laboratory and hospital management. Generally, people move up in management positions through a ladder-like path. In this way, a person takes on more and more responsibility as they progress from each position in which they succeed. Each hospital and clinic system may arrange their leadership positions differently. A smaller hospital may only have one laboratory supervisor who is responsible for all staff. In contrast, a very large academic hospital may have as many as 8 or more supervisors for one acute care lab with each being responsible for a given area of the lab (like chemistry, hematology, point-of-care, etc.). In addition to supervisors, you will find managers and laboratory directors. They are in more of a "big picture" job where they have supervisors reporting to them. Their work involves setting goals for the lab, working within a budget to manage the costs of running a lab, and working with other hospital departments to meet the goals of the entire organization. Beyond this, some laboratory professionals advance to hospital administration positions. Some of the above positions will require or prefer advanced education. A master's degree in business administration, hospital administration, or clinical laboratory science is common. Some people even pursue doctorate level degrees. There are also positions for managing one or multiple clinic laboratories. This type of job might require traveling between multiple locations to check in with several different clinics. It also offers the unique challenge of managing issues that arise from an off-site location at times. A person in this position should be skilled in communicating by e-mail and telephone calls in a timely manner. If you enjoy leadership, thinking creatively, problem solving, and motivating others, a management position might be for you!



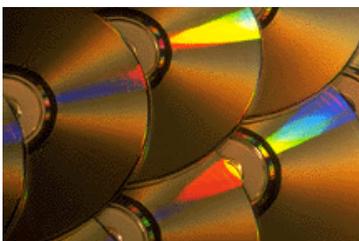
Education- There are many career opportunities within laboratory education. There are professorial positions at colleges and universities for phlebotomy, MLT, and MLS programs. Some institutions will require a master's or doctorate level degree and most require prior teaching experience. By training new employees and co-workers in the lab, you can gain experience teaching and see if it interests you. Many labs also have education coordinator positions. This person is usually responsible for ensuring that competency assessments are done, continuing education is offered, and that training is going smoothly. Another position to consider is becoming a program director of a hospital based program or coordinator of clinical rotations for a university based program. A career in education can be extremely rewarding, especially if you enjoy working with people.

Undoubtedly, there are many opportunities to pursue as a laboratory professional! We are very fortunate to have a career field that offers such great variety and new challenges to keep us excited and engaged. This article in no way details all the career paths within the laboratory field. Mostly, I hope that it inspires you to consider the many opportunities available to you while you are at the beginning of your career!

If you discover a career path that interests you, take the chance to explore it early on. Shadowing someone who has the job you're interested in is a great way to explore if it's the right fit for you. ASCLS is here to help you connect with other professionals. Many state societies have mentoring programs available or can connect you with someone in a position you want to learn more about. Please contact the New Professional Chair from your region for assistance with making these connections. We're excited and ready to help you!

Leadership Academy *by Lacey Campbell*

In 2007, a structured program of study was created to be able to mentor current and future ASCLS leaders on critical leadership topics. Now in their seventh class of students, the Leadership Academy boasts numerous graduates who have been able to showcase their leadership potential not only within ASCLS, but also within their work positions and daily lives. One of the many goals of the Leadership Academy is to identify members who have ambition and invest in their growth and development so they can blossom into strong ASCLS leaders. A structured curriculum provides these potential leaders with the skills and knowledge they need to step into leadership positions within ASCLS. There are many benefits to the participants of the Leadership Academy. Some benefits include developing skills that can assist with moving into management positions in the work setting, having opportunities to learn from dialogue with other members, and be mentored by ASCLS leaders, and acquiring the confidence and self-esteem to step into leadership roles. Each year the Leadership Academy class completes projects to benefit current and future leaders of ASCLS. All of the previous projects can be viewed online at <http://www.ascls.org/ascls-leadership/ascls-academy>.



Acceptance into the Leadership Academy is by a competitive application process that includes completion of an application form with a signed statement of commitment to the Leadership Academy, responses to five essay questions, along with two letters of recommendation with completed recommendation forms. Candidates must be current ASCLS PF1, PF2, or FYP members, and may self-nominate or be nominated by any current ASCLS member. Candidates must also agree to a commitment of personal time and effort over 12 months in addition to a financial commitment for travel expenses to attend Leadership Academy activities in conjunction with the 2014 ASCLS Annual Meeting, the 2015 Legislative Symposium, and the 2015 ASCLS Annual Meeting in their entirety.. Candidates selected will be required to certify their intention to commit to attendance at all Leadership Academy activities throughout the year, to regularly scheduled conference calls, and to the time necessary for successful completion of the program and projects associated with the Academy.

Susan Burks, a 2013 graduate of the Leadership Academy stated that, “The Leadership Academy helps you to understand who you are as a person and as a leader. It allows you to learn what your leadership style is and what type of leadership style you should use in different positions to be most effective.” We all switch roles throughout life from leadership positions to positions where we follow a leader, and it is essential for us to learn the leadership style that works best for each situation. She also mentioned, “During the course you play team building games where you learn what your natural instincts are when it comes to choosing leadership styles for certain situations. You learn your strengths and weaknesses and how to enhance your strengths and improve your weaknesses. The Leadership Academy was pivotal in helping me know the most effective leadership style to use in my new management position. Not only do you learn leadership styles and skills, but you also learn about ASCLS the organization, its history and its mission. You also learn about legislation and how it applies to the laboratory profession, and that you have a voice and how to use it. The network available to you as member is lifelong connections, both as a professional and as friends for life. There is something to be said when you walk into a room and you are recognized by the people there.”

Applications may be downloaded at <http://www.ascls.org/ascls-leadership/ascls-academy>. All completed applications are due by March 31st, 2014. Let's build our professional society with inspirational leaders today! Apply for the 2014-2015 Leadership Academy!



“The Leadership Academy was pivotal in helping me know the most effective leadership style to use in my new management position.”

How to get involved in your Society? *by Chantelle George*

Getting involved in your Society can be easy as 1, 2, 3! ASCLS can help develop your leadership skills and enhance your professional background when entering into the field of clinical laboratory science. The beginning of the year is a great time to look up future dates for annual ASCLS and statewide meetings and social events. As a First Year/New Professional, you can join your state society and began to attend state meetings. First year professionals are individuals within their first year of entering the work force, and those who have been working for up to five years are termed new professionals. You can receive more specific information by contacting your state president or anyone who you know who is already involved in your particular state.

In addition to getting involved at the statewide level, ASCLS provides its new professional members a chance to serve on various national committees, task forces, and forums. Volunteering to serve on national committee allows members to voice their concerns while also assisting to direct the future actions of ASCLS. Events are useful for networking and serving as a catalyst for getting involved in your society. At the national level consider the Legislative Symposium, March 17-18 in Washington D.C. and the Annual Meeting, July 29- August 2 in Chicago. Attending a state or national meeting is a great way to become involved! Take the first step by visiting www.ascls.org and join the organization; you can also find contact information for each state society on the website! Your participation in ASCLS will not only give you a sense of personal satisfaction, but will also help to further awareness for your chosen profession. Remember, ASCLS can only thrive and grow as a result of the participation of its members.

If you are interested in serving on one of the national committees, you may contact the NPC Chair for additional information to fill out our nomination application.

New Professionals Committee Message

The New Professionals Committee provides a forum where professional leaders can clarify the needs and wants of the newest generation within our profession, and communicate them to the Board of Directors for consideration and implementation to meet those needs and wants whenever possible.

Check us out on the web!

www.ascls.org/NPC