

Montana Laboratory

News Late Spring 2021



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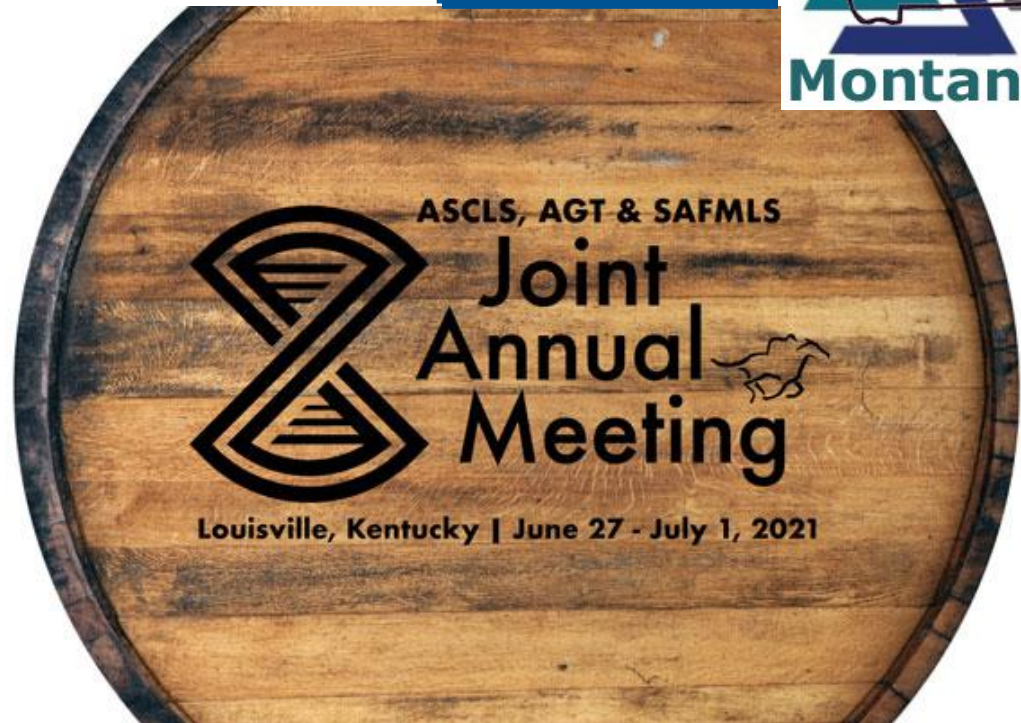
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The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS), Association of Genetic Technologists (AGT), and Society of American Federal Medical Laboratory Scientists (SAFMLS) will hold a single Joint Annual Meeting (JAM), integrating educational programs, abstracts/posters, and industry engagement platforms. The format allows for an expanded and broadened educational program and gives attendees access to a wider range of industry partners. The groups' planning committees are focused on adopting innovative, new approaches to learning and industry engagement to build a unique, new attendee experience.

Face-to-Face Attendance: Following CDC and state of Kentucky guidelines on social distancing, mask requirements, and hygiene, JAM will be held at the Omni Louisville Hotel. In addition to the educational program, poster presentations, industry partner exhibits, and networking activities, you'll also receive access to all recorded JAM educational sessions for 30 days after the event, providing you with over 60 hours of P.A.C.E.®-approved credit. In order to provide a safe environment for attendees, speakers, and industry partners, face-to-face attendance may be limited.

Virtual Attendance: You will have access to the over 60 educational sessions, either streamed live or recorded; industry partner virtual activities; virtual poster presentations; and virtual networking events. You will also have access to all recorded JAM educational sessions for 30 days after the event. You get to choose which session and events you want to attend live and which recordings you will view later when the time is right. Create a personalized JAM experience that fits your life.

ASCLS-MT SPRING QUARTERLY MEETING PAC UPDATE

Anna Adams, MPH, MLS-ASCP cm , REHS

Update from the PAC Chair, General Information

Hello, my name is Anna Adams and I stepped in to the ASCLS-MT Board of Director, as the PAC Chair, around this time in 2020 and due to scheduling constraints with my current employer, I have yet to be able to make it to the state meeting, nor any of the quarterly board meetings. New to the PAC chair position, I have been researching what is involved, and what it may look like in our current virtual world.

In terms of the 2021 State ASCLS-MT Spring Meeting, I wanted to share a brief informational update on what the PAC is, for any new members/students who may not know or as a refresher to veteran members.

Following an unprecedented year that has presented unforeseen challenges to our profession including but not limited to supply chain shortages, workforce shortages, and healthcare system overload and at times burn-out. It is now more important than ever, with the advent of a vaccine and the potential for a brighter future to reinvigorate the power of the ASCLS PAC.

I have compiled the following information from the ASCLS National PAC website, spearheaded by National ASCLS Political Action Committee Chair Stephanie Mabry.

The acronym PAC stands for Political Action Committee, a voluntary nonprofit organization that is created to provide financial and educational support for election campaigns of responsible candidates for Congress. All PACs are legal, ethical and strictly regulated by federal law, which limits the amount of individual contributions and requires full and regular disclosure.

ASCLS/PAC offers a simple, convenient way to influence elections and actively participate in the federal decision making process. Through the PAC, ASCLS members are able to unite together to gain the attention of candidates for national political office. In another sense, your support and generous contributions to the ASCLS/PAC represents your Positive Action and Commitment.

What types of legislative issues does PAC money address?

Our current legislative requests to Congress are to:

Provide financial support for laboratories performing COVID-19 testing through an Emergency Laboratory Surge Capacity Fund and through Title III of the Defense Production Act.

Enact and fund the Allied Health Personnel Shortage Act (H.R. 6302) to establish scholarships and loan repayment to alleviate shortages of clinical laboratory personnel and other allied health professionals.

Provide funding to educational programs, including laboratory preceptorships, to expand the number of students that programs can accept in the fall.

By financially supporting candidates who support and back these issues, or who hold key positions within the pertinent congressional committees necessary to make these things happen, the ASCLS PAC plays a key role in moving this legislative agenda forward.

Why should I donate?

At current member donation levels to the PAC, ASCLS PAC would be able to make approximately 8-10 campaign contributions a year. However, ASCLS PAC desires to make 25-30 contributions each year to make significant headway in pushing our legislative agenda. To make that happen, we need your help and financial contribution to the PAC.

Furthermore, as laboratory professionals, we are bound by our professional duty to “actively seek to change those laws and regulations that do not meet the high standards of care and practice.” As an ASCLS member, you “pledge to uphold my duty to Patients, the Profession

and Society by” [among other things] “changing conditions where necessary to advance the best interests of patients.”

Current financial reimbursement of laboratory testing and severe workforce shortages are NOT in the best interest of patients. While we cannot all travel to Washington, D.C., and knock on doors ourselves, especially in light of current conditions, we CAN all resolve to donate to the PAC, and put our money where our mouth, and our professional responsibility, is.

What amount should I donate?

As an individual, you can donate anywhere from \$20 to \$2,000. If every ASCLS member donated the \$20 minimum, we would reach our goal of 25-30 campaign contributions in a year. However, ASCLS PAC also has a recognition structure for dedicated donors who go above and beyond.

For a \$40 donation, donors will receive the annual PAC Pin as a thank you gift. The annual PAC pin comes in a year-specific color. For those who donate \$300 total in one membership year, the thank you gift is a special gold-colored PAC Pin. And the highest recognition, for those who donate \$300 total for three consecutive years, is the “Platinum Pin,” an eye-catching silver-toned pin with three embedded red, white, and blue glass jewels.

Additionally, the ASCLS region with the highest total donations will be recognized at the House of Delegates with the traveling “PAC-tastic Trophy,” which currently resides in Region V. Along with the dazzling trophy, the winning region secures enjoyable bragging rights until the trophy comes back up for grabs at the next Laboratory Legislative Symposium or Joint Annual Meeting!

How do I donate?

ASCLS PAC has an easy-to-use Square donation form.

Donations can also be made through the “DONATE” link in the upper right corner of the ASCLS home page

References:

<https://members.ascls.org/content.asp?admin=Y&contentid=150%20>

<https://ascls.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/solicitation.pdf>

For more information, please feel free to contact us via the [CONTACT US](#) now section:

Anna Adams, MPH, MLS(ASCP)CM

ASCLS Montana Political Action Committee Chair

Stephanie K. Mabry MS, MLS(ASCP)CMSCCM

ASCLS Political Action Committee Chair

ASCLS-Michigan Past-President



Stay in touch virtually!

As members of ASCLS one of your most valuable resources is the [ASCLS Connect Community](#)! Each year you can customize your member community to receive email updates regarding our state society news/ updates, any laboratory specialty of interest, and hot topics in the laboratory world. Stay connected to our membership across the US and across our big sky state. The most resources are at our fingertips via the [Connect Community](#), download the app today.

ASCLS Connect Community and Mobile App


Connect through the Online Community at connect.ascls.org

Download a New App to Access the Connect Community on Your Mobile Device

Convenient. The app keeps you logged in, making the entire Connect Community (and all its functions) just an icon away.

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1. Go to the [Google Play store](#) or the [Apple App Store](#) and download the **MemberCentric** app.
2. Search for ASCLS when prompted to "Find your organization."
3. Log in using your credentials for your ASCLS member account.

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Are you interested in learning details about molecular testing and the laboratory workflow that is being used to test for COVID-19?

[LEARN MORE ABOUT COVID-19 TESTING](#)

SPOTLIGHT ON LABORATORY SAFETY

If you search for top motivational movie speeches, you will see things that might work in real life. The President's speech from Independence Day (1996), for example, might influence you to never be oppressed by alien tyranny. Freedom will be your rally cry after listening to William Wallace in Braveheart (1995), or Maximus from Gladiator (2000) can speak to your heart about teamwork. Unfortunately, such speeches do not tend to maintain motivation for great lengths of time. Also, none of them will translate to a motivational discussion about safety with your staff.

Over the years I have watched what motivates people to do the right thing or take the safe actions in the laboratory, and that motivation varies. Different groups of people are persuaded by different forces, and understanding that can help you move your lab safety culture in the direction you desire. You may not agree with or even like some of the influencers, but learning them can help you be more effective in achieving overall safety compliance.

First, money is a motivator for people in all kinds of circumstances, and it can be true for lab safety as well. Lab staff who are concerned about finances are more open to following some lab safety practices if they understand the cost savings. Obviously, lab injuries and exposures cost the department both monetarily and with staff absences. Following proper regulations can reduce costly citations and fines that can be levied by organizations like OSHA, the EPA, or CMS. Some lab team members want funds available for new equipment or more staff. Use that to encourage them to follow proper safety procedures. Make sure staff properly segregates waste in the lab, for example, since doing things like placing paper into a sharps container costs the department extra money. Hospital and lab leadership also respond well to financial motivation. If you need something fixed or replaced because it is unsafe, always explain the financial consequences to the facility if the fix is not approved.

Knowledge is a second powerful safety stimulator for some staff. Understanding the consequences of poor safety behaviors will discourage some, and education about those consequences needs to be given regularly. Let's look at waste disposal again- those who are concerned about the environment should know that tossing clean items into a biohazard container could increase the need for biohazard landfills in the area- something we should avoid. Talking about the follow up testing and unpleasant effects of prophylaxis following an exposure from an unknown source can be very eye-opening. It may spur staff to be more careful when potential exposure situations arise.

You might not like to hear that punishment can be a third motivator for correct behaviors, but for some staff members it is. Sometimes, explaining that a written corrective counseling or even termination will occur if safety practices are not followed will keep laboratorians working carefully and correctly. No one wants to "threaten" people to do the right things, but there will be those who are only motivated by not wanting to "get in trouble." Knowing who those employees are can be important to guiding your leadership approach when working with them.

Lastly, some lab staff are inspired to act safely because the work environment is designed to make doing so easy. PPE is readily available- lab coats of all sizes are accessible, gloves are out and not in a drawer, and face protection is mounted conveniently. There are hooks for lab coats near exit doors and hand washing sinks so that staff can properly doff and exit. Cleaning supplies and spill kits are readily available and instructions to use them are posted and up to date. Warning signs are there for staff and for visitors not used to the dangers in the department. I know that many labs are older, and the physical layout is not always conducive to making safety easy, but there are always steps that can be taken in order to make safety easier to achieve. You may need to step back and look at your environment with fresh eyes in order to envision what can be done to make improvements.

Think about what incentives are important to you when it comes to lab safety. Is it simply self-preservation? That's good, but for many who are complacent about safety, their motivation may be different. Finding their reasons to be safe is a worthwhile task. It helps you understand better who your staff is as a people, and it will help you gain expertise for providing the stimuli they need to continue to work safely today and every day.

By Dan Scungiol May 22nd, 2021

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

5 Years:

Abou Drammeh
MyLinda Lovell
BreeAnn Cossitt

10 Years:

Carl Kirchner
Kevin Benge

20 Years:

JoAnn Smith
Theresa Kirby

25 Years:

Debbie Gibson
Barb Henderson

30 Years:

Cheri Heit-Allen
Gregg Rader
Joni Gilstrap
Susie Zanto
Darcy Birkoski

40 Years:

Vicki Rice

45 YEARS:

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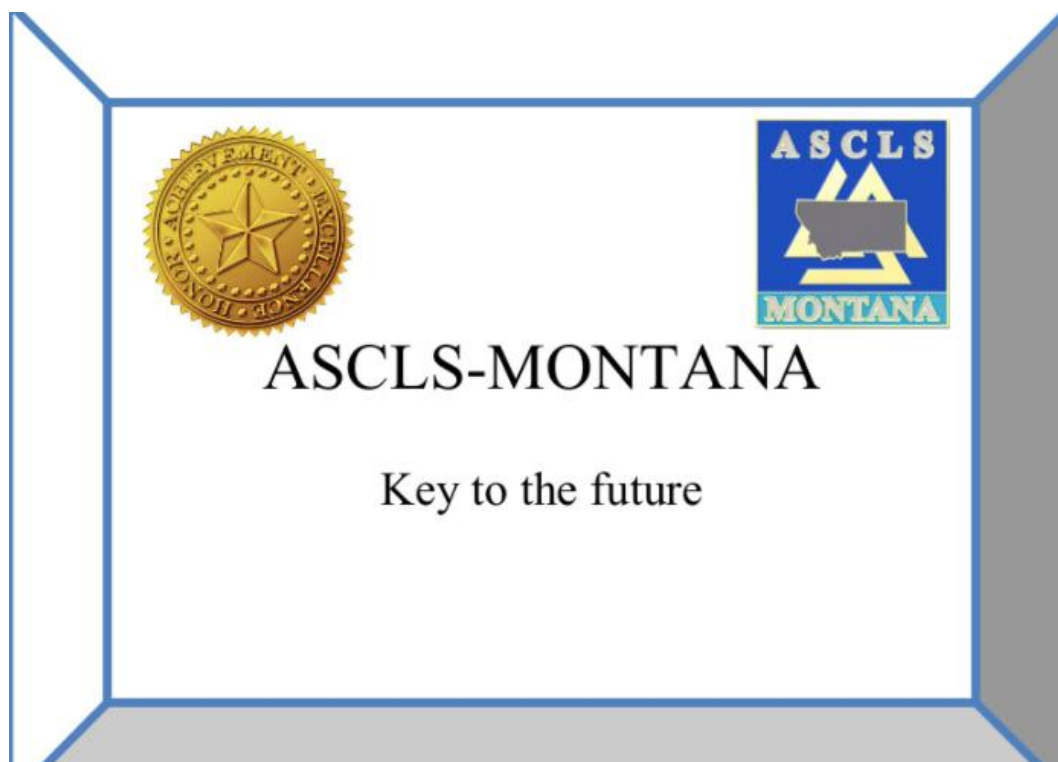
Keep up to date on the latest COVID-19 case counts, hospitalizations, and active cases by county. The state laboratory has expanded hours 7 days a week.

Watch for updates via email!

[Montana Response-COVID-19](#)



Maria Rodriguez~Joni Gilstrap~Kelly Amidei~Tiffany Ashworth~
Suzanne Hartrich~Kay Rasmussen~Victoria Rensink ~Jennifer Wolcott~
Susie Zanto~Cara Bushmaker~Holly Weinberg~



~Jennifer Wolcott~Suzanne Hartrich~



American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science – Montana Constituent Society

STUDENT OF THE YEAR

Ashley Boehm

April 17, 2021

Abbey Wichman



American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science – Montana Constituent Society

STUDENT RESEARCH AWARD

Ticha Padgett-Stewart

Machine Learning and Urine Cultures

April 17, 2021

Abbey Wichman
ASCLS-MT President



American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science – Montana Constituent Society

MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Abbey Wichman

April 17, 2021



PODCASTS

The Off the Bench podcast series discusses scientific and not-so-scientific ideas in laboratory medicine. Join the **ASCLS Off the Bench Facebook Group** to continue the discussions and share your feedback. Let's share ideas and talk nerdy.



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ABOUT

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I'M ALL IN!

JOIN US IN JACKSON FOR IMSS IF YOU'RE FEELING
LUCKY THIS FALL!



American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science



PRESENTS

The 58th Annual Intermountain States Seminar

October 3-5 2021



Snow King Resort
Jackson Hole, Wyoming

Continuing
Education

Each day begins with informative General Sessions followed by breakout sessions on a variety of topics and disciplines in the practice of clinical laboratory science

Industry
Engagement

Our Exhibit Hall will showcase new or enhanced instrumentation, reagents, and supplies used in the laboratory every day!

Networking

There are multiple breaks and exhibitor sessions allowing plenty of time to network with your colleagues



Visit: <http://asclsregion8.org/IMSS/> for more information and to book your stay

ASCLS UPCOMING EVENTS:

1. Joint Annual Meeting

2021 Annual Meeting - June 27-July 1

Omni Louisville Hotel, Louisville, KY

2. [IMSS](#)

2021 Intermountain States Seminar - October 3-5

Jackson Hole, WY

3. Legislative Symposium

2021 Legislative Symposium - October 25th

Alexandria, VA

ASCLS-MT IS ON SOCIAL MEDIA...BE SURE TO CHECK US OUT!



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Explore the ASCLS-MT website by clicking on the graphic below.

