

# Montana Laboratory News

FALL 2023

Editor Cara Bushmaker



**ASCLS**  
The American Society for  
Clinical Laboratory Science  
**MONTANA**

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Grei Sebastian

## Legislative Symposium Preview:

The ASCLS organization is holding its annual Legislative Symposium in Washington, D.C. October 23-24<sup>th</sup>.

This yearly event brings together ASCLS constituent members from each state to meet with their Congressional representatives and senators on Capitol Hill. Each attendee learns how to present and discuss important laboratory issues with their Congressional representatives. This is a great opportunity to learn how to lobby for key issues and solutions for the laboratory industry. The yearly event is well received by each state representatives and they look forward to meeting with ASCLS members.

The issues that will be discussed at this year's Legislative Symposium include:

#### 1. PAMA (Protecting Access to Medicare Act - 2014)

Medicare payments cuts threaten access to clinical laboratory services due to drastic fee reductions for the laboratory testing reimbursements. Under the first year of cuts in 2014, the Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule (CLFS) resulted in 10 % year cuts in 2018, 2019 and 2020. The planned fee cuts for 2023 were delayed until 2024 when last minute legislation at the end of 2022 cleared the House and Senate - delaying again cuts to the CLFS.

#### 2. SALSA (Savings to Laboratory Services Act)

The solution to the PAMA for the Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule cuts is to pass the SALSA Act. This Act would simplify the reporting process to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid and would determine an equitable fee schedule for laboratory services. A sustainability and fair fee schedule will protect patients, our public health and provide increased incentives for testing and diagnostic innovations.

Learn more about PAMA and SALSA at [StopLabCuts.org](http://StopLabCuts.org). You can make a difference by sending an email to your Montana Congressional members with one click at this website.

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## **ASCLS 2023 Scientific Research Award Winner**

**The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS) presented the 2023 Scientific Research Award to Francis Grei Sebastian during the ASCLS, AGT, SAFMLS Joint Annual Meeting last June 28, 2023, at Providence, Rhode Island. Mr. Sebastian is a full-time laboratory manager at Ruby Valley Medical Center, Sheridan, Montana, one of the ASCLS-MT board of directors, and pursuing a Doctorate in Healthcare Administration at Oklahoma State University.**

**The ASCLS Scientific Research Award recognizes developed scientific research in clinical laboratory science, which may include new test methodology, reagent development, test development, quality assurance, quality control program, and instrument development. The scientific merit must incorporate quality and patient care improvement benefits, uniqueness, timely and critical to laboratory practices, and valuable impact on the ASCLS Body of Knowledge or Scope of Practice.**

**More than twenty percent of healthcare system spending is wasted from many sources in healthcare systems in the United States of America (USA) and country members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) worldwide. The cost of quality (COQ) model has not been fully integrated into clinical laboratories in the USA and most parts of the globe; thus, most non-management laboratory staff are unaware of the laboratory's financial status, making them care less about the cost of their work activities.**



Research Award cont...

**Mr. Sebastian's research is "Cost of Quality Model: Tool in Diagnosing and Improving Quality Cost Management in a Critical Access Hospital Laboratory." The study challenged to know if determining and examining the components of COQ (prevention, appraisal, and failure costs) influenced the improvement of the quality cost management system in a critical access hospital (CAH) laboratory. It also verified the benefits of the model in healthcare settings as realized in other industries. The applied COQ model can improve a clinical laboratory's profitability, savings, budgeting, and processes. It also bridged the gaps and uncertainties of COQ application in the laboratory or healthcare industry. The COQ model effectively identified the wastes and reevaluated processes and cost outcomes. This is relevant, especially in organizations with high operational costs and employees who care less about the financial side of operations. Finally, integrating the COQ principles in the laboratory served as a tool to balance quality and cost management.**

**It is common to hear hospital or laboratory managers or administrative staff promoting cost-reduction strategies to the extent of compromising quality. The fact is that "healthcare is expensive" and competitive, but something can be done to make the situation better. One of the solutions is to use the COQ model, which is a concrete tool and produces positive outcomes.**



**#LABVOCATE**

Legislative Preview cont...

### 3. Laboratory Developed Testing (LDT)

The FDA announced on September 29, 2023, the publication of a proposed rule that would consider LDT's as medical devices subject to FDA regulation including labs that develop their own tests. With the publication of the FDA draft rule, public comment now is open until December 2, 2023. The oversight by the FDA for LDT is a controversial area for laboratories that develop their own testing. This oversight may add new layers of compliance and cost to developing new tests but add more assurance that lab developed tests work as intended as they are increasingly used to drive diagnostic decisions.

You can comment at: FDA Notice [here](#).

[Register to attend the virtual Legislative Symposium NOW](#)

# Joint Annual Meeting



## ASCLS-MT Delegates:

- Jennifer Wolcott
- Anne Tate
- Holly Weinberg
- Ethan Mercer
- Grei Sebastian
- Abbey Wichman



Constituent Society Website Award  
1st Place – ASCLS-Montana      Anna Adams, Webmaster

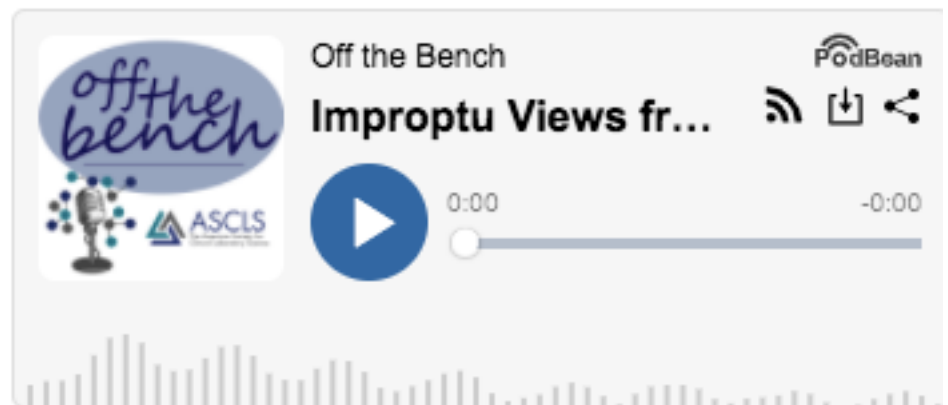
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT   ABOUT ASCLSMT   GET INVOLVED   COMMUNICATIONS   NEWS

ASCLS   The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science

#IamASCLS



Clinical Laboratory Science (CLS) is the official journal of the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science. CLS is an online journal published quarterly and features articles on the very latest in research, education, and government actions affecting clinical laboratory science professionals and their integration and impact on the healthcare system.

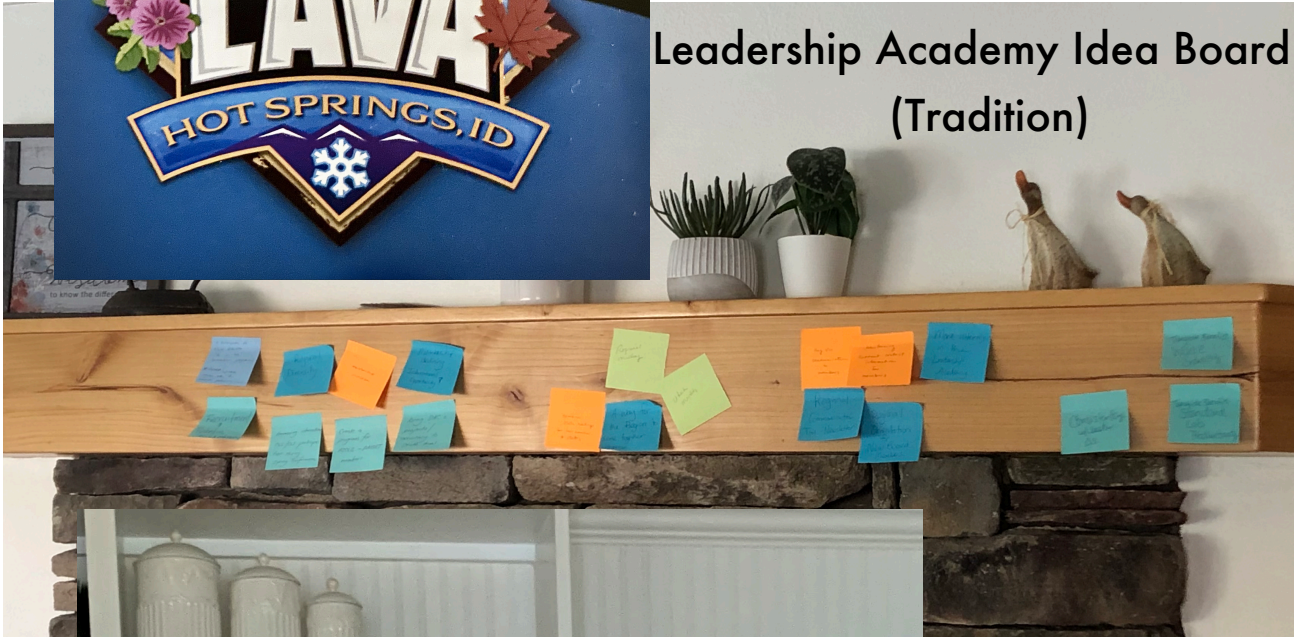


**September 29, 2023.** In this episode, co-hosts Sophia Chandrasekar and Doryan Redding continue going through the “Impromptu Views” recorded at the 2023 ASCLS, AGT & SAFMLS Joint Annual Meeting and dive into the importance of self-advocacy, community, and outreach in the laboratory field.

# Leadership Academy Retreat 2023



Leadership Academy Idea Board  
(Tradition)



## Interns:

Jin Heo (left)  
Grei Sebastian  
(right)



Team Activity

IN  
THIS  
ISSUE:

[Legislative  
Symposium](#)

[JAM  
Overview](#)

[Off The  
Bench](#)

[JAM Award](#)

# Leadership Academy Schedule:

- Leadership **Styles**
- Project Planning
- Team Building
- Time Management
- Recruitment and Retention
- Emotional Intelligence
- Presentation Skills
- Communication Styles
- Burnout/Stress Management



# ASCLS UPCOMING EVENTS:

- 1. 2023 Laboratory Legislative Symposium**  
October 23-24  
Alexandria, VA
- 2. 2024 Emerging Laboratory Managers Collaborative Conference**  
January 19-20  
Virtual
- 3. 2024 Clinical Laboratory Educators Conference**  
February 22-24  
Las Vegas, NV
- 4. ASCLS-MT State Meeting**  
April -TBD  
Billings, MT
- 5. 2024 ASCLS, AGT & SAFMLS Joint Annual Meeting**  
July 7-11  
Pittsburgh, PA

ASCLS-MT is on social media...be sure to check us out!



Follow us to stay up on the latest news affecting our profession, conference updates, technology, government affairs and society updates.

If you have haven't already, follow us, like us and show us some love! You can also stay connected with us and other laboratorians with:

#IAmASCLS #ASCLSMT #ASCLS #Lab4Life #IMSS #AintItGreatInRegionEight

