



# BadgerLab Times

A Publication of the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science-Wisconsin

Fall, 2008

## President's Message

Stacy Walz



Happy Fall, y'all! I'm thrilled to be addressing you for the first time as president of ASCLS-WI. Many exciting things have been happening in our profession, and I commend you for being a member of the premiere CLS organization, staying on top of these important events. Kudos to everyone who contacted their congressional and senate representatives in the past year, asking them to sign legislation to repeal competitive bidding. This was a major victory for the laboratory, and it could not have happened without the grassroots efforts of our members nationwide. The national ASCLS office is launching an exciting new benefit for members to help continue similar grassroots efforts. They are introducing CapWhiz, an internet advocacy action tool that aims to easily connect citizens to their elected officials. Now it will be easier than ever to send an email or letter to your elected representative to request that they support legislation in the best interest of the lab. Coupled with this, I hope to strengthen our lines of communication among members of ASCLS-WI and

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## ASCLS Meeting Washington, DC July 29-August 2, 2008 Summary of Delegate Reports

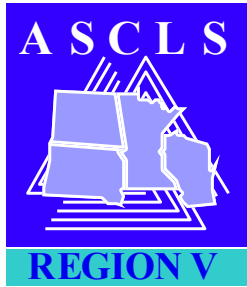
*Below are excerpts from reports submitted by Wisconsin's delegates to the ASCLS annual meeting. The total number of possible delegates from all states was 323. There were actually 245 delegates credentialed and 209 delegates were seated for the final House of Delegates. Wisconsin was one of the few states with a full delegation!!!*

*Go to [www.ascls-wi.org](http://www.ascls-wi.org) to see delegates' full reports & pictures.*

**Joyce White:** Keynoter, Michael Astion, started us on Wednesday with a definitive look at **Patient Safety and the Lab**. He stressed some of our ongoing concerns with "do more with less" and our "graying staff," giving good suggestions of ways to lessen lab errors. He raised a question, "How do we get doctors to quit ordering obsolete tests?" Real simple, amusing answer--take it off the order form and test menu! Every year the Expo seems grander than the year before. If it can be used in the lab, it is on display, somewhere on that floor. Take your pick of scientific sessions. Every base was covered: lab needs, pharmacotherapy, emotional intelligence, flow cytometry vs. differential, just to name a few. After nearly half a century I can still be excited and empowered by association with my peers!

**Kristine Pegues:** ASCLS has been advocating for our profession, to collaborate with other medical professionals, and to create an enticing field that draws in more young professionals, the future of our labs. At the **young professionals open forum** we discussed the need for a better system of maintaining and converting student members into first year professional (FYP) members. We are looking into creating a blog or a forum to keep our young professionals connected and give them an opportunity to be heard. As for our students being converted to young professional members, we need to combine our efforts of both FYP and

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*Minnesota\*North Dakota\*South Dakota\*Wisconsin*

## **ASCLS Region V Director's Message**

**Lezlee Koch**



### **The Art of Successful Juggling.....In a 3-Ring Circus!**

Every year when I attend Region V State Society meetings and then the national ASCLS meeting I am "WOWed" by all the clinical laboratory science practitioners that are 3-Ring Circus shining stars because they master the "Art of Successful Juggling" and find time to give of themselves for ASCLS, their profession and their states! ASCLS's voice, value and vision are ALIVE in REGION V. A sincere thank you to each of you that are currently serving or have served ASCLS at the local, state, regional, and national levels. It is through the giving of yourselves that ASCLS is what is today and what it will be in the future... you are the face, the heart and the strength that will allow us to make a difference in healthcare one step at a time.

Now on to the "Art of Successful Juggling"! When you balance or successfully juggle the meaningful things in your life, you're able to achieve maximum value from all. In our whirlwind society, many of us find ourselves juggling family, friends, work, professional involvement and personal time. When all of these are in perfect balance, we achieve more, grow more, and feel more fulfilled, powerful and effective. But if our juggling act crashes to the ground, it leads to feeling frustrated, anxious, apathetic, unhappy with work, and we begin to feel we are the victim of circumstances out of our control. It is at this moment that we need to realize that something in our life is out of balance and it's time to take action on the imbalance. This imbalance may not be from taking on another project or task, it may merely be that we have "dropped an essential ball" and that ball may be how we reinvest or nourish our personal and professional self because we are consumed with caring for the needs and wants of others.

So if you find yourself in the middle of a 3-Ring Circus, sitting on the floor with all your juggling balls laying on the ground around you.... It's not too late... just start successfully juggling again! Begin each new day with the urgency that you would if it were your last. Focus your efforts while keeping your spirit confidently relaxed. Value and enjoy all those around you while taking full responsibility for yourself and your professional growth. Take time to be professionally involved in ASCLS and your profession through networking and sharing of your God given talents. Allow yourself to become the best you can be. Remain open to new ideas and find a new meaning to happiness in giving when you share your knowledge with co-workers and professionals across the nation. Remember, you were born to do great things in clinical laboratory science. Live each moment with balance, enthusiasm, passion and purpose... and you will once again master "the art of successful juggling".

*Lezlee Koch*

ASCLS Region V Director



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### ASCLS Clinical Laboratory Educator's Conference (CLEC)

February 19-21, 2009: Denver, CO

### ASCLS Legislative Days

March 23-24, 2009: Washington, D.C.

### National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week

April 19-25, 2009

### ASCLS-WI Annual Meeting

April 26-28, 2009: Appleton, WI

### ASCLS Annual Meeting

July 21-25, 2009: Chicago, IL

*ASCLS Meeting/Delegate Reports-Continued from page 1 column 2*

the students. Creating an updated list is crucial to our ASCLS community. Please keep your e-mails current with ASCLS. ASCLS offers many opportunities to get continuing education credits. The **DNA MedED Café** is a great way to earn needed PACE credits and there is no registration fee. Just log on to the ASCLS website and you can register to listen to the webcasts. The best and most effective way to keep and recruit new members is to keep advocating every chance you find. There are many advantages of being and staying a member. The more we work together, the more things will change and improve for us as professionals and of course for the patients that we work so hard for everyday. ASCLS represents you as a laboratory professional, shouldn't you do the same for ASCLS?

**Kimberly Polsley:** The **Microbiology Scientific Assembly Meeting** covered several ongoing activities and opportunities to get involved within ASCLS. Those interested in being a part of the Micro SA, or just have an interest in microbiology, are encouraged to join the Micro SA listserv through the ASCLS website at <http://www.ascls-lists.org>. There also are several different types of listservs available on the ASCLS website for other areas of interest. In addition, several *volunteer opportunities within ASCLS are always available!* Anyone interested in volunteering in SA activities are encouraged to fill out a SA volunteer form at <http://www.ascls.org/leadership/sa/saVolForm.asp>. The **Consumer Laboratory Testing Information** website, offered through ASCLS, also expressed a need for volunteers to help answer questions from the general public. The website has been an increasingly popular resource for consumers and health care professionals for obtaining information about laboratory testing from qualified laboratory professionals like you. Current activities of the

Micro SA are discussion of the Micro Morphs Newsletter, identifying authors for scientific and technical articles for *ASCLS Today* and *Clinical Laboratory Science*, finding speakers for the 2009 Annual meeting in Chicago, creating a Micro SA logo and icon, and the possible development of a Micro SA webpage. If this fits your creativity, then sign-on!

**Stacy Walz:** Ten ASCLS members graduated from the first **Leadership Academy** at the 2008 Annual Meeting. Leadership Academy was created to 'jump start' select members' leadership skills in ASCLS. Ten more participants began the second Academy during the 2008 Annual Meeting and will 'graduate' at the 2009 Annual Meeting. Members work on projects that utilize leadership skills and promote our profession. Participants put together a '**Membership Recruitment Packet**' to be used by members in their local areas. Other projects include a 2-minute 'advertisement' for membership in ASCLS, a lovely book of 'stories' about how members grow through the years because of ASCLS, recruitment brochures, and sample 'thank you' notes for renewed members. All of these membership tools are available on the [www.ascls.org](http://www.ascls.org) web site for download and use. It would be great to see some participants from WI in the 2009-2010 Academy. Nominations are due in March. Participants agree to come to the 2009 and the 2010 Annual Meetings and the 2010 Legislative Symposium, participate in 6 teleconferences, work on 1-2 group projects, and do some leadership-related reading as part of the Academy.

**April Harkins:** Our national **membership committee** had plenty of discussion of where the memberships lapse and why. There are three charges for the committee on the table: 1) Implement a campaign strategy to promote the "value" of membership targeted at specific levels of practitioners; 2) Work with Student Forum to increase new student members by 5%; 3) Identify needs and wants of laboratory professionals and incorporate strategies to address these in the above charges. Concern centered around whether new members and "middle" members, those with 10-15 years in the profession, realize the benefits of belonging to our professional society. The membership packet recruiting material is a start. Perhaps we need to go to individual labs and clinics and talk to the laboratorians about ASCLS. For Wisconsin as well as other states, membership to ASCLS needs to be front and center at our local and state meetings. State meetings should be used as vehicles for really showing how our organization benefits laboratorians compared to other organizational membership.

**Linda Milson: Government Affairs Committee (GAC):** The goals/charges of this committee for the next year: These include adding a GAC page to the ASCLS website, sharing information with the membership in the Focus Column in the *CLS Journal*, appointing a liaison to GAC from the AGT and structuring a mechanism to share updates and strategies on licensure activities nationwide. Good news for our profession and patient well-being is that the **Competitive Bidding bill was repealed** for a period of 18 months. However, our efforts cannot stop there. ASCLS will take an active role in revamping the lab fee schedule most likely introducing a bill that will be a major topic of discussion for

*Continued on page 4 column 1*

the 2009 Legislative Symposium. Other topics included: **GAC 101** – the *bill to law* legislative process. Information will be shared via the website and possible in-person sessions at national/regional/state meetings. Health Care Reform 2009, including Title VII and workforce issues, will be discussed during the next congress. Also included in this session may be regulatory issues concerning genetic testing. **Cap Wiz** will be coming to the ASCLS membership in mid-August. It is a technological tool by which members can access current legislative issues and easily forward comments to state representatives. **NCA/NAACLS Update:** A task force has been appointed to develop a pass rate plan for educational programs with pass rates that are below the national average. The Site Process Committee will review and redesign the current forms used for the accreditation process. Another group is looking at the differences in selected quality indicators between graduates of NAACLS vs. non-NAACLS programs. Program numbers remain fairly constant but there has been a slight dip in both CLT and CLS graduates this last year. NCA and the BOR have come to agreement that there should be a single, unified certification exam.

**Linda Laatsch:** Plans are underway to rename the **Committee on Professional Affairs (CPA)** to “Committee for Promotion of the Profession”. Committee discussions centered on ways to communicate the role of clinical laboratory professionals to the community. Some of the ideas discussed were: 1) Host an evening session, at each year’s annual meeting, that covers a laboratory topic of keen interest to the public; 2) Provide a session about laboratory careers for high school counselors at each year’s CLEC meeting; 3) Develop an on-line “toolkit” for recruitment visits for members in branch societies; 4) Provide information on the ASCLS website to help members respond to their local media outlets whenever a story regarding the laboratory is in the news. Finances were discussed at the **ASCLS Issues Update**. The last couple of years ASCLS has seen a net profit, primarily due to the success of CLEC, the annual meeting, and the P.A.C.E. program. There are proposals to change the structure of the annual meeting to increase attendance while decreasing expenses.

**Cindy Koffman:** The P.A.C.E. committee’s main work this past year focused on a new system for awarding P.A.C.E. credits. Go to [www.ascls.org](http://www.ascls.org); on the front page under the “quick links” you will find the **CE Organizer**. This is a FREE service to all ASCLS members. The CE Organizer keeps track of your CE credits. Whenever you need a transcript, you simply select the time period you need the transcript to reflect, and the CE Organizer will print the transcript for you. In addition, all national meetings have eliminated the sign-in P.A.C.E. registration sheets or bar coding reading of badges. Instead, a unique code is given to participants at the end of the session. You then go to the CE Organizer on the ASCLS web site and enter the unique code for each session attended. This is automatically entered into your personal CE organizer. You are allowed to print as many copies of your P.A.C.E. form as needed. If you run

into problems, PLEASE let ASCLS know or contact Cindy Koffman at [koffman@kmoraine.com](mailto:koffman@kmoraine.com).

**Susan Stalewski:** I choose to write to you about **advocacy and professional membership**. ASCLS is very proud of its work to defeat the competitive bidding project. Wisconsin laboratory scientists should be particularly pleased with the end result of this work, as Southeastern Wisconsin was a targeted pilot region for the competitive bidding initiative. *If ASCLS did not exist, who would speak for you as a laboratory professional?* All organizations need leaders, workers and membership in significant numbers. There are many issues concerning our profession, including staffing shortages, salary, recognition, encroachment of other health professions into the realm of laboratory testing, and licensure. *If ASCLS did not exist, who would speak for you as a laboratory professional?* Wisconsin has much to be proud of -- our state society conducts an outstanding spring meeting. ASCLS-WI supports discounted membership for new graduates in the first two years after graduation, yet few new graduates and student members maintain their membership. *Is this because you don’t care if anyone speaks for you?* There are other professional organizations to belong to, and many of us do belong to them. Almost all collaborate with ASCLS -- ASCLS is the link between the others. Do you know about competitive bidding, professional licensure, patient safety initiatives, and the CLS doctorate? Each of these can have a huge impact on your profession and your job. Membership in ASCLS costs about 40 cents a day -- less than one stop at Starbucks a week. I challenge all CLS professionals that I know to activate their ASCLS membership. Go to [www.ascls.org](http://www.ascls.org) and follow the links. ASCLS is THE organization that actually knows what you do!

**Paul Martin:** It’s Saturday, late in the morning. The ASCLS House of Delegates has already been going for about an hour at the end of a full week of the ASCLS National Convention. The House is discussing a formal resolution on the Doctor of Clinical Laboratory Science (DCLS) position, but delegates hit an impasse. Being only human, my mind wanders to reflect what has taken place over the last few days. The hustle and bustle of arriving on Monday was quickly overshadowed by the daunting prospect of making a week of meetings, seminars, and exhibitions. Attending the **Student Forum Orientation**, something of an exercise in nostalgia after last year, gave me a chance to see the new faces of student leadership coming to ASCLS from across the nation. The Student Forum business meeting was Wednesday with a full slate of candidates. Thursday morning Region V Caucus rolled around bright and early. Friday was, thankfully, a slower day with a scientific assembly here, some social time there, and a little bit of sight-seeing in our nation’s capital to round it all off. This brings me back to Saturday and the DCLS discussion. Resolution on the DCLS wording finally winds up. Everyone seems content, and just as important, people seem satisfied that they had their say, which is after all the point of the House of Delegates. I feel privileged that I have been part of something much bigger than just my little part of the laboratory world.



## A Message from ASCLS Student Forum Chair

I was born Michele Yost on September 6, 1981 in the southern Philippines. My mother (Filipina), father (American-born of German parents), and I moved to Maggie Valley, NC right before I turned six so I would be able to enjoy an American education. After high school I moved to Charlotte, NC to try my hand at International Business. Even with good grades, I soon learned that this was of little interest to me.

I tried my hand at the wild (to say the least) side of life, which grew stale after a few years. I came to decide that I wanted to become a contributing member of society, so I went on to finish my Associates in Business, which really didn't open many fruitful doors (from my perspective). I needed to choose a major for a Bachelors degree. The Buddhism kicked in and I thought maybe I should help people, but I knew I no longer possessed the TLC or patience to be a nurse. (See what years of customer service can do to a person!)

Ahhh! The lab! Where the names of the innocent (and not so innocent) will remain undisclosed and I could be an equal opportunity do-gooder! I enrolled at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, NC with the goal of entering the workforce as soon as I graduated, working as a traveling clinical lab professional. I became involved as the VP, Treasurer, and SGA representative for the CLS club and once the classes got started I fell in love with all of the subjects. Parasites and viruses just fascinate me, so I would like to obtain a PhD with that concentration.

Being an involved student had more ups than downs so I ran for the NC Student Forum Chair at the Carolinas Clinical Connection in Wilmington, NC of March, 2008. This brought me to the 2008 ASCLS National Meeting in Washington DC where I got to rub elbows with some really important and really cool people in the CLS profession. Being at ASCLS really made me see what the Society does for its professionals, how important it is to the profession itself, and how important the profession is to our communities, our country, and our world. While I was in DC I was graciously appointed to the position of Region III Student Forum Chair as well as elected the ASCLS Student Director. I am enthusiastic about my new privileges and responsibilities and have already gotten some duties underway. Being a firm believer in doing things "like you mean it", I hope to represent the students well and make a positive difference in the CLS world while I am in office.

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ASCLS members across the country. I'd like to see the WI leadership roster mirror national's, so national can always have a point of contact for every committee and scientific assembly. Paramount to this connectivity, we absolutely need all current members to make sure their contact information in the ASCLS database is correct, especially email addresses. If you haven't yet renewed your membership in ASCLS, please go to [www.ascls.org](http://www.ascls.org) and renew immediately. Our organization is only as strong as its members! And finally, recruit, recruit, recruit! Tell every laboratory professional you know about the benefits of membership in ASCLS: promoting our VALUE in the medical community and beyond, providing a unified professional VOICE, and creating a VISION for our future!

*Stacy Walz  
ASCLS-WI President 2008-09*



## Elections

Be part of the future leadership of our State society by considering running for office or recommending a colleague for one of the following positions:

- President – Elect
- Treasurer
- Board of Directors Member – 2 positions
- Nominations Committee – 1 position

*Duties and Responsibilities* for these positions can be found in the Bylaws located on [www.ascls-wi.org](http://www.ascls-wi.org) If you need additional information or wish to nominate someone, please contact the Chair of the Nominations Committee, Sue Beglinger, at

[Beglinger@matcmadison.edu](mailto:Beglinger@matcmadison.edu)

## Renew Your Membership in ASCLS!

*If you have not yet renewed your ASCLS and ASCLS-WI membership, please do so today. Go to the ASCLS website ([www.ascls.org](http://www.ascls.org)) and click on the Membership section; there is an online renewal form. Memberships run from August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008–July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009*



Be sure to check out our website for updated information: [www.ascls-wi.org](http://www.ascls-wi.org)



# ASCLS Awards 2008

Several ASCLS-WI members received awards and recognition at the ASCLS Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. this past July:

**Paul Martin**, ASCLS-WI and Region V Student Forum Chair for 2007-08, won the **ASCLS Student Forum Leadership Award**.

Nineteen ASCLS members from across the country were honored as nominees for the **ASCLS Member of the Year Award**. Wisconsin's **Linda Milson** was recognized as one of these nominees.

**April Harkins**, ASCLS-WI Board Member, won a **1st place award** for her poster, *Characterizing Phospholipase D1 Activity in C. albicans Isolates from Different Host Sites*.

**Omicron Sigma Awards** went to:

**State Level:** Donna Byrne, April Harkins, Linda Laatsch, Patricia Limbach, Mark Maticzek, Sue Miller, Linda Milson, Susan Stalewski, Talora Zank

**Regional Level:** Sue Beglinger, Paul Martin, Stacy Walz

**National Level:** Mary Jo Tietge, Joyce White

**Keys to the Future Awards:** Rebecca Beckmann, Chris Gries, Kim Murray

## BadgerLab Times

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### Article Submission

Articles for BadgerLab Times should be submitted in Microsoft Word or .pdf format and sent electronically to [linda.laatsch@marquette.edu](mailto:linda.laatsch@marquette.edu).

All articles published represent the opinions of the the authors and do not reflect the official policy of ASCLS-WI or the authors' institutions unless specified.

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## Wisconsin Society for Clinical Laboratory Science SCHOLARSHIP FUND, Inc.

### Clinical Year CLS Scholarships Awarded 2008-09:

#### Mary Muckerheide Clinical year scholarship recipient:

**Phillip Prusinski**

Hometown: Marshfield, WI

Attends: UW Oshkosh

Interning at: Marshfield Laboratories, Marshfield

#### Clinical Year Scholarship recipients:

**Jackie Krzykowski**

Hometown: Junction City, WI

Attends: UW Stevens Point

Interning at: St. Michaels Hospital, Stevens Point

**Amanda Otto**

Hometown: Fremont, WI

Attends: UW Oshkosh

Interning at: Zablocki VA Medical Center,  
Milwaukee

**Anna Peterson Sanders**

Hometown: Appleton, WI

Attends: UW Oshkosh

Interning at: Affinity Health System St. Elizabeth's  
Hospital, Appleton

**Erin VanStrydonk**

Hometown: Tomahawk, WI

Attends: UW Stevens Point

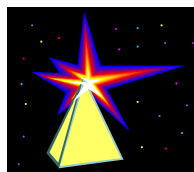
Interning at: St. Mary's Hospital, Green Bay

All money for scholarships comes from member donations or proceeds from the Silent Auction held at our annual state meeting. Please consider making a donation. Also, start thinking about items that you might be able to donate to the April 2009 Silent Auction. Questions?? Contact Judy Wiltgen at [judyau@yahoo.com](mailto:judyau@yahoo.com).

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*Congratulations to All of the Winners!*

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Current and past issues of BadgerLab Times are posted on our website. Go to [www.ascls-wi.org](http://www.ascls-wi.org), click on the "Newsletters" link, and view each issue in color.



## We Need Your Comments! Licensure Initiatives Moving Forward in Wisconsin

We are reminded daily that diagnostic testing has significant impact on patient care. Laboratory professionals must take steps to assure that quality testing correlates to positive patient outcomes. As the shortage of clinical laboratory professionals continues in the workplace, one alternate practice that employers may opt for is to hire less educated, non-certified laboratory personnel. Studies show that laboratory errors increase as the educational level/training of the persons performing the tests decreases. In December 2007, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services finalized their review of laboratory statistics and reported the top ten deficiencies seen in labs across the country. Comprising 15% of all lab errors are the top three:

- Specimen acceptability, microscopic examination and step-by-step performance of procedures
- Complete test reports with correct units, patient identification and correct

interpretation of results

- Use of outdated reagents, controls and calibration materials

Testing errors result in negative patient outcomes. One way to improve quality testing in diagnostic laboratories is to ensure properly trained and qualified laboratory professionals (MLT, MT, CT, HT, etc.) perform the testing. Because laboratory professionals are not licensed, there is nothing to prevent others (nurses, pharmacists, high school students) from performing laboratory testing. To the contrary, laboratory professionals are prevented from performing tasks protected by the licensure of nurses, pharmacists, etc.

The primary reason for licensure is to assure quality testing in laboratories with a reduction in medical errors – positive impact on patient safety. For the clinical laboratory professional, it means preservation of our scope of practice.

**Please post** this article in your lab and encourage each and every employee to contact one of the task force members listed below.

Sue Beglinger [beglinger@matcmadison.edu](mailto:beglinger@matcmadison.edu)  
 Toni Kuehl [toni.kuehl@uhsi.org](mailto:toni.kuehl@uhsi.org)  
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 Mary Jo Tietge [maryjot@charter.net](mailto:maryjot@charter.net)



## ASCLS-WI 2009 Spring Meeting

Hosted by Fox Valley Society for Clinical Laboratory Science

April 26-28, 2009

Radisson Paper Valley Hotel  
Appleton, WI

## Update Your Contact Information

Please take a few minutes to update your contact information for ASCLS. You are the only one who can make these corrections; ASCLS relies on its members to update their membership profile on the web. How do you do this?

**Go to the ASCLS website (Members Center/Existing Members):**

<http://www.ascls.org/members/login.asp>. **Login** (register for a login if you don't already have one). Then go ahead and **Modify your Membership Profile**.



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