



Spring 2020 Edition

Focus ASLCS - ID

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT MARY COBOS

When a movie becomes a real world scenario!

What a year 2020 has started out to be! This has been a year of unprecedented events that have taken us all by surprise and changed almost everything about how we live, eat, work, shop, socialize, communicate, and even buy **toilet paper**! I thought it would be interesting to watch the movie "Outbreak" which came out in 1995 last night with my family. As I watched the movie and how it evolved, I thought about COVID-19. It is remarkable how quickly one host can create a pandemic in such a short time. While there are aspects of the movie that are obviously fake or not applicable to COVID-19, there are so many that hit home. There are many who have watched loved ones become sick from this virus. There are some who have lost loved ones to the virus. We've seen PAPRS and N95 masks used in our hospitals and communities. We've watched as our entire country has slowly shut itself down with stay at home mandates. Everywhere I go; there are people wearing masks and gloves. Signs in store windows warning of closures or limited services. Children are at home learning in a virtual setting with teachers through webex and other online means. How things have changed in just a couple of months!

In the midst of all that, I want to shine on some of the great things that have come out of it. It has also been an innovative year for laboratory technology as we have seen PCR and other COVID-19 tests created and made available in record time. We have adapted to drive through collection sites and our labs have brought on and validated PCR and antibody testing faster than ever! The lab community was called upon when COVID-19 hit our shores and we answered in a most tremendous way! I want to extend my thanks to each of you and your laboratories for their efforts in COVID-19 sample collection and testing. Together we can accomplish anything!

As part of my goal to bring recognition to our labs across the state, I was able to get Governor Little to sign a proclamation declaring April 19-25 Medical Laboratory Professionals week. The proclamation somehow made its way from Boise to Idaho Falls with a few stops along the way. Please click on the link below to see the journey of recognition across our beautiful state during a time when our laboratorians needed it most! You are all my HEROS!

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/um44qndp8273kig/Lab%20Week%202020%20%20HD%20108op.mov?dl=0>

Please don't forget to mark your calendars for our first ever **VIRTUAL annual business meeting coming up Saturday May 16th from 0900-1000**. We will meet via ZOOM and I would love to have you all attend and participate in this great event! I will see you all there!

Sincerely,

Mary Cobos, MLS (ASCP)^{CM}

ASCLS-Idaho President



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ASCLS Idaho Annual Business meeting May 16, 2020 9am
- Virtual National Meeting June 28th—July 2nd
- IMSS October 18-20th



MECHELLE REEVE

Mechelle Reeve is a native of Utah and obtained her education and MLS degree at Weber State University. She did two summer internships at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota in the Hematopathology Morphology lab where she gained invaluable experience. She has been an MLS for over 10 years working as a Generalist, Hematology Lead, and Blood Bank Key Operator.

Mechelle enjoys working as an MLS, being involved with the lab, committees, and takes on extra projects whether asked to or not. She loves

teaching coworkers, students, and sharing her knowledge and experience with them along with promoting and educating people about the laboratory. She has lived in Idaho 7 years now and since moving here has actively been involved in ASCLS every year participating in local and national conventions, meetings, board positions, and likes getting to know her fellow Idaho lab professionals.

Mechelle enjoys traveling both in the US and internationally. She loves the outdoors, swimming, hiking, kayaking, and playing the piano.

Nominations for President Elect 2020-2021 Mechelle Reeve and Hollie Bearce.

[Click here to vote!](#)

NOMINATIONS

PRESIDENT ELECT

MECHELLE REEVE

HOLLIE BEARCE

SECRETARY

DOUG POWELL

DEBBIE CUTFORTH

2 YEAR BOARD MEMBER

KATE DEANGELO

JESSICA LAWLESS

DELEGATES FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING

KATE DEANGELO

MECHELLE REEVE

DEBBIE SHELL

HOLLIE BEARCE

Hollie earned a dual bachelor's degree in Biochemistry and Italian Studies from the University of Washington. Shortly after college, she moved to Idaho and worked in private research developing monoclonal antibodies. After learning about Medical Laboratory Science, she pursued a post-bachelor's degree from Idaho State University and continued on to earn a Master's degree. Hollie is currently the laboratory supervisor for St. Luke's Wood River Laboratory. Hollie has been an active member since joining ASCLS in 2015 as a Region VIII Student Representative and has served many roles in the past 5 years. In 2015, she was the recipient of both the "Keys to the Future" award from ASCLS Idaho and "Omicron Sigma" award from ASCLS Region VIII. She has been an active participant in local, regional and national events. Additionally, in 2019 she was recognized by ASCLS with the "Voices Under 40" award.

Hollie enjoys spending time with her family. Her favorite activities include: hiking, biking and skiing. In her spare time, she dabbles in theater and piano. In light of the recent COVID19 pandemic, she has mastered several virtual/online platforms to stay connected with family, friends, local community and hospital network.



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE: DEBBIE SHELL

The Allied Health Professional Shortage Act (H.R. 6302), sponsored by Rep. David Cicilline (D-RI), was introduced in the House of Representatives on March 19, 2020, and was referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. This legislation would provide scholarship and loan payment programs for allied health professionals, with a period of obligated service in personnel shortage areas, and would authorize \$25 Million from 2021-2025. There is currently no Senate companion bill.

Identical versions of the **VALID Act of 2020** (H.R. 6102/Sen. 3404) were introduced in the House (Rep. Diana DeGette [D-CO] and Rep. Larry Buschon [R-IN]) and the Senate (Sen. Richard Burr [R-NC] and Sen. Michael Bennet [D-CO]) on March 5, 2020. This legislation was referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, and creates a new laboratory test category called “in vitro clinical tests” (IVCT), currently referred to in the laboratory community as laboratory developed tests. It gives the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the authority to review and approve these tests using a risk-based framework, and would “grandfather” all current IVCT’s, with new high-risk tests required to go through pre-market review.

Also related to laboratory developed tests, the **Verified Innovative Testing in American Laboratories Act of 2020, or VITAL Act of 2020**, was introduced in the Senate by Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) on March 17, and was referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. This legislation grants CLIA, through the Public Health Service Act, governing authority for all clinical laboratory tests, including laboratory developed tests, with no Food and Drug Administration (FDA) involvement. CLIA would maintain this authority during emergencies, such as pandemics, to ensure expediency in laboratory testing as the primary goal of this legislation.

Legislation placing the collection of laboratory pricing data on hold for one year (part of **The Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014 [PAMA]**) was passed in December, 2019 as part of federal budget legislation. A review of the processes for collecting and using this data for laboratory testing reimbursement has been referred to the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC), with the goal of ensuring that the data collection process truly reflects the laboratory marketplace, as was intended by the original legislation.

ASCLS Executive Vice President Jim Flanigan, ASCLS Legislative Affairs Consultant Patrick Cooney, ASCLS President Cindy Johnson, and the ASCLS Government Affairs Committee have been sharing aspects of the impact of **COVID-19** on clinical laboratories with Congress, the White House Coronavirus Task Force, federal agencies such as FDA and CDC, and other laboratory associations. Work continues by these individuals and groups, as well as individual ASCLS members, to make sure all ASCLS members are well-informed, and to assist in any way

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE CONTINUED

possible to ensure laboratory professionals have access to resources for answering their questions. Many of the ASCLS Communities, as well as the Open Forum, have had extensive discussions regarding laboratory impacts and shared solutions for members, including educators and students.

The January/February issue of *ASCLS Today* was focused on **advocacy**, with many articles giving examples of how we can all advocate for ourselves in our workplace and for our profession. The ASCLS website also has an advocacy center with great infor-

mation and resources. ASCLS is sponsoring monthly webinars about leadership topics, including advocacy.

We need all members to be educated about how they can become effective advocates.

Come Labvocate with us!

Resources:

<https://ascls.org/advocacy-issues/labvocate>

<https://connect.ascls.org/home>

<https://congress.gov>

<https://vimeo.com/372648901>

IT'S NATIONAL MEDICAL LABORATORY PROFESSIONALS WEEK MECHELL REEVE , MLS (ASCP)^{CM} ST. LUKE'S MAGIC VALLEY LAB

Did you know that approximately 70% of a patient's medical record is laboratory data? We are often just referred to as "the lab," but who are we and what do we do? **Phlebotomists** draw patients' blood and send it to the lab where it is received and distributed to the appropriate depts by Specimen Processors. Then in the various depts of the lab (Hematology, Chemistry, Blood Bank, and Microbiology) **the Medical Laboratory Scientists (MLS)** do the technical processing and analysis of the samples.

Depending on the test ordered and the sample type, the MLS use very advanced instrumentation to analyze some tests/samples, some tests are done on an individual test cartridge, and some tests require manual hands-on analysis with microscopes, centrifuges, reagents, and/or our eyes.



Jill, Liz, Mitzie, and Kaycee at St. Luke's Magic Valley

For surgical samples, some are sent to the pathology dept where the sample is received and then “grossed” (measured, assessed, and cut) by the **Pa-
thology Assistant**. Then the sections of tissue that need further analysis for possible infection, malignancy, or abnormalities are processed and stained by Histology Techs and then the final slides are given to the Pathologists to review.



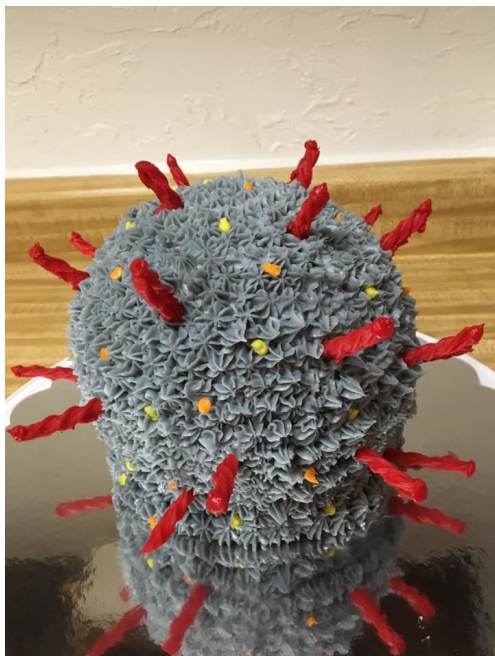
Mechelle Reeve sporting her superhero lab coat!



Pathology Department at St. Luke's Magic Valley

There is a lot going on in the lab and while the lab is often a mystery to most, especially during this unique time we are glad to be a vital part of the health care team serving our patients. So next time you see a fellow laboratorian, **tell them thanks!**

CORONA COOKING



Covid-19 has brought with it a variety of changes and challenges to the lab. Kate DeAngelo turns to baking to help relieve the stress for both herself and her co-workers. She made two delicious cakes for her co-workers a coronavirus cake and the last roll of toilet paper. Next time bring one to my lab!





New this year, ASCLS is offering a trial of multiyear membership, available only to Professional members. [Learn more.](#)

Show your passion for your profession by renewing your ASCLS membership early.

Our membership system makes it easy to renew when you visit members.ascls.org or you can call and renew your membership at (571) 748-3770.

Thank you for your continued support of ASCLS.

Join us for our Annual Business Meeting

When: Saturday May 16, 2020 @ 9:00 am

Where: wherever you are!

Join the Zoom Meeting via computer or phone

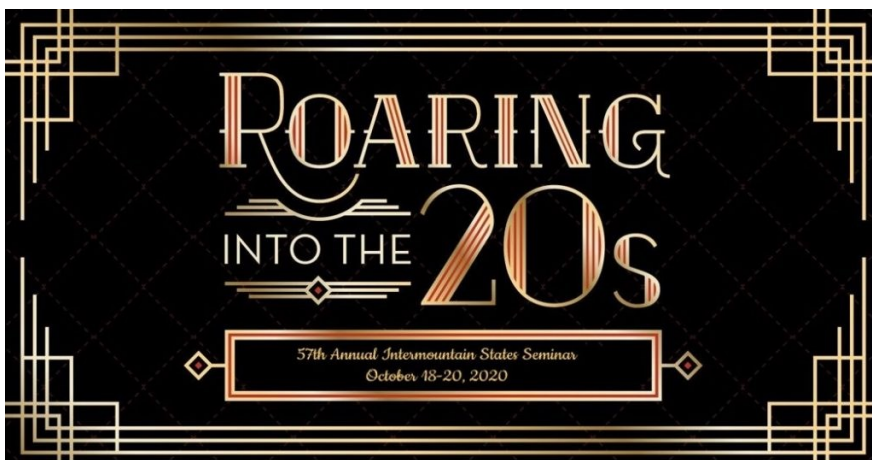
<https://zoom.us/j/93048329687>

Meeting ID: 930 4832 9687

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)



IMSS 2020 is slated to be one of the greatest of all times and we need your help to get the word out! The seminar will be held in the luxurious **Snow King Resort and Hotel** and will be a beautiful backdrop for both our educational workshops and our vendor sessions. **Join us October 18-20, 2020.**

More info coming soon!

Lab Laughs

Essential workers trying to process the 35th policy change in the last 3 weeks



Join Us for the **2020 Joint Annual Meeting**, June 28 - July 2!

The 2020 Joint Annual Meeting (JAM) will feature a whole new experience for attendees.

- Laboratory professionals and colleagues will come together virtually to learn from one another and network.
- The educational program will include over 60 presentations.
- Attendees will be able to engage with industry, educational programs and employers, as well as discover the latest in laboratory technology.

For more information go to

<https://www.ascls.org/education-meetings/annual-meeting>

[Be Informed...Stay Connected...Get Involved @ asclsidaho.org](http://asclsidaho.org)

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, & SUBMISSIONS

The ASCLS-Idaho FOCUS Newsletter is published quarterly and is made available to all ASCLS-Idaho members in electronic format. Rights to edit for content and length of material are retained by ASCLS-Idaho. All ASCLS-Idaho members are invited to submit articles for publication.

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