

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2020



ASCP
BOARD OF
CERTIFICATION®

**Providing excellence in
certification of laboratory
professionals on behalf
of patients worldwide.**

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**Susan Johnson, MSTM,
MT(ASCP)SBB^{CM}**

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

It is crazy to think about how our lives have changed since my last message. I am deeply grateful for everyone's efforts during this time of pandemic; from all certified laboratory professionals on the front lines who are tirelessly performing high quality testing and implementing new COVID-19 assays in record time to those who are continuing to perform their daily activities amid constant change. Kudos to program directors and faculty who quickly adapted to teaching 100% virtually and providing students with experiences to replace their clinical rotations. To assist program directors, the ASCP Board of Certification (BOC) developed a list of educational resources available online. This resource is valuable for not only students, but anyone interested in continuing education. ([Click Here](#)).

Congratulations to the new graduates who made it through this tumultuous semester and who are willing and able to sit for their certification/credential exams!

Finally, a huge thank you to the BOC staff who have been working remotely, developing ways to process applications quickly.

Pearson Testing Centers did close for a few weeks in March until they could be recognized as offering an essential service by delivering examinations for essential services

personnel. I am happy to report that through the efforts of BOC Executive Director Patricia Tanabe, MPA, MLS(ASCP)^{CM}, the ASCP BOC worked with Pearson VUE to ensure that MLS, MLT and PBT examinations were recognized as essential services personnel and given priority to schedule exams at a limited number of test centers by the end of March. A few weeks later, all ASCP BOC exams were available to be scheduled. On May 1, Pearson VUE re-opened testing locations within the U.S., Canada, and many international locations where there are no restrictions prohibiting operation, while following CDC guidelines. We have heard from program directors that their students are able to schedule their certification examinations, and many have already taken their certification examination and passed. Congratulations!

The examination committees, made up of volunteers from all laboratory disciplines, have continued to give of their precious time to meet virtually to ensure exams are of the highest quality.

The Board of Governors (BOG) meeting was conducted virtually for the first time on April 2 and 3. Details on the changes made to the Certification Maintenance Program and the Donor Phlebotomy Technician Certification can be found in this newsletter.

The ASCP 2020 Annual Meeting will be held virtually from September 10–12. Along with this, the second virtual BOC BOG meeting will occur.

Proposals for “The Value of Medical Laboratory Science Education and ASCP Certification for Medical Laboratory Professionals” grant to examine the efficacy of certification and medical laboratory science education for testing personnel were received and are being reviewed. An updated timeline for selection notification, completion of the project and publication will be provided.

As COVID-19 has enlightened the public and others in health care on the role of laboratory professionals, we will continue to build on this momentum. Spotting the work of medical laboratory professionals worldwide in the global fight against COVID-19 will continue through our social media efforts on Facebook. ASCP and the ASCP BOC will continue their efforts for a diverse and inclusive profession. (Learn more [here](#).) Unfortunately, recent events show us we have work to do, but we know it is front and center at the BOC, and we will continue to embrace and support all.

Finally, on behalf of the BOC and its Board of Governors, again THANK YOU for the important work you are all doing!

CREDENTIAL MAINTENANCE PROGRAM (CMP) CHANGES

In order to balance the requirements for the Credential Maintenance Program (CMP) across all technologist level certification categories, the ASCP Board of Governors approved the following changes at its April 2020 meeting.

The dedicated number of CMP points required in the area in which an individual is certified will increase from two to eight points for all technologist-level certifications to be equal to the current CMP requirements for MT/MLS. Likewise, the number of dedicated

points required for Histotechnician (HT) will also increase from two to eight points, to be in line with the MLT CMP requirements. This will not increase the overall total number of CMP points required.

The additional point requirement will go into effect for all certificants recertifying on or after January 1, 2024.

Changes to the CMP requirements for qualification categories were also approved. Since one point in laboratory safety and one

point in medical ethics (effective 1/1/23) is, or will be, a requirement for all certification categories, this requirement will also apply to all qualification categories. This will increase the overall total number of required CMP points from six to eight. The new CMP point requirements will go into effect for those individuals renewing their qualification credential on or after January 1, 2024.

TRANSITION FROM DONOR PHLEBOTOMY CERTIFICATION TO QUALIFICATION IN DONOR PHLEBOTOMY

Due to the continuing decline in applicant numbers, the ASCP Board of Governors approved a motion to change the Donor Phlebotomy Technician (DPT), to a Qualification in Donor Phlebotomy (QDP), effective January 1, 2022. The last date

to take the DPT(ASCP) certification examination will be December 31, 2021. The deadline date for submitting an online application to take the DPT(ASCP) certification examination will be October 1, 2021. As a qualification, the eligibility requirements have

changed and the examination will be administered as a 50-item examination. Individuals currently DPT(ASCP) certified will retain their certification and continue to participate in the Credential Maintenance Program (CMP) as required to maintain valid certification.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S FACEBOOK GROUP ADDRESSES CHALLENGES TO EDUCATORS DURING DISRUPTIONS

The ASCP Board of Certification (BOC) Program Director's Facebook group has been in existence since 2018. The group is open to program directors, educators, faculty, and clinical coordinators of NAACLS, CAAHEP, and ABHES-accredited/approved laboratory programs. While it has consistently been a venue for sharing information and ideas relative to the Board of Certification, it has never been as important a resource as it has been during the COVID-19 pandemic. With over 400 members, there was a flurry of activity in the social media group as program directors sought information about procedural changes in exam application and testing. BOC staff and volunteers worked diligently to provide timely responses.

As the challenges of virtual program delivery became an issue, members reached out to each other to provide advice, support and share ideas and resources. The postings included such topics as simulation experiences, changing from graded assessment to pass/fail, safety policies and alternatives for clinical rotations.

ASCP BOC provided two important documents during this time - a list of educational resources for program directors and the ASCP BOC COVID-19 information page to provide educators with the most up-to-date information about BOC certification and testing. These were posted as announcements on the site with the documents being

updated with current information regularly. In addition, reminders were sent regarding existing ASCP programs such as the ASCP Foundation Grants for Programs and the ASCP National Student Awards, which couldn't have been more timely in this time of uncertainty.

[ASCP BOC COVID-19](#)

[Program Director Resources](#)

MLS ROUTE 6 FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL

The ASCP Board of Certification (BOC) recognizes the quality of the laboratory training programs provided by the U.S. Military. Thousands of service personnel have been certified by the ASCP BOC as Medical Laboratory Technicians (MLT) after completing a 50-week military medical laboratory training course. Once certified as an MLT, many active duty personnel have gone on to become Medical Laboratory Scientists (MLS) using MLS eligibility Route 2*. The eligibility route requires, in addition to a current MLT certification, a bachelor's degree, a minimum number of hours in specific science courses, and two years of clinical laboratory experience within the last four years.

While eligibility requirements are clearly defined and not left to interpretation, it may not have been apparent to service personnel that Route 2 allowed for them to include the experience they received during their training program as one of the two years of experience required. Therefore, the ASCP BOC elected to introduce MLS Route 6 which outlines the specifics of the current Route 2 eligibility requirement, but more clearly labelling it for military personnel. Personnel

that can answer "yes" to the following questions are likely eligible to sit for the MLS examination:

- Have you completed a 50-week U.S. Military medical training course within the last 10 years?
- Do you have a baccalaureate degree from a regionally-accredited college or university?
- Do you have at least 16 semester hours (24 quarter hours) of biological science (with one semester in microbiology)?
- Do you have at least 16 semester hours (24 quarter hours) of chemistry?
- Do you have one year of full-time acceptable clinical laboratory experience in the U.S., Canada or an accredited laboratory within the last 10 years?
- Does your clinical experience include experience in Blood Banking, Chemistry, Hematology, Microbiology, Immunology, Urinalysis/Body Fluids?

For additional information visit the ASCP BOC website at: www.ascp.org/boc/mls.

*Route 2

- Valid MLT(ASCP) certification,
- AND a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited* college/university with 16 semester hours (24 quarter hours) in biology including one semester in microbiology and 16 semester hours (24 quarter hours) in chemistry including one semester in organic or biochemistry, which may be obtained within, or in addition to, the baccalaureate degree,
- AND two years of full time acceptable clinical** experience*** in blood banking, chemistry, hematology, microbiology, immunology, and urinalysis/body fluids in an accredited laboratory within the last four years.

BOC SPECIALIST SHARE EXPERIENCES

Are you curious about the specialist examination process? Would you like to have a better understanding of what it takes to prepare and sit for a specialist examination?

In late 2019, the ASCP Board of Certifications (BOC) conducted interviews with a number of specialists with the goal of educating all laboratory professionals on what it takes to attain a specialist certification.

Those interviews are currently available online. Now is your chance to hear directly from ASCP BOC specialist credential holders about their exam experiences.

SPECIALIST INTERVIEWS

[Highlight Video](#)

[Danielle Mullins,
MLS\(ASCP\)^{CM}SBB^{CM}](#)

[Hana Fukuto,
PhD, SMB\(ASCP\)^{CM}](#)

[Karen Milks,
MLS\(ASCP\)^{CM}SBB^{CM}](#)

ASCP BOC HOSTS JAMT VISITOR



From left to right: Joseph Baker, MS, Manager, BOC Social Media and International Development; Mari Kunihiro, MA; Patricia A. Tanabe, MPA, MLS(ASCP)^{CM}, ASCP BOC Executive Director; and Angela Sreckovic, Manager of International Certification & CA Technical Operations.

On November 8, 2019, the ASCP Board of Certification (BOC) welcomed Mari Kunihiro, MA, to the ASCP offices in Chicago. Ms. Kunihiro was in Chicago as part of a collaborative program between the ASCP BOC, the Japanese Association of Medical Technologists (JAMT), and Loyola University Medical Center (LUMC). Since 2015, as part of the ASCP BOC's commitment to contribute globally to the highest standards of patient safety, the program has arranged for Japanese laboratory professionals who are ASCPi certified (or ASCPi-eligible) to participate in a week-long laboratory visit in the United States. Ms. Kunihiro is the sixth participant— and the first woman—to participate in the visitor program.

Ms. Kunihiro shared with BOC staff that she was very excited to be able to participate in the program because she had always wanted to have the opportunity to observe and engage with medical laboratory scientists from another country.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: EUNICE CHOI



Eunice Choi MLS(ASCP)^{CM}

Eunice Choi MLS(ASCP)^{CM} knows her way around a laboratory. With a bachelor of science in biochemistry and a master's in medical laboratory science, she is certified as an MLS(ASCP)^{CM} and has worked as a medical laboratory scientist. As part of the ASCP Board of Certification, she is the assistant technical manager of examination activities and works with other BOC staff on publishing exams.

In addition to her degrees, Ms. Choi is licensed to teach high school chemistry, biology and physics in Illinois and spent time as a high school chemistry/science teacher. She shares that her time as a teacher was a lot of work, but there was never a dull moment.

When not at work, Ms. Choi enjoys hobbies, including knitting and watching TV. As far as programming, she has been watching the series, "The Last Dance" on ESPN. The series has taken her back to her young adulthood, when Michael Jordan and the Bulls were the Kings of Chicago. She has many fond memories of watching the Bulls with her late

father and cheering on her hometown basketball team.

In her free time, Ms. Choi also likes to exercise with friends. She says that exercising with friends helps take her mind off of the exercise itself. This could be why she has participated in the Ragnar relay race from Madison, Wisconsin to Chicago. Participants run a 200-mile relay with 12 other team members, running all day and all night, within a 24-hour time period. She laughs that it was a lot of fun and possibly one of the craziest things she's ever done.

Yet of all the things she enjoys, her favorite thing to do is spend time with family and friends. Married for 21 years, Ms. Choi has three children: a 21-year-old daughter in college, a 13-year-old son in middle school and an 18-year-old son, who graduated from high school this spring as a member of the "Class of COVID-19."

When asked what was the best advice she has ever received, she replies, "You can't get what you don't ask for."

MEDICAL LABORATORY PROFESSIONALS ON THE FRONT LINES: THE GLOBAL FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

In this extraordinary time of crisis, the ASCP Board of Certification (BOC) has launched an awareness campaign on Facebook called, “Medical Laboratory Professionals on the Front Lines: The Global Fight Against COVID-19.” Laboratory professionals were asked to submit pictures, videos and stories highlighting the amazing work being done around the world to combat COVID-19. Responses poured in from all over the world including:

THE PHILIPPINES

- Department of Pathology & Lab Medicine, Providence Hospital, Inc., the Philippines
- Zamboanga Sibugay Provincial Hospital’s Laboratory Department in the Philippines.

JORDAN

- Jordanian Ministry of Health and MedLabs testing initiatives in Amman and Irbid, Jordan
- King Hussein Cancer Center (KHCC) in Amman, Jordan

-
- National Blood Transfusion Reference Laboratory, RIPAS Hospital, Ministry of Health in Brunei Darussalam.
 - NMC Royal Hospital in Abu Dhabi, UAE
 - Indhira Gandhi Memorial Hospital (IGMH) Malé, Maldives
 - The Korean Association of Medical Technologists in South Korea
 - Sengkang General Hospital, Department of Pathology, in Singapore.
 - Sultan Qaboos University Hospital in Muscat, Oman
 - Stanford Health Care – Valley Care Laboratory in Pleasanton, CA
 - Versiti Blood Centers and the Transfusion Service Team at Children’s Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI
 - NMC Royal Hospital in Abu Dhabi, UAE.
 - Department of Pathology, University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, NM.
 - Quetta, Pakistan
 - Ecuador
 - Peru



Stanford Health Care – Valley Care Laboratory in Pleasanton, CA



Indhira Gandhi Memorial Hospital (IGMH) Malé, Maldives

To join the online community, visit us on [Facebook](#).

ASCP BOC ADDRESSES LABORATORY WORKFORCE ISSUES

In April, the ASCP Board of Certification (BOC), along with its professional partners, sent letters to each U.S. governor and public health official to raise awareness of the role that the laboratory workforce plays in the fight against COVID-19. While states are engaging in a variety of measures to ensure there are enough healthcare professionals to meet the need for testing, leaders were urged to make certain that laboratory professionals are included in such efforts.

Laboratory professionals play a critical role in diagnosing, staging and monitoring patients who have been infected with COVID-19. Since March, several U.S.

governors have publically acknowledged the importance of testing. Commercial laboratories at hospitals, academic medical centers and reference laboratories have been granted permission to develop and use their own laboratory tests, increasing the nation's testing capacity and the need for more laboratory professionals. The ASCP BOC noted that for laboratories to succeed at testing, there needs to be a reliable supply of skilled laboratory professionals who can perform highly-complex laboratory procedures, such as those used to identify COVID-19.

The letter identified the laboratory workforce by profession, noting that each individual

is critical to quality laboratory operations. Many states have taken steps to relax or waive state licensure requirements or sought out volunteers, including those from other states, to ensure an adequate workforce. While those efforts are important, it is unclear to the ASCP BOC that they have included the laboratory personnel needed to diagnose, treat and screen for the disease. The BOC urged leaders to keep laboratory professionals in mind as they address workforce needs and offered its assistance to share its knowledge of the laboratory workforce and extensive network of certified and/or licensed laboratory professionals.

NEW LOOK FOR THE ASCP BOC NEWSLETTER

WELCOME TO THE NEW ASCP BOC NEWSLETTER!

Published three times a year, the revised newsletter will incorporate all the news of the previous publication as well as the International Credentialing Newsletter (ICN). Each issue will feature news from the ASCP Board of Certification (BOC), including updates from the ASCP BOC Board of Governors related to eligibilities, credential maintenance and international credentialing.

To keep informed of news throughout the year, make sure to check out the BOC's social media channels, including BOC Instagram, [ASCP BOC Facebook Page](#) and the [ASCP BOC International Facebook Group](#). Once published, past issues of the BOC Newsletters can be found on the [BOC website](#).

In order to receive the latest news from the ASCP BOC, certificants should log into their ASCP account, select "Profile & Settings,"

then click on "Communications" to make sure that "Board of Certification" is not selected (*selecting "Board of Certification" actually opts account holders out of receiving BOC news and updates*).

BOC PROFESSIONAL PARTNERS MEETINGS

JUNE
Association of Genetic Technologists (AGT) Virtual Meeting June 28-July 2
American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS) Virtual Meeting June 28-July 2

SEPTEMBER
American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Virtual Meeting September 9-11

OCTOBER
AABB Baltimore, MD October 3-6
National Society for Histotechnology (NSH) Reno, NV October 13-15

NOVEMBER
American Society of Cytopathology (ASC) Orlando, FL November 5-8

DECEMBER
American Society of Hematology (ASH) San Diego, CA December 5-8
AACC Chicago, IL December 13-17

FEBRUARY 2021
ASCLS Clinical Laboratory Educators Conference (CLEC) Denver, CO February 25-27

MARCH 2021
Clinical Laboratory Management Association (CLMA) Nashville, TN March 21-23



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American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP)

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American Association of Pathologists' Assistants (AAPA)

American Society of Cytopathology (ASC)

American Society for Microbiology (ASM)

Clinical Laboratory Management Association (CLMA)

National Society for Histotechnology (NSH)

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BOC MISSION

The mission of the ASCP Board of Certification (BOC) is to provide excellence in certification of laboratory professionals on behalf of patients worldwide.