

2023 Workforce Action Alliance Summit

Proceedings Document



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This document summarizes the Executive-level discussions and short presentations of the May 2, 2023 Summit. The information within these proceedings can be freely shared to communicate the great work underway by the Workforce Action Alliance. Wherever data is used by readers in their own works, attribution to the original source is advised.

For more information on the Workforce Action Alliance, visit www.cola.org//workforce-action-alliance/

About COLA: COLA is a leading, non-profit laboratory accrediting organization serving more than 7,400 laboratories in a variety of healthcare settings. Having completed more than 100,00 onsite surveys in laboratories nationwide, COLA promotes industry best practices and government regulatory compliance that contribute to safe and accurate testing.

For more information about COLA, visit www.cola.org

About the Workforce Action Alliance: The Workforce Action Alliance (WAA) brings together executives who are committed to working together to address the laboratory workforce shortage by focusing on a few critical issues that cannot be addressed by any single organization. Participants include executives from professional laboratory associations, public health laboratories, accrediting organizations, educators, employers, public servants, high school counselors, and recruitment/retention experts. Annually, the WAA plans a Summit to identify the three most critical breakthroughs needed to address the laboratory workforce shortage.



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“Laboratory testing is instrumental in our system of care providing physicians with actionable data to diagnose and treat patients. Unfortunately, the current shortage in the clinical laboratory workforce has reached a breaking point. It will take everyone working together to reverse the current trajectory.”

– Kathy Nucifora, MPH, MLS(ASCP), Chief Operating Officer, COLA

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Letter

On May 2, 2023, stakeholders from the laboratory industry gathered in Fort Worth, Texas for the Workforce Action Alliance's inaugural Summit. The Summit's main purpose was to inspire a community of action to address the numerous aspects of the laboratory workforce shortage.

Many can agree that working together to achieve a few key objectives will be the only way to gain the momentum necessary to overcome the present challenge and to build a sustainable laboratory workforce for the future. Extending beyond addressing the needs of the clinical laboratory industry, the group included key executives from the public health laboratory community.

The tremendous dedication of laboratory professionals with outstanding academic knowledge, skills and experience has a significant impact on the diagnosis and treatment of patients as well as the public health surveillance for infectious and environmental threats. In the last two years, the public has come to a greater understanding of the vital role laboratories play in our nation's health, even though it is not a well-known scientific field. We believe it is crucial to educate the next generation about this vital profession, as well as the fascinating scientific and technological advancements and cutting-edge career options available to them.

This proceedings document is a summary of the 2023 Workforce Action Alliance Summit. The document is a roadmap for our joint activities. Anyone may freely share these proceedings with others.

It was an honor to participate among the leaders present, and we really appreciate the efforts of the 2023 Summit Planning Committee members and the charitable donations which made the Summit possible. We made progress, but many agree that we still have a long way to go. Our hope is that our collaborative attitude, openness to listening, willingness to examine assumptions and our collective creativity will come together to form a powerful, energizing force for change.

Sincerely,

Nancy Stratton, Chief Executive Officer of COLA
Kathy Nucifora, MPH, MLS (ASCP)
Chief Operating Officer of COLA



(Left) Kathy Nucifora, MPH, MLS(ASCP) and Nancy Stratton



Summit Introduction

The idea to hold a Workforce Action Alliance Summit was sparked at COLA's 2022 Laboratory Enrichment Forum during an educational panel discussion about the challenges of the laboratory workforce shortage. Understanding that so many others were working on this issue, COLA invited several leaders from laboratory organizations to assist us in organizing and hosting the Summit. We were delighted that all our invitations to participate were accepted, which led to the formation of the 2023 WAA Summit Planning Committee.

The WAA Summit Planning Committee worked for months to get ready for the event. Because so many people had the same goals, we focused on defining initiatives that we can work on together as a community. The Planning Committee wanted to develop practical action plans requiring Executive-level engagement around a few key priorities essential to taking the first steps in addressing the crisis.

It was apparent from the very beginning that there are already numerous excellent initiatives under way to address the crisis; however, we all had the sense that those efforts would not close the gap on today's crisis. To make the most of a one day gathering, the Planning Committee developed an inventory of examples of existing initiatives that could serve as a reservoir of ideas that could be reproduced, scaled or customized for the benefit of other communities. We also considered a number of other trends, such as the aging workforce, early retirements, burn-out, the

failure to attract new people to the profession as major drivers that could further weaken a fragile workforce.

To help focus the day's discussions, the Planning Committee outlined the following four goals:

- 1) Learn about initiatives underway
- 2) Develop collaborative relationships
- 3) Set three priorities that can be achieved by working together
- 4) Define our metrics of success

The Planning Committee also proposed the following guidelines to govern our time together:

- Encourage everyone's contribution
- Focus on what matters
- Listen together for patterns and insights
- Build on each other's ideas

Finally, the Planning Committee decided that a diverse group of leaders representing professionals, employers, public health laboratories, accrediting bodies, laboratories that serve the military and our veterans, educators, regulators, high school counselors, and specialists in recruitment and retention should be invited to participate. We also concurred that it would be beneficial to the Summit's decision-making process and organizational engagement to invite the Chief Executive Officers, wherever possible. Invitations to participate were extended by members of the Planning Committee.

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2023 Planning Committee Members

Kathy Nucifora, MPH, MLS (ASCP) Chief Operating Officer of COLA, Chair of the Committee

Christine Bean, Ph.D., MBA, MLS (ASCP), Chief Learning Officer, Association of Public Health Laboratories

Mark Birenbaum, Ph.D., Administrator, American Association of Bioanalysts and the National Independent Laboratory Association

Jim Flanigan, CAE, EVP, American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science

Edna Garcia, MPH, Senior Director, Scientific Engagement & Research, American Society for Clinical Pathology

Amy L. Leber, Ph.D., D (ABMM), Director, Clinical Microbiology and Immunoserology Nationwide Children's Hospital, American Society for Microbiology

Aubrey MJ Wanner, CEO & Executive Director for National Society for Histotechnology

Kelly Winter, Ph.D. Chief of Training & Workforce Development Branch, Centers for Disease Control

"Working on the preparations for the Summit alongside each and every one of you has been an incredible privilege."

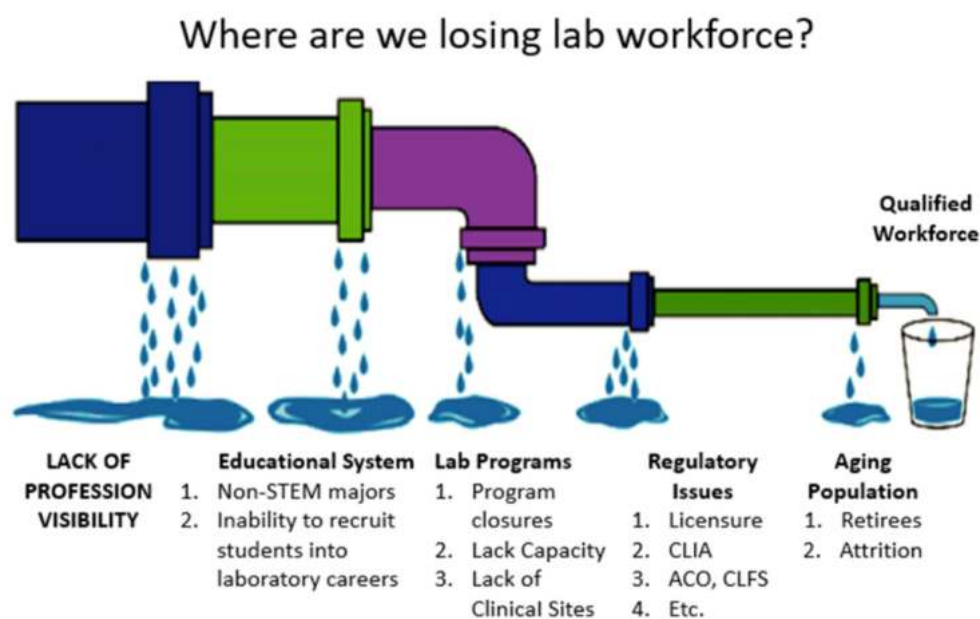
Kathy Nucifora, MPH, MLS(ASCP)



State of the Laboratory Workforce

To set the stage for our discussions, Edna Garcia, MPH, Senior Director for Scientific Engagement and Research, American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP); and Christine Bean, PhD, MBA, MLS (ASCP), Chief Learning Officer, Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL), gave opening talks on the State of the Laboratory Workforce. This session was also supported by Jim Flanigan, Executive Vice President, American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS), as the host of this session and author of the paper Factors Impacting the Clinical Laboratory Workforce.¹

The complexity of the challenge can be seen in the visual picture below of a leaky pipe created by Pat Tanabe, Past President of the ASCP Board of Certification. While the leaks are alarming, each one also indicates an area of opportunity that we can work on together.



Source: Pat Tanabe, Past President, ASCP Board of Certification. Included here with permission from Edna Garcia.

Lack of suitable candidates, low pay, competition with other service providers, and issues hiring for specific schedules, particularly evening, night, and weekend shifts, were among the challenges in hiring workers during the pandemic, according to Ms. Garcia. Other difficulties mentioned included those relating to human resources, immigration, COVID-19 vaccine resistance and associated issues, difficulty hiring in remote regions, and a lack of management awareness of and support for laboratory needs. Alarming statistics on overall job satisfaction and professional burnout² include:

- 52.5% of those responding to the reporting experiencing burnout
- 30.5% are considering changing their career completely; 13.1% are retiring

¹ Flanigan, J. Factors Impacting the Clinical Laboratory Workforce, summary of key data prepared in advance of the Workforce Action Alliance Summit, May 2023.

² American Society for Clinical Pathology. Laboratory staffing data during COVID-19 pandemic. 2020. https://ascpcdn.s3.amazonaws.com/static/ISTP/ASCP_Covid-19_data_web.pdf. Accessed 6/9/23

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Ms. Garcia also shared several trends in the challenges faced by the laboratory field that have been observed in ASCP's Wage and Vacancy surveys.³ Over the years, surveys have pointed to several key factors contributing to the shortage:

- Need for higher wages
- Need for qualified lab personnel
- Regulatory issues
- Need and access to training programs
- Addressing burnout and job satisfaction
- And in the last decade, an increased need for diversity

According to the findings of the 2022 Wage and Vacancy survey, more than eighty percent of individuals who took part in the study said that their laboratory had difficulties attracting workers over the course of a year. Sixty-nine point seven (69.7) percent of respondents said that the amount of time required for testing has increased over time by an average of 17.8 additional hours per week over the course of a year.

Ms. Garcia also shared the results of the key findings from studies conducted by Lotte Mulder, PhD., ASCP Director of Leadership and Empowerment, on burnout and workforce bullying. The study on burnout in the laboratory profession was submitted to the American Journal for Clinical Pathology in April 2023. The workplace bullying study will be available at a future date.

Public Health Laboratories

Christine Bean, PhD, MBA, MLS (ASCP) provided an overview of the survey results of the Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Survey⁴:

- More than a quarter of laboratory professionals are considering leaving their organizations within the next year
- Twenty-two percent (22%) reported that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted their decision to stay or leave and among those who intend to leave, 38% said the pandemic impacted their decision

The top reasons reported for leaving the laboratory profession include pay (reported by 60%) and workplace overload/burnout (reported by 37%). Furthermore 22% of laboratory professionals rate their mental health as either "poor" or "fair."

Dr. Bean also shared the highlights of the 2022 APHL Workforce Priorities Survey of individuals from state, territorial and local public health laboratories.

Forty-two percent (42%) of the public health laboratory workforce intends to leave their laboratory within the next four years. Laboratory Aides/Assistants expected to have a turnover rate of 68%, and IT and tech positions expected to turnover at a rate of 56%. The turnover rates in the specialties include virology (65%); toxicology (56%); molecular biology (44%); laboratory quality assurance/quality improvement (40%); serology/immunology (37%); genomic sequencing (37%); bacteriology (36%); mycobacteriology (35%) and clinical chemistry/hematology (24%).

The top three reasons for leaving the laboratory included:

- Salary (52%)
- Lack of career path (42%)
- Retirement/Leaving the workforce (29%)

Fortunately, for those staying in the workforce, job satisfaction is high:

- The work I do is important (97%)
- I am satisfied with my organization (91%)
- I am satisfied with my job (87%)
- I am determined to give my best effort at work every day (86%)

Conversely, the top three reasons for staying include:

- Benefits (70%)
- Job security (62%)
- Job location (43%)

As a capstone to her presentation, Dr. Bean provided an overview of the APHL Fellowship and Internship

³ ASCP Workforce Initiative, Wage and Vacancy Surveys, <https://www.ascp.org/content/get-involved/institute-of-science-technology-policy/workforce-initiatives#>; Last Checked 6/12/23

⁴ <https://debeaumont.org/phwins/2021-findings/>; Last checked 6/12/23

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Programs in Public Health as well as the new public health job portal which promotes careers in public health and employment opportunities in all 50 states, U.S. territories, freely associated states and Washington D.C.⁵

Several lessons emerged from the group's consideration of the State of the Laboratory Workforce:

- 1) The shortage is beyond urgent.
- 2) Salary is an important factor but not the only issue that needs to be addressed. Recognition, career development, inclusivity and work-life

balance are also essential.

- 3) Important to convey to decisionmakers the cost of addressing increasing salaries and benefits in contrast to the true cost of not doing so including the cost of overtime, costs of temporary workers, costs of training new hires, recruitment and retention bonuses.
- 4) Finding creative ways to reward people who enter laboratory medicine as a career choice can be effective.
- 5) One solution will not meet everyone's needs. Different solutions are needed to match the unique situation.



⁵ www.publichealthcareers.org, Last checked 6/12/23



Appreciating the Efforts Underway

Six attendees were invited to offer examples of recent initiatives to alleviate the laboratory workforce shortage. The panelists talked about the initiative's objectives, successes, crucial success elements and biggest obstacles.

Amy L. Leber, Ph.D., D(ABMM), SM(ASCP)MB, Host for the Session

Senior Director, Clinical Laboratories
Director, Clinical Microbiology and Immunoserology

Department of Laboratory Medicine
Nationwide Children's Hospital
Clinical Professor of Pathology and Pediatrics

The Ohio State University College of Medicine
American Society for Microbiology Subcommittee on Personnel
Standards and Workforce Subcommittee

The lack of practicum sites for existing education programs is well acknowledged. All MLS and MLT programs include real-world laboratory training. The American Society for Microbiology (ASM) has actively sought clinical laboratories to hold clinical microbiology rotations. ASM and Weber State University (WSU) collaborated on a microbiology certificate program. WSU provides didactic information, while ASM member laboratories provide at least four weeks of microbiology instruction. Students complete their coursework online and select a conveniently located training site.

The program targets students and professionals with a bachelor's degree in a qualifying field (e.g. biological science or chemistry) and prepares them to be eligible for the Technologist in Microbiology M(ASCP) certification exam from ASCP via Route 3. Since the program's launch in September 2021, twenty (20) laboratories have agreed to serve as training sites and thirty-four (34) students have been enrolled.

Dr. Jonathan Genzen, MD, PhD

Chief Operating Officer at ARUP Laboratories
Professor of Clinical Pathology (Clinical), University of Utah

One of the greatest barriers to increasing enrollment of medical laboratory scientists is securing enough clinical sites for the student practicum experience. Traditionally, students complete practical training in local hospital-based and reference laboratories; however, the total number of sites is at capacity. Dr. Genzen shared with the group the results of a unique partnership between ARUP Laboratories and the University of Utah Department of Pathology Medical Laboratory Science Division. Together, a proposed Advanced Practice Clinical Laboratory Training Center was submitted as a community project for consideration to the community's U.S. Congressional representative as a potential federal appropriation. The assistance and support of ARUP's Congressional delegation, and letters of support from community healthcare leaders, were key to advancing this proposal for consideration. Funding for this \$3 million community project was included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act approved by Congress and signed by President Biden on December 29, 2022.

James Crawford, MD, PhD, FASCP

Chair of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine
Hofstra/Northwell Health

Dr. Crawford shared with the group some of the important workforce initiatives underway at Northwell Health as well as the work of the New York Laboratory Leadership Consortium. Northwell Health works with regional high schools and universities to encourage learners to take the first step toward careers in laboratory science. The organization hosts more than 100 MLT/MLS students each year, and has clinical site agreements with many regional programs, including MLT/MLS, Pathology Assistant, Histotechnologist, Cytotechnologist, Phlebotomist and healthcare informatics programs. In addition, Northwell Health hosts career fairs and virtual as well as in-person laboratory tours for those interested in learning about the profession.

Once hired at Northwell Health, the organization supports laboratory professionals with career goals by

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offering tuition reimbursement, mentorship programs and multiple professional development opportunities.

Katrina Moreau, MAT, MLS (ASCP)

Clinical Assistance Professor

Coordinator, Graduate MLS Program and Director, Undergraduate MLS Program, University of Vermont

According to Ms. Moreau, to address low enrollment in the graduate and undergraduate medical laboratory science (MLS) programs, the faculty have been involved in several initiatives related to the recruitment and retention of MLS students:

- 1) Clinical faculty have become involved in the community and clinical practice.
- 2) The University has developed an articulation agreement for a 2+2 pathway with the state's community college system: currently exploring out-of-state opportunities.
- 3) Students are involved with professional advocacy. They complete outreach assignments, participate in departmental events and mentor students as alumni.
- 4) Close collaboration with nearby academic medical center on outreach activities.
- 5) Recent approval to offer a variable tuition rate for out of state students interested in the entry level master's program.

Ms. Moreau also shared some of the barriers to increasing program enrollment:

- The career path for the profession remains somewhat of a mystery.
- Hospitals are now hiring employees who do not have a B.S. in MLS which has begun to produce confusion about what knowledge and skills are required for the position.
- Internally, their university budget model does not easily allow for collaborating with other programs across campus.
- Program faculty have a limited role in the university recruitment and admissions process.

Despite these obstacles, Ms. Moreau noted that awareness, support and relationships are essential. Teaching students the importance of professional advocacy and involving them in awareness of the profession is both rewarding to them and benefits all MLS programs. Student support, now more than ever, is so important. Lastly, having good relationships with clinical affiliates, fellow MLS colleagues and program directors ensures continued placement opportunities for our students and creates pipelines of qualified entry-level scientists to join the workforce.



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Dollie Marie Jacosalem, CLS, PAMET-USA, Inc.

Ms. Jacosalem shared with the group the mission and vision of the Philippine Association of Medical Technologists (PAMET)-USA. She conveyed that hiring foreign laboratory personnel from the Philippines is an immediate solution to augment the existing medical laboratory workforce shortage. The Philippines annually produces an average of 5,000 medical technologists with Bachelor of Science degree and are ASCP certified. The demand for these careers in the Philippines is not very high, which is why most of these graduates opt to go overseas for employment that will provide higher wages and better benefits.

According to Ms. Jacosalem in March 2021, H1B visa application went into lottery. This streamlined the application process both for applicants and sponsoring facilities. In the same year, there were two (2) H1B visa lotteries that were completed. This resulted in a huge influx of Filipino Medical Technologists to the US with H1B visa. From 2020 to 2021, there was an approximate 100% increase of H1B Labor Certificates Application approved for hospitals, staffing & recruitment agencies combined. The number of EB3 (green card visa) has also shown an increase in terms of issuance. Those selected during the yearly (March) visa lottery usually arrive in the US between October of the

same year to January of the following year.

However, there are challenges: the hiring hospital must go through rigorous hiring process to prove that no local applicants are available for the position; hiring foreign laboratory personnel is costly and sometimes requires an immigration lawyer on standby. There is also a possibility of foreign nationals transferring immediately from rural areas to urban areas due to the weather, feeling lonely (homesick), unfamiliar territory, culture, pay and benefits.

Bianca Frogner, PhD, University of Washington, Center for Health Workforce Studies

Dr. Frogner shared with the group what is already known about the laboratory workforce shortage within the larger health workforce shortage. The issues contributing to these shortages include higher demand for care related to delayed care during the pandemic, competition for workers by other industries and burnout among health care workers. She also shared solutions being discussed by policymakers at the national and state level to alleviate these shortages, such as investments in apprenticeship programs, increasing reimbursement and providing wraparound services such as childcare to support workers stay in their jobs.



Mark Birenbaum, PhD



Key Themes

The following areas of concern were brought up during the Summit, which undoubtedly brings to the forefront the complexity of the issue and the interrelationships of the task that lies ahead. In the end, it was recognized that addressing three critical areas of opportunity would pave the way for tackling other difficulties that needed to be addressed.

Salaries

The salaries for medical laboratory scientists have long been considered as a deterrent for young people considering careers in healthcare. While there have been some improvements in salaries for medical laboratory scientists in recent years, they still lag behind salaries for other clinical careers, in particular nursing careers. This issue is exacerbated by the continuing cuts in Medicare reimbursements for many laboratory tests. Salaries in public health laboratories are even more of an issue and are lower than those in the medical laboratory settings.

Workplace Culture

Laboratory work has always included a relatively high amount of stress, and the SARS CoV-2 public health emergency caused many healthcare workers, including medical and public health laboratory scientists, to work long hours with a high degree of potential exposure to the virus. But stress is not the only factor contributing to workplace culture. Employees want to feel safe and appreciated, and to be able to achieve a comfortable work/life balance. Organizational culture is critical for employee retention and critical as well for students who are evaluating their options. The long-term effects of the added stress from the PHE that was put on laboratory professionals may reverberate for years to come, so there is a dire need to take steps to improve workplace culture to attract and retain a sufficient laboratory workforce.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The need to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the workforce permeates all professions. Across the

field of laboratory medicine, there is a distinct need to recruit from under-represented populations. This was a common thread discussed at the Summit, in the context of many of the broad categories including educational programs and awareness of the laboratory careers.

The APHL Fellowship and Internship Programs are working to increase DEI by 40% over the five-year CDC Cooperative Agreement for these programs.

Recognition / Career Opportunities

High school and college graduates who are trying to make career choices are looking for professions that offer opportunities for upward mobility and professional development. Careers in laboratory science offer a wide selection of specialization opportunities in both clinical and public health arenas. School counselors, advisors and the public often do not recognize the many opportunities available to laboratory professionals. Career options should be promoted to students at every level.

Not only are the many career options for laboratory professionals not well-publicized, but many in the field have felt a lack of recognition for the significance of their daily work. Promoting and celebrating the value of laboratory careers and the contributions that we make to the health of our communities should be a component of any solution to the workforce shortage.

Licensing & Certification

The question of state licensure and certification for laboratory professionals is one that has been circulating among the laboratory community for many years. Do licensure requirements result in better pay and recognition of laboratory professionals? Would licensure or certification requirements help or hinder efforts to address the workforce shortage? These questions should be considered as we navigate the way forward in resolving the current laboratory personnel crisis.

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Number of educational programs

There was an in-depth discussion at the Summit regarding the educational opportunities to increase professionals in medical laboratory science. Currently, there are approximately 240 MLS and MLT programs independently. In the late nineties and early 2000s, programs were decreasing due to financial strain and the profession's lack of visibility, but that has changed, reflecting an increase in programs since 2008. As programs have grown, there have been significant efforts to accept increasing numbers of qualified students. Like other clinical professions, there is a requirement for clinical rotation practicum to focus on the technical skills of laboratory science.

Number of sites for clinical rotations

Clinical rotations are an opportunity to recruit talent for the laboratory. Rotations can be beneficial for both the organization and students. Therefore, students must have the opportunity to participate in a clinical rotation site during their matriculation. The limitation of good clinical sites directly affects the number of students a program can accept. It can cause a bottleneck in admissions, especially with the influx of applicants in the post-pandemic era. There are challenges for organizations engaging in being a clinical site due to a lack of staffing and adequate trainers. Organizations should prioritize becoming clinical affiliates to maintain the quality of personnel in their laboratory and contribute to broadening the laboratory industry. Public health laboratories in some states are playing a role in MLS clinical rotations and could be considered as affiliates moving forward.

In a 2007 research article by Utz and Stuart it was stated that most participants chose employment within the same city where their academic training took place further emphasizing the need for greater partnerships between MLS programs and clinical laboratories at the local level. During the Workforce Action Alliance, there was a discussion of examples of organizations that have begun creatively looking at their contributions as a clinical partner to the local MLS education programs. ARUP Laboratories and the University of Utah will be launching an Advanced Practice Clinical Laboratory Training Center to significantly expand the amount

of medical laboratory science graduates through the program. The partnership of a laboratory organization and an education organization can make a significant impact in tackling the workforce shortage, it is hoped that more organizations will assume the reigns to work closely with their neighboring schools to close the gap in the shortage.



Nancy Stratton



Closing the Gap

We spent time throughout the day sharing our hopes and new ideas. While many great ideas emerged when it came time to focus our collective efforts over the next 12 months, three important priorities were chosen to set the stage for future work in the years to come.

First, the group decided that despite all the data we now have about the key factors contributing to the shortage, there are still gaps in what we think we know. It is important that we get on solid ground related to the true capacity of our nation's educational programs if we are to persuade others, such as policy makers, to aid in our cause. For example, we need better data to understand where in the country we have sufficient applicants to fill the available academic program slots and where there are too few applicants. Furthermore, we need to be on more solid footing in terms of the number of professionals needed to staff laboratories now and in the future.

Second, a strong case was made that we need to communicate all the career paths in the field of laboratory science, both as they are now and as they might be in the future. This is important not only to get high school students to consider a degree to lead them to a laboratory profession which may include medical laboratory science (among all the other options open to them), but also to give people already working in the field hope that they can reach their dreams. Visualizing career paths and sharing them nationally with teachers, counselors and students in high schools and other college/university science department programs are great ways to get more people interested in the field. Also important is creating a digital space for potential candidates to visit to learn about all the exciting developments in the field.

Third, the Summit group discussed the importance of continuing the work towards standardizing titles within the profession. Obviously, this is a challenge from the perspective of achieving consensus, but we can build upon the existing work to further this idea in a meaningful way. The experience so far is that the variation in nomenclature may, in part, have the

Workforce Action Alliance Priorities for the next 12 months:

1. Strengthen data to understand the laboratory workforce
2. Communicate career pathways in laboratory science for new and transitioning professionals
3. Standardize professional titles

unintended consequence of undermining professional unity and identity in addition to confusing the public and the employer market. In addition, there are many people who believe that the more casual, day-to-day way in which we refer to ourselves as “med techs,” “lab techs,” or simply “techs” may cloud understanding of the level of academic knowledge, skill and experience that is required of those who work in the laboratory science field as well as the value of the profession and the scientific discipline within the patient care team. The focus of this workgroup is to see if we can develop a standard title for the profession within which there are many paths.



(Left) James Crawford, MD and James Flanigan, CAE

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Next Steps

In the coming months, subgroups will be working together to implement the action plans for the three essential priorities identified during the Summit. At the 2024 Summit, which will be held on the Emerald Coast of Florida on May 7, 2024, the group will reconvene to celebrate their accomplishments and to choose new priorities for the 2024-2025 period.

If you are interested in learning more about the Workforce Action Alliance, you can send an email to waa@cola.org.



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Participants

Dana Baker, MBA, MS, MLS (ASCP)^{CM}, *Manager, Academic Partnerships, Association of Public Health Laboratories*

Lee Barnard, *SVP Strategic Partnerships, VCIO, US HealthTek*

Christine Bean, PhD, MBA, MLS (ASCP), *Chief Learning Officer, Association of Public Health Laboratories*

Mark Birenbaum, PhD, *Executive Director, American Association Bioanalysts/National Independent Laboratory Association*

Christine Booth, MD, *Board Member, American Society of Cytopathology*

Diane Calmus, JD, *Senior Director, Federal Government Affairs, America's Blood Centers*

Anne Chenoweth, MBA MT(ASCP)^{CM} CQA(ASQ), *National Quality and Compliance Officer, Veterans Health Administration*

David Chhieng, MD, MBA, MSHI, MSEM, MLS, MDR, *Chief Medical Officer, COLA*

Kathy Cilia, MBA, MT (AMT), MT (ASCP), CAE, *Executive Director, American Medical Technologists*

James Crawford, MD, *SVP Laboratory Services, Chair Department of Pathology, Northwell Health Lab*

Victor De Jesus, PhD, *Chief, Quality and Safety Systems Branch, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

James Flanigan, CAE, *Executive Vice President/CEO, American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science*

Maribeth Flaws, PhD, *BOD President, National Accreditation Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences*

Meghan Frias, PHR, SHRM-CP HR, *Communications & Recruitment, Carter BloodCare*

Bianca Frogner, PhD, *Director and Professor, University of Washington Center for Health Workforce Studies*

Edna Garcia, MPH, *Senior Director, Scientific Engagement and Research, American Society for Clinical Pathology*

Jonathan Genzen, MD, PhD, *Chief Medical Officer / Professor, ARUP Laboratories / University of Utah*

Leah Gillis, MS, PhD. HCLD(ABB), *Chair, Workforce Development Committee, Association of Public Health Laboratories*

Mark Golden, MD, *Chief Executive Officer, American Association for Clinical Chemistry*

David Grenache, PhD, *Chief Scientific Officer, TriCore Reference Laboratories*

Jon Harol, *President, Lighthouse Lab Services*

Heather Hurley, BS, *Executive Director Laboratory Accreditation and Health Systems, The Joint Commission*

Dana Jackson, EdD, *Chief of Support Services, Grand Prairie ISD*

Dollie Marie Jacosalem, CLS, *Chair Legislative Committee, Philippines Association of Medical Technologists*

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Marisa James, MA, MLS (ASCP)^{CM}, Chief Executive Officer, National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences

Barb Jones, PhD, Chief Executive Officer, Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI)

Grace Kubin, PhD, Laboratory Director, Texas Department of State Health Services Laboratory

Jack Lafferty, Director - Managed Accounts, Naylor Association Solutions

Amy Leber, Ph.D., D(ABMM), Senior Director, Clinical Laboratories, Nationwide Childrens Hospital, Nationwide Childrens Hospital

Troy McCann, Director of Regulatory Affairs, DNV Healthcare USA Inc

Shelby Melton, MD, Chief, Pathology & Laboratory Medicine Service, VA North Texas Health Care System, Association for Molecular Pathology

Robert Michel, President and Editor-in Chief, The Dark Intelligence Group

Debbie Michel, RN, Vice President, The Dark Intelligence Group

Katrina Moreau, MAT, MLS (ASCP), Coordinator, Graduate MLS Program, Director, Undergraduate MLS Program, University of Vermont

Renee Ned-Sykes, MMSc, PhD, Health Scientist, CDC

Kathy Nucifora, MPH, MLS (ASCP), Chief Operating Officer, COLA

Melissa Owens, BS, CHP Founder/President, Allied Search Partners

Rowena Pablico, National President, PAMET-USA, Inc.

Kelly Proctor, MPA, President, DNV Healthcare

Jill Roberts, PhD, Associate Professor, University of South Florida

Donna Russell, MEd, CT (ASCP), HT (ASCP), CMIAC, Member, American Society of Cytopathology

Don Simpson, PhD, Professor and Dean, College of Health Sciences, University of Louisiana Monroe

Amy Spiczka, MS, HTL(ASCP)^{CM}SCT, MB^{CM}, CPHQ, Executive Director, ASCP Board of Certification

Heather Stang, MS, MT, Senior Advisor for Clinical Laboratories, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Nancy Stratton, Chief Executive Officer, COLA

Dani Stroughton Duncan, MLS (ASCP), MEd, Director of Education Division, COLA

Jackie Thomas, CAE, Sr. Director of Education, AABB

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Contact Information

To find out more about the activities of the Workforce Action Alliance, please email:

Tammy Zinsmeister
Chief Innovation Officer

WAA@cola.org