

The Connection

The Connection

September 2007

Celebrating Of ASCLS 75 years

SUN, SURF & SCIENCE

The 2007 ASCLS Annual meeting was held in San Diego, CA on July 17th –21st. See inside this edition for more details.

Inside this issue:

<i>President's Message</i>	1-2
<i>Region V Report</i>	2-3
<i>A Dozen Do's and Don'ts</i>	4
<i>Student's Corner</i>	5
<i>Treasurers Report</i>	6
<i>Young Professionals</i>	7
<i>Delegates Report</i>	8-9
<i>National Meeting Highlights</i>	10
<i>Region V Meeting Information</i>	11
<i>Leadership Roster</i>	12



President's Message

By: Dawn Michelson, ASCLS-ND President

Hi everyone and welcome to a new membership year in ASCLS. I am excited to be working with Stacy Askvig our Past President and Mary Belanus our President Elect this upcoming year. They are both old pros at this and will be wonderful mentors. There are very exciting things happening nationally for laboratorians. For instance, everyone at the National Meeting in San Diego was abuzz about the new Doctorate in Clinical Laboratory Science. ASCLS is still working hard on getting the Competitive Bidding project revoked. The collaboration between ASCLS and ASCP is also very good news. Here in North Dakota I have seen firsthand how committed our membership is and I will do my best along with the ASCLS-ND Board to strengthen our state society. I think the people that go into this profession are by nature behind the scene workers and we are reluctant to promote ourselves. Therefore, we have to go out of our comfort zones. When somebody asks what you do for a living tell them that what you do is essential in aiding doctors in determining a diagnosis or that what you teach your students will prepare them to be a vital member of the health care team. Be proud, you are important!

Lezlee Koch is still looking for candidates for the Region V Secretary/Treasurer position. Here are the links for the application form and job description- <http://www.ascls-sd.org/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/regvsectreas.doc>, <http://www.ascls-sd.org/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/regvopsmanual4-17-07.pdf>.

President's Message continued from page 1....

The deadline is August 31, so if you are interested please apply! I invite everyone to attend the Region V convention October 1-3 at the Ramada Inn in Fargo. There are tons of great speakers lined up, lots of vendors to visit with and great entertainment and networking opportunities. There will also be lots of food and door prizes galore. I hope to see you all there!

If there are any issues you believe should be discussed or have any concerns, please e-mail me at med-tecdawn2@msn.com

Sincerely,

Dawn Michelson ASCLS-ND President



“Practice Levels & Educational Needs for Clinical Laboratory Personnel White Paper”

By: Lezlee Koch, ASCLS Region V Director

A New Day Is Dawning – Together In ASCLS We Can Assure It!

Somewhere deep within every clinical laboratory professional is a vision of how wonderful and beautiful they know their professional life can be. It may be buried under layers of disillusionment, cynicism, frustration and despair, and yet it is there. It has been said that “whatever you can envision, you can become” what a glorious thought to take our professionals and our profession to a higher level. By envisioning, **“what should be” and not “what is”** will help guide us on a needed journey of change in defining practice levels and educational needs for clinical laboratory personnel and our profession.



A new day is truly dawning before us. At this years 2007 ASCLS meeting, the “Practice Levels & Educational Needs for Clinical Laboratory Personnel White Paper” was approved for information and presented to the ASCLS House of Delegates. A “white paper” is an expository paper to initiate awareness of the issue at hand and/or educate people about the elements of the issue. A “white paper” does not include a statement of policy or infer action taken by a society.

Background & Information (taken from the white paper): In July 2005, ASCLS commissioned a Task Force to address issues raised in ongoing, unresolved discussions among laboratory professionals concerning the preparation of students for the current clinical laboratory environment. Additional concerns and frustrations were documented relating to the skills required in today’s workplace, current and future workforce shortages, lack of well-defined roles for CLTs and CLSs, career recruitment and retention issues, and lack of opportunities for professional career advancement.

Region V Report continued from page 2.....

The Task Force was a collaborative project that included representatives from ASCLS, Clinical Laboratory Management Association (CLMA), American Medical Technologists (AMT), American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) and industry. Task force members included CLT and CLS educators and laboratory managers from diverse laboratory environments and geographic locations. The extensive work of this Task Force included:

- A review of literature related to clinical laboratory levels of practice
- A review of scopes of practice in several health professions
- Focus groups of laboratory educators and managers held at national meetings
- A national survey to collect quantitative data and comments on a proposed model

Based on all the above work, the “Proposed Model for Levels of Practice in Clinical Laboratory Science” truly reflects a **new vision and new standards** for the levels of practice in our profession. The model attempts to make the educational process more realistic, attainable and differentiated. The model represents “**what should be**” in many important ways including:

- Model clearly differentiates levels of practice based on education, certification and experience.
- Model affirms the importance of certification and verified competency at all levels of the practice.
- Model defines the practice skills that should be taught and can be expected of new practitioners at each level.
- Model represents a true career ladder from entry level positions through the clinical doctorate.

The model describes what laboratory practice would look like if the profession were able to start from scratch and design a system that ensured patient safety, encouraged practitioner’s professional development, and facilitated the effective use of laboratory personnel at all levels. Of course, it is not possible to start from scratch, so moving from “what is” to “what should be” will be a complicated and lengthy process. The first step in this process is seeking consensus from laboratory professionals on the vision of “what should be.”

The transition from current practice to the final model will be difficult, but without a vision and a plan for change, the frustrations of the present facing our profession and our professionals will continue. The time is now for all clinical laboratory professionals to be part of planning, preparing, and giving input on the “Practice Levels Model”. For a copy of the “Practice Levels White Paper June 2007” visit our ASCLS Region V Web page at: www.ascls-sd.org/id41.html

Volunteer your talents to your ASCLS state society leaders to help disseminate this information to all clinical laboratory professionals in your state or region. Only if we work together to shape the change in our profession will we be assured.... That A New Day Will Be Dawning For Our Profession!





A Dozen Do's and Don'ts

By: Stacy Askvig, Past-President ASCLS-ND

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your ASCLS state president. It was a great year and I appreciated all of the help.

Now as past-president, I will serve as the state leadership chair. There are times, ASCLS members are asked to write a letter, send an e-mail, or visit legislators. Below is a list of "A Dozen Do's and Don'ts" to follow when dealing with legislators. A special thanks to my son Josh for helping me. Hopefully this list will make it easier to approach legislators and get our views heard.

All of these suggestions apply to all levels of government – federal, state, local.

s:\leg\lobbying essentials

DO know your legislator's full name and spell it correctly.	DON'T guess at the spelling of your legislator's name or his/her initials.
DO inform yourself about the measure of concern to you; know what you are talking about.	DON'T guess at facts or base your letters on rumors.
DO use plain stationery or personal stationery.	DON'T use mimeographed or printed postal cards; they give no evidence that you can think for yourself.
DO use first-class mail.	DON'T use form letters under any circumstances. DON'T use postage machines.
DO let the legislator know how a particular measure will affect your locality—his own home district.	DON'T limit your self to generalities.
DO be concise.	DON'T be wordy.
DO be complete enough to give pertinent reasons and facts.	DON'T leave out essential details.
DO be sincere.	DON'T use insincere flattery or flowery terms.
DO be courteous—always.	DON'T use threats—ever!
DO clearly identify the bill, using the title and number, if possible.	DON'T get mixed up on the name, the number, or the contents of the bill.
DO follow through. Let your legislator know you are watching his record with deep interest.	DON'T write letters that only criticize or only include requests.
DO write a letter of appreciation whenever your legislator does something that meets your approval.	DON'T forget to write a thank-you letter.



STUDENT'S CORNER

BY: VICTORIA WELTON, ASCLS-ND STUDENT REP

Hi everyone,

I'm Victoria Welton, the current ASCLS-ND student forum representative. I was elected to the position at the North Dakota State meeting in April. By accepting the position, I was given the opportunity to travel to the ASCLS national meeting in San Diego, California!!!

During my stay I went to student meetings, committee meetings, learning sessions, and lots of exhibits. I met so many great and inspiring people and made tons of new friends that I am able to share stories and network with. A great new installment made by the national student forum is a blogging website. It is intended to keep all the students connected and communicating. Feel free to visit and network with other students from around the country: <http://asclsstudents.blogspot.com/>

I was able to learn so much from going to the student forum meetings and sitting in to listen to the board of directors. This gave me an insight to the bigger picture of the profession as a whole. I learned about the shortage of individuals within the profession and the lack of colleges that offer a CLS/MT or CLT/MLT degree as well as lack of clinical sites for those students to get an internship. People from across the country voiced their concerns about this recurrent problem. It was an eye opener for me because I realized if we don't take action now, it could devastate our profession in the upcoming years.

I came back from the meeting very motivated and I hope to use that throughout the year to help promote the profession in our state and get students involved and enrolled in the society.

Respectfully Submitted,

Victoria Welton MT(ASCP)

Student Representative

ASCLS Has Revamped Their Website

Within the last few weeks ASCLS has updated their website. It is now streamlined and quite easy to navigate. I encourage everyone to go to www.ascls.org and check out the different links. While you are exploring, non-members can go to <http://www.ascls.org/membership/index.asp> and within a few minutes can easily become a member of the organization that provides laboratorians with **VOICE** to be heard, promotes the **VALUE** of what we do to other members of the healthcare team and has the **VISION** to lead us into an exciting future.

For those members who have not renewed, you can go to ASCLS <http://www.ascls.org/members/login.asp> and renew your membership in a few easy steps. A reminder to members who have registered and set up a profile on the ASCLS website-if you have changed residences, e-mail addresses, phone numbers, work locations, etc. **PLEASE** take a few minutes to go in and update your profile. Having the most current information will help ASCLS serve you better. Thank you!

Treasurer's Report



From August 23rd, 2006 through August 21st, 2007

ASCLSND Checking Account

Interest Earned	\$43.45	Checking	Beginning Balance	\$1,332.34
Meeting Income	\$14,546.79		Income	\$15,015.24
State Dues	\$425.00		Expenses	\$11,945.60
Total Income	\$15,015.24		Ending Balance	\$4,401.98

EXPENSES

Annual Dues	\$10.00
Awards	\$170.16
Board Meeting	\$100.00
Legislative days	\$2,417.98
Meeting Expense	\$130.06
Mileage	\$466.49
National Meeting	\$4,082.09
National Meeting-Airfare	\$1,715.00
Newsletter	\$165.67
Office supplies	\$15.60
PACE	\$250.00
Region Dues	\$279.00
Science Fair	\$50.00
Spring Meeting	\$216.50
Website	\$377.05
Total Expenses	\$10,445.60

MONEY MARKET SAVINGS

Beginning Balance	\$7,246.30
Interest Earned	\$258.60
Ending Balance	\$7,504.90

12 Month CD	\$4,724.07	5/16/2007	4.75%
12 Month CD	\$7,969.47	12/7/2007	4%

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



Hi! My name is Kyle Riding and I am the current First Year Professional Director for ASCLS. For those who haven't heard much about my position, I am the chair of the young professional committee. This committee is composed of all ASCLS members who have been in the profession for five years or less, and young professionals is a misnomer, as a person of any age can be a young professional. This position also places me on the ASCLS Board of Directors to represent the interest of the younger professionals in the field. We truly are blessed that ASCLS gives us young professionals a VOICE.

I am a recent graduate from the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth Clinical Laboratory Science program. Three months ago I started a job at Massachusetts General Hospital in the hematology lab. Amazingly, I am one of the crazy people who work the midnight shift and enjoy the schedule! I live in Boston right down the street from Mass General and like many of my fellow young professionals, am amazed at how fast life is coming at me. My affiliation with ASCLS has already driven me to become involved in the hospital and to hopefully show our peers throughout the medical arena that the clinical laboratory scientist is an integral part of healthcare delivery. Above all ASCLS has made me VALUE what I do as a CLS.

Over the next year I will work my hardest to make sure that the young professional committee continues to grow and expand. I am here to help any member and am always willing to do what it takes to make sure that the needs of the young professional are being taken care of. We are the future, not only this society, but of this profession. Thanks to being involved early, we are planting the seeds that will lead us to build up the VISION that we have for our profession. In closing, I wish all young professionals the best of luck and I am here for any of your needs. I hope that in my short blurb you have seen that ASCLS provides VOICE, VALUE, AND VISION for all members, including young professionals.

Upcoming Events

Region V Meeting: October 1-3rd in Fargo at the Ramada Inn

ASCLS-ND Spring Meeting: April 23-25th, 2008 in Bismarck at the Radisson

Membership

New Members:	Brooke Juntunen	PFI
	Crystal Sellhammer	STU
	Farhad Mustafa	STU
Current Members:	100	
Lapsed Members:	23	

Publication Submission Deadline

The publication submission deadline for articles for the next issue of The Connection is Monday January 21st, 2008. Submit any articles to The Connection Editor:

Shannon Jongeward
shannon@gra.midco.net



Get Noticed and Be Heard: Say It with a Story

By: Mary Belanus, President-Elect ASCLS-ND

At the National meeting in San Diego, the keynote address: *Get Noticed and Be Heard: Say It with a Story* was about storytelling and the power of stories. The story I am going to tell you involves real people, happened a long-long time ago, has many twists and turns and hasn't ended yet. So hang on for a wild ride as I have decided to share my story with you as to what ASCLS has offered me.

I have been a member of ASCLS-ND since 1982 and I joined because Lavonne Steiner, program director at the St. Alexius Medical Technology Program, told me that I would be a professional and if I wanted to grow in my profession I should belong to a professional organization. Now as a student, I may have been coaxed into joining because I was afraid that if I didn't I wouldn't pass my medical technology training or maybe I just wanted to please the program director. However, the reality is I wanted to be a professional. Anyone that knows me probably thinks that I have always been an outgoing and extroverted person. Well, I am here to tell you that I haven't always been this way and I can honestly say that as a member of ASCLS-ND I have grown to be the person I am today. **Wow, what a great benefit of ASCLS membership, I grew personally as a person and I gained confidence!**

I got my first job when Curt Spidel, the laboratory supervisor of the Pembina County Memorial Hospital in Cavalier, ND called me after seeing the student bowl competition at the ASCLS-ND spring meeting in which I was a member of the winning team. He offered me a job and I started in August of that year. **Wow, what a great benefit of ASCLS membership, I got a job!** As I worked in Cavalier, I felt removed from other laboratory professionals in the state because we were a very small lab that employed 3 people rotating call and weekends and it seemed like Cavalier was in the middle of nowhere. Shortly after my hire, Curt left for a bigger job. So guess what, I became laboratory supervisor because I was the only other Medical Technologist. This was really "baptism by fire." I didn't have a clue what I was doing and found myself reaching for the ASCLS-ND newsletter where I found the names of other members published with their contact information. When I had a problem in a specific area, I used the Scientific Assembly (SA) Chairs that were listed and called them for information. I can't tell you how many times I reached for that newsletter and made a phone call for information. **Wow, what a great benefit of ASCLS membership, I found others with the same interest and they could help me!**

As a member of ASCLS-ND, I used my membership to gain support from my employers to pay for me to attend the state meetings. I attended many workshops sponsored by ASCLS-ND on leadership, laboratory billing, CPT coding and general meetings in each discipline of laboratory science. All of these sessions allowed me to do my job better and gain the leadership skills I needed. **Wow, what a benefit of ASCLS membership, I continued my education!** I grew as a laboratory supervisor and as a professional. Now, I could really hear Lavonne's words, "you will be a professional" ringing in my ears.

My next big step was at a spring ASCLS-ND meeting where I attended the business meeting and Tom Braaten was the President. There was a plea to have people get involved with the scientific assemblies and he was looking for anyone interested in chairing one of the assemblies. OK I thought, this was innocent enough and I signed up to be SA chair for Hematology / Coagulation. When it came time to planning the next spring meeting, I received a call from the planning committee and was asked for input on new topics in the area of Heme/Coag. I made a few suggestions and the committee brought in speakers on the topics. I even volunteered to present a case study at the next spring meeting. I called other members using my membership list and Linda Bossert from Minot also presented with me. **Wow, what a benefit of ASCLS membership, I came out of my comfort zone!** I have never spoken in public before, what was I thinking? Whew, I couldn't believe I got up in front of all those people. Who was I to present at a meeting? The presentation went off without a hitch.



Get Noticed...continued from page 8.....

By this time, I had moved to Grand Forks and was employed by the Grand Forks Clinic working with over 100 doctors. We didn't have a pathologist at our laboratory, so when problems arose or changes needed to be made in the area of Hematology, Coagulation, Urinalysis or Phlebotomy; it was my responsibility to relay this information to the doctors. Again, I found myself in front of people giving presentations. I was glad that I had a little experience and knew people in ASCLS-ND who could give me technical expertise. **Wow, what a benefit of ASCLS membership, I had a contact list of professionals so I could network and I didn't feel like I was alone!**

At some point in time, Eileen Nelson called me to help with the planning of the ASCLS-ND spring meeting that was to be held in Grand Forks. I didn't know where to start, except I pulled out my ASCLS-ND newsletter and started calling the SA chairs for ideas. We planned a great meeting and I have been helping with the meetings in Grand Forks ever since that day along with other members (Mary Coleman, Toscha Larson, Terri Hintz, Elaine Ramstad, Shannon Jongeward, Evonne Lopez). **Wow, what a benefit of ASCLS membership, I am part of a team!**

I don't recall when it happened, I guess my age and what I call "sometimers" (this is kind of like Alzheimer's but only happens sometimes) is catching up with me but I kept getting more and more involved with ASCLS-ND. I became Secretary/ Treasure of ASCLS-ND and then represented ASCLS-ND as a delegate to the national meeting as Pres-Elect-Elect in Nashville, Tenn. This was the first national meeting I had attended since 1982. I remember rooming with Elaine Ramstad, Linda Bossert and Jeannette Festvog. I attended the governance sessions and learned more about ASCLS as an organization and came to realize just what this professional group of laboratory scientists was actually all about. **Wow, what a benefit of ASCLS membership, I was elected to represent North Dakota!** I was proud to be a part of ASCLS-ND and sit on the floor of the House of Delegates and vote on important issues that directly affected our profession. **Wow, what a benefit of ASCLS membership, I had a voice; I could be heard; I could make a difference!** The words of Lavonne Steiner, "you will be a professional" meant more to me at that moment than anytime before. I was participating in the future of our profession.

This story doesn't end here but due to time and the possibility of limited space in this newsletter, I will come to a close. I have been attending the State, Regional and National ASCLS meetings for many years and I have met many colleagues across the country that I have developed great personal and professional relationships and can call on them anytime. **Wow, another benefit of ASCLS membership, I have a network all over the country!** Today, I am teaching our profession in a CLT program and the many benefits of ASCLS have been shown to me over and over. I love clinical laboratory science and my students have benefited from my membership in ASCLS. The opportunities that this organization has provided to me are endless. I encourage new members as well as members that have not been involved to become involved. It will be the best decision that you will ever make. I have reaped so many benefits from this great organization and now I am back again as Pres-Elect of ASCLS-ND. I can't wait to see what the future has in store for me. **Wow, what a benefit of ASCLS membership, somewhere along the line I became a professional!**

Note of Thanks: Mary Belanus

I would like to thank ASCLS-ND for the opportunity to represent North Dakota at the National ASCLS meeting in San Diego. It was an excellent meeting and it is so exciting to get involved again with this great organization. I have been attending the national ASCLS meeting for many years and I served as President of ASCLS-ND some time ago. In fact, I don't recall the year but as I was attending the governance sessions I started to reflect on why I was an ASCLS member and why I chose to get involved again. Many memories came back and I realized once again that I belonged to one of the greatest professional organization in laboratory medicine.

National Meeting Highlights



Members of the North Dakota Delegation from left to right are: Stacy Askvig, Victoria Welton, Mary Belanus, Dawn Michelson and Shannon Jongeward.



Members of the Board at the House of Delegates



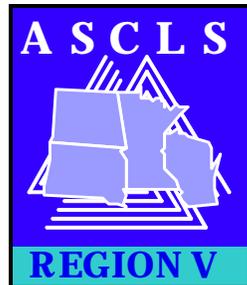
Rick Panning, ASCLS president and former Region V director giving his acceptance speech at the House of Delegates.

"The Connection" Takes Second Place at National Meeting

By: Dawn Michelson

The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science – North Dakota (ASCLS-ND) received second place for the state's society newsletter in print format at the ASCLS National Meeting held in San Diego July 16 – 21. "The Connection" competed against other state society newsletters to win the award. Publications newsletter editor, Shannon Jongeward was at the conference to receive her reward. Great job Shannon-congratulations!

2007 ASCLS Region V Meeting



"HARVESTING THE KNOWLEDGE"



October 1-3rd, 2007

Ramada Inn

Fargo, ND

Hosted by ASCLS-ND

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Leadership Roster 2007

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