

BEGINNERS GUIDE TO ASCLS

New Member Edition

A Quick Reference Guide



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Every organization is only one generation away from extinction.

We must recruit members who are willing to be active participants in achieving the goals of ASCLS.

We must seek out fresh perspectives so that we can grow and continue to be relevant in the changing world of laboratory science.

We must invest in the idea of an institutional legacy in order to survive.

We must make sure that everyone who joins ASCLS can easily get answers to their questions and find ways to become active.

ASCLS Student Forum

ASCLS Young Professionals Committee

Disclaimer: This guide is intended to be quick reference only and should not take the place of ASCLS Standard Operating Procedures or Bylaws that can be found on the web along with any other complete information at www.ascls.org.

How is ASCLS organized?

The Executive Office of ASCLS is the 'hired' staff. These people are employed by ASCLS to take care of the business of the organization and their duties and responsibilities are directed by the ASCLS members through the Board of Directors.

ASCLS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART EXECUTIVE OFFICE

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Elissa Passiment

I

**Meetings
Consultants**
Meetings for
Management

**Government
Affairs
Consultant**
Don Lavanty

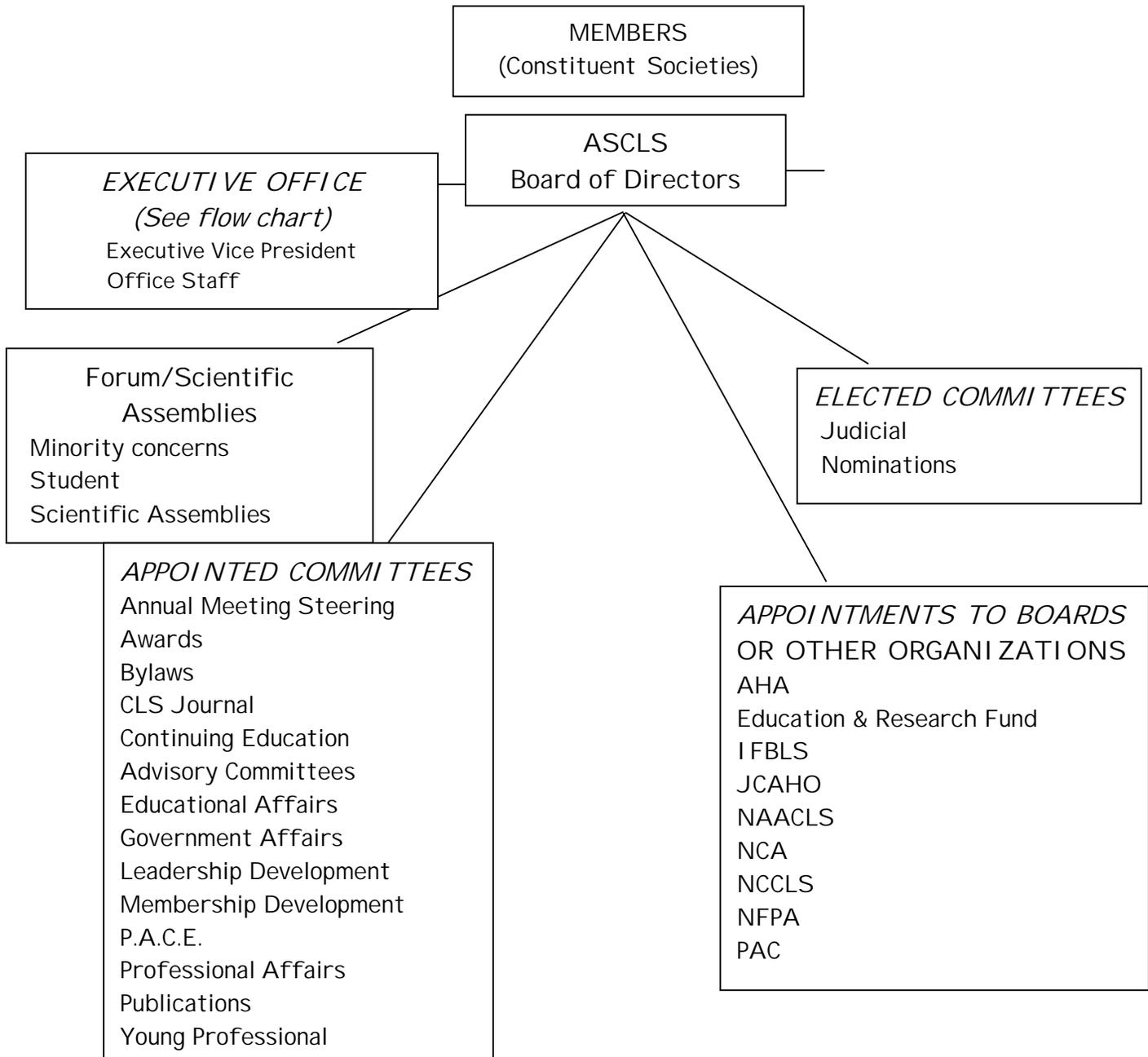
**Financial
Consultants
and
Webmaster**
ICentric
Marketing

**Director of
Education and
Project Planning**
Joan Polancic

**Coordinator of
Membership and
P.A.C.E.®**
Sherry Miner

ASCLS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

The members of ASCLS ultimately control the direction and activities of the organization. Members elect their representatives to the annual House of Delegates where all major decisions are made.



Constituent Societies and Responsibilities

What region am I in?

Within ASCLS there are constituent societies which serve as local representatives for ASCLS. The constituent society members address local and statewide issues and encourage interest in ASCLS through local and regional channels of the laboratory profession. A constituent society produces their own newsletters or publications for their members. The societies hold annual meetings sponsoring workshops and seminars.

ASCLS has a very organized structure and all members of ASCLS must hold membership at the state and national levels, in accordance to the Bylaws. This requirement helps information get to the national levels from the constituent societies so feedback is generated. There are ten regions in ASCLS and within these regions are over forty constituent societies which represent ASCLS.

Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Region V
Connecticut Maine Vermont New York Central New England: New Hampshire Massachusetts Rhode Island	Delaware District of Columbia Maryland New Jersey Pennsylvania Virginia West Virginia	Alabama Florida Georgia Mississippi North Carolina Puerto Rico South Carolina Tennessee	Indiana Michigan Kentucky Ohio	Minnesota North Dakota South Dakota Wisconsin
Region VI	Region VII	Region VIII	Region IX	Region X
Illinois Iowa Kansas Missouri Nebraska	Arkansas Louisiana New Mexico Oklahoma Texas	Colorado Idaho Montana Utah Wyoming	Alaska Oregon Washington	Arizona/Nevada California Hawaii

MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES

Student members are entitled to serve as voting members of the House of Delegates when serving as official delegates from a constituent society, and to have all other rights and privileges of the Society with the exception of holding elective positions.

Professional members, including First Year Professionals, are entitled to all rights and privileges to include voting, holding office and serving in any formal capacity recognized by the Society.

I am a new ASCLS member, what do my dues pay for? What benefits do I receive?

CONTINUING EDUCATION

A commitment to learning is a crucial element of being a professional. It is especially important that all professionals take advantage of CE opportunities to fulfill requirements to prove continued competence for recertification. Membership in ASCLS gives you access to a wide variety of quality educational opportunities at reduced registration fees and allows you to receive CE credits through the PACE program. PACE (Professional Acknowledgement for Continuing Education) serves as a quality assurance program for continuing education programs that are available to clinical laboratory professionals. ASCLS sponsors many PACE-approved programs, audio-conferences, workshops, and online course offerings to its members. CE credit for recertification, licensure renewal or in your workplace can also be found through FOCUS articles which are convenient mail-in examinations published in every issue (4 times/year) of the ASCLS journal, Clinical Laboratory Science (CLS). Members can read and study articles on selected topics, correctly answer follow-up questions, and earn 1.5 to 5 contact hours per FOCUS section.

ANNUAL MEETING and EXPOSITION

ASCLS hosts an Annual Meeting in July which is held concurrently with AACC (American Association of Clinical Chemistry). The Clinical Laboratory Exposition brings hundreds of vendors, cutting edge technology, technical workshops and symposiums to a single site for ASCLS and AACC

members. This meeting is held in a different city each year and is a great opportunity to network and meet other clinical laboratory professionals like you. ASCLS members can receive discounts on fees for registration for this meeting.

There are also state and regional meetings held throughout the United States that provide continuing education, exhibits, and leadership opportunities.

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Professionals and professional associations must be aware of the legislative and regulatory environment that controls how we perform our duties. ASCLS is committed to inform clinical laboratory professionals of these issues and is poised to respond to any concerns.

ASCLS has a Legislative Consultant who is part of the Executive Office staff. This person basically keeps track of things happening in Washington, DC that affect ASCLS. They also go up on Capitol Hill and present ASCLS's point of view on these topics.

PUBLICATIONS

ASCLS has two publications, *Clinical Laboratory Science* and *ASCLS Today*. *Clinical Laboratory Science* is an award winning bimonthly journal that discusses the latest in research, education and government affairs in the clinical laboratory profession. *ASCLS Today* is a newsletter that is published once a month and keeps readers updated on the profession and activities of the state, regional and national organization.

PERSONAL SERVICES

ASCLS members can save on credit card, hotel room and car rental purchases. Members can also participate in ASCLS insurance programs and take advantage of group rates on health, professional liability, life, disability and Geico automobile insurance.

Do I get any special discount?

Yes! If you are currently a student you may join ASCLS as a Student Member for a base fee of \$25. State dues vary but all are less than \$5.

A First Year Professional membership (FYP) special dues rate is offered to any student member, or individual eligible for student membership, during their first year as a laboratory professional. The FYP member only pays 50% of Professional I dues!

MEETINGS

Annual National Meeting

Which meetings will be beneficial for me to attend as a state delegate?

All meetings at the ASCLS Annual Meeting are open to any member who chooses to attend, unless specified in the Annual Meeting Program. The Board of Directors meetings, committee meetings, and forums/scientific assemblies invite all members to attend any meeting that they have an interest in or would like to know more about.

If you are a delegate to the Annual Meeting, you should attend the President's Council and House of Delegates, and vote in the elections for society officers, directors, and elected committees. You should also attend the "Meet the Candidates" and the ASCLS Issues Update so that you can become more informed about the issues that you will be addressing in the House of Delegates.

Not a state delegate—These meetings are still imperative to attend.

What is the President's Council and the House of Delegates?

President's Council

Presidents and president-elects from constituent societies are 'seated' at the President's Council held on Wednesday afternoon of the Annual Meeting but any member may attend and sit in the gallery. It is a very informative session and it would be valuable to all members and, especially, to delegates to attend. Candidates for elected offices within ASCLS are introduced and the ASCLS President gives a 'state of the society' address. Updates are given on activities of the society during the previous year and items related to the current meeting. This meeting is also an introduction to issues that will be voted on at the House of Delegates meeting on Saturday. During the President's Council there shall be no

debate, or action on any motion, resolution, or recommendation, except on motions to "accept" or on a privileged motion.

House of Delegates:

The House of Delegates has the ultimate authority within the society regarding the election of officers, board members, directors, and elective committees, and adoption/amendments to bylaws and Articles of Incorporation. The House of Delegates approves professional standards for the society and position papers on topics of interest to members. During the House of Delegates, newly elected officers are inducted and awards from the ASCLS Board of Directors are given, commendations to members are given from the floor, and a preview of the next year's meeting location is presented. This meeting is very similar to the political conventions that are held every four years to decide on party positions and candidates for national office. The meeting can be contentious, very exciting, and thought-provoking. Any society member can attend. Privilege of the floor can be granted to non-delegates by consent of the House of Delegates.

The voting members of the House of Delegates are the President and President-Elect of each constituent society (or their alternates), delegates designated by each constituent society, and the members of the Board of Directors of ASCLS. The Bylaws indicate that each state is allowed one delegate for every 50 active and emeritus members (or major fraction thereof) plus one student delegate.

What is the procedure for speaking to the House?

The House of Delegates follows Parliamentary Procedures, so all motions to the Board of Directors must be in writing. All motions must be signed by the maker and given to the chair of the house who gives them to the secretary after presentation.

In order to be granted the privilege of the floor, a member must stand, address the chair of the house, and give his/her name and constituent society affiliation. A member may speak not more than twice and for no more than three (3) minutes each time on the same subject on the same day.

Legislative Symposium

Each year since 1989, ASCLS has hosted a Legislative Symposium in Washington, DC where our members have taken issues to members of Congress to discuss and to advocate for the profession.

Legislative Day is an annual conference held in Washington in March of each year. For three days prior to the event, various meetings are held, such as the Executive Board meeting. On Monday, everyone in attendance meets to discuss the current issues facing the profession. This is a great time for debate and discussion. This is also the time when issues are broken down and made clearer for those of us who are not legislators. Presentations are made that discuss the position of ASCLS on certain topics, and why we have this position.

Role-playing is used to teach you how to present the position to your state Senators and Representatives. On Tuesday morning, everyone goes up 'on the Hill' to talk to the Congressmen and women from their respective states. Usually you deal with each Senator or Representative's Health Care Liaison. This is the person that deals only with health care issues. You will have been provided with 'leave-behinds'. These are short, succinct summaries of the position of ASCLS on specific issues. These are especially helpful if you cannot see a particular person—you just 'leave behind' your information for them to look at later!

All members are encouraged to attend these meetings. Your input is critical as these issues will impact the way you practice your profession for years into the future.

Standing Committees

I'm interested in being on a committee nationally, what committees does ASCLS offer for me?

There are a number of committees that a new member can consider becoming a part of. Most committees are by appointment; however, elections are held in some cases or new committees may be formed. For example, a Membership Recruitment Committee, new in 2006, is being formed as the needs of our organization and profession evolve. Volunteering to help existing committees is a good way to be recognized and eventually appointed to positions on a particular committee.

Here are committees for which a member is appointed:

Appointments - Works closely with the President, the Board of Directors (BOD), and other leaders in ASCLS to identify potential candidates for appointed positions for the next year.

Long Range Planning - Coordinates the long-range planning activities to accomplish long-term goals and help steer the society's future.

New Board Orientation - Updates the BOD manual and orients new board members.

SOP and Policy - Review all policies and procedures and position descriptions, and revise these documents as needed.

Minutes - Assist the secretary/treasurer in recording the proceedings of various meetings held within ASCLS, including the House of Delegates (HOD) sessions.

Credentials - HOD affairs; appointed by the President for each annual meeting; responsible for certifying and tallying delegates and alternates at the meeting.

Elections - HOD affairs; appointed for each annual meeting; conducts all elections of the HOD.

Sergeant-at-Arms - Responsible for logistical support of ALL major meetings held at the annual meeting, liaison among all committees for traffic flow, security, and seating.

Annual Meeting Steering (big job!) - A new member would need to work alongside existing society members for several years, since this committee plans the scientific sessions and workshops, and coordinates these activities with the Continuing Education and Advisory Council (CEAC), and the BOD and staff.

Awards -Coordinates all activities related to publication, description, nomination and selection for ASCLS awards: also involved in presentation of these awards.

Bylaws -Another big job for which a new member would need to become active early as a volunteer and commit time to the society: receives all proposed changes to the ASCLS bylaws and articles of incorporation and prepares these amendments for consideration at the HOD. This committee ALSO examines, considers, and approves appropriate proposed changes for our constituent societies.

CLS Journal -This committee includes the Editor-in-Chief of our journal; participants are involved in the constant tasks of coordinating and reviewing articles for publication. This committee would take long-term commitment and a steadier workload than most other committees within ASCLS.

Educational Affairs -An EXCELLENT way to get involved, especially if your goal is to become an educator in our profession, or to just have input into the future of our competency requirements. This committee recommends standards for educational requirements and competencies for professional practice at different levels. This committee assesses current trends in our educational programs and the effects of these trends on our profession. This committee develops and implements recruitment strategies and materials for a broad spectrum of candidates, from pre-college to

graduate students.

Continuing Education Advisory Council (CEAC) -Works directly with the Annual Meeting Steering Committee by recommending topics and speakers for the annual meeting; this committee also requires a more steady commitment in that it recommends continuing education activities for ASCLS members and nonmembers.

Government Affairs -This committee DOES include newer professionals and generalist CLS personnel; two members of the current Young Professionals Committee were appointed in 2006 to this committee because of their early commitment as students to ASCLS. This committee assists ASCLS in achieving our objectives of putting important governmental policies into effect that will benefit healthcare and our profession. Meetings are not frequent; however, attendance at the Legislative Symposium and the GAC meeting at the beginning of each annual meeting are very important for members of this committee to attend.

Leadership Development -Involved in helping others who show an interest and potential to become leaders. For this committee, one representative is appointed from each region by that Region Director at the END of that director's first year.

Membership Recruitment (New Committee)-Recruits new members and produces materials to attract those already in the profession to the ASCLS organization. This committee is composed of members who are appointed by Region Directors in the same way that Leadership Development committee members are appointed.

Membership Services (Formerly Membership Development now broken into 2 parts; Recruitment and Services) -Maintain new and current members while continuing to contact lapsed members by reiterating the Voice, Value and Vision that the member has gained access to.

Professional Acknowledgment for Continuing Education (P.A.C.E)
Very important and a good idea for anyone starting out who is interested in watching our professional development grow and strengthen. This committee works with Sherry Miner, full-time coordinator, to create

provider approval and documentation for education programs. *Since those graduating after 2004 must now maintain CE with certain certifying agencies* this committee is an important one to become involved with.

Professional Affairs -Appointed by the Region Directors. Another great committee if you value promoting our professional image and securing the future of our profession and organization. This committee is involved in a range of activities from membership services to employment security and professional development. Members of this committee also work with other health care professionals.

Publications -A more steady commitment is required for this committee as well; members coordinate the development and maintenance of current publications, but duties involve creating new publications, such as the new Case Study Continuing Education program and other CD-ROM and written materials. Again, if you are interested in education as a career or would like to bolster our image and professional standing, this committee is extremely important and worthwhile to become involved in.

Scientific Assembly -Get involved as a student in one or more of the Assemblies! Members are able to designate up to two professional assemblies according to area of interest. Students are encouraged to join, and new professionals and members are always needed for projects. Example: the newest Scientific Assembly, Molecular Biology, is currently chaired by a *new* member, Cheryl James, PhD. Cheryl has been in the fields of Molecular biology and Cytogenetics for years; she joined ASCLS just a few years ago. One of the Young Professional Committee members is currently the vice chair. From there, a member may work his or her way into the committee positions.

Student Forum -Each member coordinates the involvement of students in the organization. Provides mentoring for students and those entering the profession after graduation.

Young Professionals (NEW!) -the YPC represents those who have been in the profession fewer than five (5) years. Provides a voice for not only new graduates, but also new members so that the evolving needs of this group may be met and incorporated into the framework of the ASCLS structure.

The following committees are elected:

Executive -Manages ASCLS affairs in general and carries out duties assigned by the BOD.

Finance -monitors ASCLS income and expenses, and submits recommendations to the BOD regarding financial policies and budget proposals.

Judicial -Elected by the HOD; this committee functions only on matters assigned by the bylaws or those matters referred by officers or recognized committees within ASCLS.

Nominations (elected by the HOD) -This committee advertises vacant positions within the society and secures nominees for these positions. The committee also evaluates qualifications of the candidates.

SO.....how do you become involved in order to elect committee members and vote for candidates? How do you become a member of the HOD? The same way many of us new professionals and veterans have. VOLUNTEER! Speak to your State ASCLS president. The President has a number of seats assigned for your state. If you cannot be a delegate your first year in the organization, attend the HOD session at the annual meeting and sit in the gallery. Observing is often the best way to start having your voice heard. Many of the new professionals, including those in the testimonial section of this publication, started as student members.

Publications

What publications are available to me as a member? I have a passion for writing and I love my career choice, how do I get involved?

ASCLS offers several publications for members. The most prominent publication is our journal, *Clinical Laboratory Science*. This journal is our official scientific journal, published quarterly. Your membership dues include your subscription to this journal. The journal is a forum for members to voice professional concerns, submit scientific articles, and to earn CE credit.

Another publication, published monthly, is the national newsletter *ASCLS Today*. Many of the new professionals have also submitted articles to this newsletter, and have been writing articles since their time as students. Other new members are always encouraged to submit case studies, opinions, and other professional pieces to this newsletter. Your membership entitles you to receive this newsletter. In addition, job advertisements and current events are published in *ASCLS Today*. Networking opportunities are abundant, just by reading, submitting to, or sharing this newsletter.

In each state, members should receive a state newsletter. This is perhaps the easiest place to start if you would like to become involved in ASCLS publications. Newsletter editors always welcome help and articles from the membership.

Other publications surface in the form of continuing education. The ASCLS store has various CD-ROM materials and books for sale that allow you to earn P.A.C.E. credit, which in turn allows you to earn credit toward recertification. Members are encouraged to submit materials they have for educational purposes and to propose new topics for education and professional interest. Many of the text and reference books you may be interested in were written or edited by our membership. Some of these books are also for sale through the ASCLS store, or at the meetings.

CURRENT ISSUES IMPACTING THE PROFESSION

If you are wondering about the position that ASCLS takes on the many issues that are facing laboratory professionals today, you can find the ASCLS Position Papers on the ASCLS website, www.ascls.org. They include papers on topics such as

- Value of Clinical Laboratory Services
- Advanced Practice: Doctorate in Clinical Laboratory Science
- Direct Access Testing
- Phlebotomy
- Model Career Ladder
- Healthcare Reform
- Independent Practice
- Leukoreduced Blood Products
- Managed Care
- Medical Errors and Patient Safety
- Personnel
- Point of Care
- Scope of Practice
- Expanding Geriatric Population
- Bioterrorism Preparedness

Issues that are also impacting our profession, but may not be able to find position papers on are; Competitive Bidding, Medically Unbelievable Edits (M.U.E.s) and Title VII Funding. New issues are cropping up and ASCLS is defending your rights as laboratory professionals.

How can YOU contribute to ASCLS?

1. Find a mentor

- Someone you respect
- Someone you are comfortable with
- Someone who can develop you into the person you want to be
- Someone who can guide you
- Someone who can provide you with opportunities

How?

Check the ASCLS website (Member's Section under Leadership) for the latest Leadership Directory. It will have contact information for all persons in leadership positions- Staff, Board of Directors, Regional Leadership, State Leadership, Committee Leadership, Forums, and Boards.

Then make the first move- call someone!

2. Speak up! Ask questions!

Remember the old saying- the only stupid question is one that isn't asked? Let others know what you are thinking so that ASCLS can really be a reflection of its members. ASCLS can't 'read your minds'!

3. Get involved

Volunteer! Start with the small obligations until you become more confident to take on larger tasks. Be sure to follow through with whatever you have agreed to do.

Encourage your friends and colleagues to join you.

4. Get informed

- Ask questions
- Attend continuing education sessions
- Read articles and periodicals
- Find out about legislative/regulatory issues
- Go to committee meetings

5. Have fun

ASCLS is a wonderful resource for fun and friends. Take advantage of the many opportunities to participate in social events and to

meet laboratory professionals from all over the United States. It is an effort you will not regret!

6. Become the ASCLS VOICE:

- as a spokesman for the entire profession
- on Capitol Hill on regulatory issues that affect our practice
- as an advocate for the individuals who make up our profession

Show others the ASCLS VALUE:

- as an integral part of the healthcare team
- as a knowledgeable source of information for other professionals, our patients, and the public
- as a source of continuing education for the practitioner

Define the ASCLS VISION:

- by defining the changing role of the laboratory in the future
- by fostering collaboration among laboratory professional organizations
- by educating and preparing professionals for exciting new roles in the future

Where do YOU fit into ASCLS?

Anywhere you want to!!!

Member Testimonials

I honestly don't know where I would be if it wasn't for ASCLS. My first hands on exposure to the society was in LA at the National Convention. I was entering my senior year and was questioning whether I really wanted to and could become a Clinical Laboratory Scientist. This meeting changed my life. I meet so many people that supported what I did and who I was. It was the first time I felt accepted and understood by people who are just like me. There are not many people out there who would like to sit down at dinner and talk about stool, urine, blood, and other fun lab topics. I have met some amazing people and some life long friends. This society makes you want to get involved and it makes me proud of what I do on a daily basis. We are not just people who sit in front of instruments and press buttons; we are scientists that change and help lives everyday. This society has taught me to have a voice and to stick up for what I believe is right.

Jeanette Etro
Region I

ASCLS has positively influenced my professional experience. ASCLS not only provides the many continuing education opportunities needed for certification maintenance, but a network of dedicated members of both young and seasoned professionals to answer any questions you might have about the organization or profession as a whole.

Sharon Bobryk
2005-2006 National Student Forum Chair

I have had quite a wonderful string of opportunities, thanks to becoming involved with ASCLS as a student. I am a nontraditional student that began CLS School at the age of 36. While in my junior year, I was encouraged by my Hematology professor Jeanne Isabel to attend a retreat for ASCLS-IL BOD. I attended this retreat, and it was the best thing I could have done. I

was appointed the Region VI Student Forum Chair. After graduation from NIU, I attended the ASCLS national meeting in Los Angeles. In a chance encounter in the elevator, I met Shirlyn McKenzie the 2006-2007 President. A conversation that lasted less than 10 minutes appeared to have convinced Shirlyn I had potential. She has since appointed me to the Government Affairs Committee and put me in contact with an ongoing research project.

So, how did I get involved with ASCLS in the first place? By attending meetings as a student and telling my state President that I was interested in being a delegate. By making the time to attempt to reach students and new professionals and tell them how wonderful this organization is. By just plain getting out there. In short, I volunteered for one position and was rewarded hundreds of times over.

Linda Whaley
Region VI

ASCLS has given me a group of peers that understand and encourage my desire to be considered a professional. So often as a new professional in the workforce, I was met with people that told me to get out of this profession while I still could, that it was a dead-end job. But being a member of ASCLS has kept me from being dragged down by their pessimism. I know that as long as I continue to further my education and expand my knowledge-base by staying involved with ASCLS, there will always be opportunities for me to grow in the area of Clinical Laboratory Science.

Rebecca L. Rogers, CLS(NCA), MT(ASCP)
2005-2006 ASCLS-TN Student Forum Chair

I have grown as a professional through ASCLS. I have made long lasting friendships through ASCLS. My VOICE is heard, my VALUE is known and my VISION is shared with my fellow members of ASCLS.

Karine Dunn
ASCLS-TN

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Student Forum Committee

Young Professionals Committee