



# the FILTER

## From School to the Work Place

By Daniel Brokenicky MLT (ASCP)

I graduated from the Medical Laboratory Technician program at Southeast Community College (SCC). SCC was the third school I attended since graduating from Fremont Senior High School in 1998. School was two years of intense class schedules and twenty weeks of onsite clinicals at different locations. I graduated in 2005 from SCC and found a job within a month of graduating. Half of my class had jobs lined up before graduation. I started interviewing for jobs in February of my last year of classes.

The interviewing process can vary from place to place. I would suggest when looking for a job that you start about six months before graduation. My first interviewer even made the remark that she was impressed that I started applying so early. The first interview I went through took three months due mainly to a consulting firm looking at all available positions. I went through a phone interview and a sit-down interview with a small test. In the end the position I was going for was eliminated by the consulting firm. But on a brighter note, my last clinical site had an opening. I went through two sit-down interviews and found out that I had gotten the job!

I currently work for Physicians Laboratory Services Inc. at their Lincoln lab location. It has been a great job - the people here have been excellent help for me in getting used to the new environment. The attitude of laboratory professionals at my clinical sites gave me my first taste of how supportive the laboratory environment is. . . especially for those just starting out.

However, the learning curve has not ended for me yet. In July, I will begin the online Medical Technology Bachelor's Degree completion course through the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science promotes the *value* of the clinical laboratory science profession in all arenas possible, strives to be the *voice* for the laboratory practitioner in the workplace, the classroom, the community, the legislative arena and all for the good health of the public and is actively defining the *vision* of the future of the profession.



# TREASURER'S REPORT

## FISCAL YEAR 2005—2006

SUBMITTED BY KAREN KELLER, MT(ASCP)SH

	Money Market balance - 1 July 2005	\$21,985.41
<b>Cash receipts</b>		
	Interest income	\$569.91
	Scholarship CD interest income	\$570.33
	Spring meeting checking account	\$5,600.61
	ASCLS membership	\$1,180.00
	Merion Publishing	\$595.95
	TOTAL Money Market cash receipts	\$8,516.80
<b>Disbursements</b>		
	Transfers to checking account	\$13,500.00
	Money Market account balance 30 June 2006	<u>\$17,002.21</u>
	Checking account balance - 1 July 2005	\$607.98
<b>Cash Receipts</b>		
	Transfers from money market account	\$13,500.00
	ASCLS E&R fund - membership collection	\$466.00
	ASCLS membership income	\$655.00
	Merion Publishing income	\$359.06
	Checking account adjustments*	\$32.54
	TOTAL checking account cash receipts	\$15,012.60
<b>Disbursements</b>		
	2004-05 budget carryover	\$962.66
	Alyce Watson scholarship fund	\$1,000.00
	ASCLS E&R fund	\$966.00
	ASCLS silent auction	\$50.00
	Awards	\$928.77
	Filter	\$433.87
	Legislative Days	\$2,070.99
	Membership/Public Relations	\$374.31
	Membership Development Chair	\$929.71
	Office Supplies	\$40.44
	PACE	\$250.00
	President	\$1,624.54
	President-Elect	\$1,799.61
	Region VI Assessment	\$1,200.00
	Scholarship	\$500.00
	Student National Mtg Funds	\$750.00
	Treasurer	\$86.00
	TOTAL checking account disbursements	\$13,966.90
	Checking account balance 30 June 2006	<u>\$1,653.68</u>

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## TREASURER'S REPORT CONTINUED

### NSCLS SUMMARY OF ASSETS:

Money Market balance 30 June 2006	\$17,002.21
Checking account balance 30 June 2006	\$1,653.68
Scholarship CD balance 30 June 2006	\$13,345.09
Legislative CD balance 30 June 2006	\$5,582.87
NSCLS money in Spring Meeting account 30 June 2006^	\$17,554.18

NSCLS TOTAL ASSETS - 30 June 2006\* \$55,138.03

^\$12,103.07 is NSCLS balance prior to Spring 06 meeting. \$5,451.11 is NSCLS recorded profit to date from the Spring 2006 NSCLS/ASCP/CLMA meeting.

\* Includes a \$15.95 fee reversal and \$16.59 deposit from Spring meeting account for account adjustment.



Would you rather receive your copy of **the FILTER** electronically?  
It's as easy as sending an email with your request to [NSCLSfilter@hotmail.com](mailto:NSCLSfilter@hotmail.com).

## Laboratory Licensure Update

Submitted by Linda Fell, MT(ASCP)SH

In the November Filter, I issued a call to action to begin the process that will culminate in licensure for laboratorians in Nebraska. It is essential that we protect our scope of practice and be recognized as the professionals we are.

The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS) and the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) have worked together to develop a model licensure bill for introduction into state legislatures. This model bill can be adapted by each state to include local and regional concerns. In addition, each organization has gathered data on the effect of licensure on wages and labor supply, as well as talking points to assist members in preparing their licensure initiatives.

At the ASCP-ASCLS-CLMA Nebraska Spring meet-

ing, I solicited names of those interested in helping with the licensure effort in Nebraska. Eight clinical laboratory scientists and MLTs volunteered. At this time, I would like to gather more names and to identify a Chair for a Licensure Task Force who would lead the effort in identifying issues, strengths and possible barriers to licensure in Nebraska. This would be the first step to be followed by an action plan. If you are interested in working on licensure, please email me at [lfell@unmc.edu](mailto:lfell@unmc.edu).

Please volunteer--- it is your future!

Ms. Fell is the Clinical Laboratory Science Program Director at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. She is a lifelong member of both ASCP and ASCLS and an advocate for clinical laboratory licensure in Nebraska.



## 2006 NSCLS Award Recipients

Submitted by Joyce Colombe, 2006 Awards Chairperson

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The following awards were presented at the 2006 NSCLS-CLMA-ASCP Spring Educational Meeting on April 21st at the Downtown Holiday Inn in Lincoln, Nebraska.

### *Filter Award*

The Filter Award is awarded to an outstanding NSCLS member who has made a significant contribution to our society. This year's very deserving recipient was *Phyllis Muellerberg*. Phyllis has touched the lives of so many people as program director of the Clinical Laboratory Science Program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, as a speaker at professional meetings, as a workshop presenter, and numerous other professional activities. Her dedication to the laboratory profession is certainly an asset to our Society!

### *Key to the Future Award*

The Key to the Future Award recognizes newly active members of NSCLS who have demonstrated leadership potential by their contributions to our organization. This year's winner is *Tracey Vrba*. Tracey is employed at Prairie Fields Family Medicine in Fremont. Her many talents and willingness to serve make her a key to our future.

### *Award of Excellence*

This award is awarded to a Medical Technologist/Clinical Laboratory Scientist or Medical Laboratory Technician/Clinical Laboratory Technician who has made a significant contribution to that person's profession, institution and community. *Peggy Weekly*, a Senior Technologist at Nebraska Methodist Hospital, was this year's recipient.

### *Technical Support Award of Excellence*

This award was established to recognize a person who supports the laboratory profession and has made a significant contribution to that person's profession, institution and community. This year the award was presented to *Catherine Musembi*, a Laboratory Assistant at the Nebraska Medical Center.

### *Exhibitor Appreciation Award*

The Exhibitor Appreciation Award is presented to an exhibitor, salesperson, or technical representative to show appreciation for his or her outstanding educational or financial support to the field of Clinical Laboratory Science and NSCLS. *Kirk Hansen and Laboratory Corporation of America* was this year's worthy recipient.

**Congratulations to all of this year's award winners and nominees!!** Please consider the quality individuals at your institutions and submit their names for the 2007 awards. Nomination forms may be found at [www.nscls.net](http://www.nscls.net)

# A New Prospective on Recruitment in the Profession

Submitted by Janet L. Schmidt, MT (ASCP)

Our goal is to interest people in Clinical Laboratory Science (CLS), but it is also to educate those students who are going into other health care professions. First, always be truthful in portraying this profession. We want students to enter this profession and remain. We do not want them to be lured in when it might not be the best fit for the student.

So what information will spark an interest about Clinical Laboratory Science to today's younger generations? Let us consider some options.

Clinical Lab Scientists are the experts of laboratory work. No other professionals know how the tests really work and what they mean like we do. Some might argue that Pathologists are the experts, but I doubt that they could actually "run" the lab for a day. Although they have an important role, without us, health care would come to a screeching halt. Students like to hear how important lab professionals are to the rest of the health care team. Pharmacists, doctors, PA's, nurses, dietitians, etc., could not do their jobs without our expertise.

Please stop using the phrase, "Behind the Scenes". Generally, today's youth perceive that phrase negatively because they want to be "In the Scene" and "On the Front Lines". We all know it has been estimated that 70%-80% of all medical decisions are based on laboratory testing. If that is not leading the way to a better health care for our patients, then please lets all go back to the black box that spits out lab results.

CLS is a great field where you can work in a variety of areas and settings. Students are comforted in the fact that they have these options. Plus, if they get tired of working in one area after a few years, they can move to another area and not have to go back

to school. Creating options for the student generates interest in the program.

Many students ask, "Will I be able to get a job once I finish the program"? We tell them about the emerging lab shortage and how it will exceed the nursing shortage. The Bureau of Labor Statistics stated that we will need 15,000 new lab professions annually and we are currently only graduating around 5,000 new professions each year. We can almost guarantee that they will find a job.

Another popular question students ask is, "How much am I going to make"? Since competition for lab professionals exists everywhere, salaries are rising. It is finally competing with nurses salaries. Many other professionals who have BS degrees make much less. I have friends with MBAs that are making the same as I am because the business field is so saturated. When it comes to income, I issue a word of caution: make sure to compare CLS salaries with other BS degrees. Some people will emphasize that you won't make nearly what a doctor or pharmacist would make, but it is comparing a bachelor's with a doctorate degree; of course, they are going to be different. I like to point out the difference in degrees to the students.

Length of Schooling is something that I always emphasize. If they play their cards right, they can have a marketable degree with only four years of college. I really like to emphasize this because even if they say that they are thinking of other programs, I mention that during undergraduate training people sometimes realize that they don't want to go on to four or more years of schooling after undergrad. Clinical lab science is a great profession as well as a notable alternative to longer programs.

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Continued from page 5 . . .

In the past, it has been the trend to tell students and parents that the chances of them getting into medical school or pharmacy school are so slim that they shouldn't even try. Many list statistics to prove their statements, and though these statistics are usually accurate, this generation has been raised with the belief that they can do whatever they dream – the sky is the limit. Telling them that they are not intelligent enough for these programs, not only insults them, but it also insults our program because this gives them the impression that the only people who go into the CLS profession are the ones that can't get into medical school or pharmacy school. Why would they want to work in a field that isn't "good enough"? Then we wonder why people that do get into those "higher-ranking" programs negatively view us. So, I think the best approach is portraying clinical lab science as a great profession to go into as an alternative to longer (not better) programs.

One last point – thanks for sticking with me so far. Please, let us stop the stepping-stone charade. Why are we wasting our time accepting students into a clinical lab science program when we know they don't care about CLS and are just looking for something to do between PA and Med School?

It is a burden for the faculty and fellow students who want to be just a CLS because then they think there is something wrong with that. We can't forbid CLS students from going on to another program. We can however, discourage other programs from telling students to do CLS to boost their resumes. Be honest with prospective students; tell them what CLS work is really like and stop accepting students who flat out don't want to be a lab professional. How is training this type of student going to help the lab shortage?

Many people are startled by my new ideas on recruitment and still like to harbor old habits. If the old ways were effective, why are so many CLS graduates leaving the profession, and why is there a nationwide shortage of qualified applicants?

If you are interested in helping recruit for our profession by attending job fairs or doing presentations at your nearby high schools and colleges, please contact me. I will have power points and many other materials you might need. Although I can't attend every one of them, we can make a difference by working together.

### MANY THANKS TO THE NSCLS BOARD AND ALL THE MEMBERS!

Many thanks to Melissa Helligso, Robbe Schweitzer, Shelly Ballard, Roxanne Alter, Amy Stanley, Karen Keller, Joyce Colombe, Christian Herdt, Julie Richards and other NSCLS members that had anything to do with the wonderful recognition of the FILTER AWARD at the Nebraska NSCLS-ASCP-CLMA meeting. You are all doing a great job for our profession and make me proud to be a part of the Nebraska tradition.

When I first came to Nebraska in 1968, I expected that it would take a long time to adjust to new places and new people. I was definitely wrong about that. The first thing I knew, Doris Johnson recruited me as a partner in her traveling workshops and that began my travels and many contacts across the entire state. Many wonderful memories and challenges later I have decided it is time to just ease back and enjoy my family and friends.

Thank you again for all of the support you have given to me and to medical technology/clinical laboratory science education in Nebraska and beyond our borders.

Phyllis Muellenberg

# President's Page...

Robbe Schweitzer, MT(ASCP)



My reign as NSCLS president has not officially started yet, but boy have I been busy preparing for the year. I want to thank all of you who have graciously accepted my offers/pleas for NSCLS appointed positions. Without volunteers like you, NSCLS would not be where it is today. If I did not contact you and you would like a new role in NSCLS, please let me know.

I also want to thank every NSCLS member for helping make the 2006 NSCLS-CLMA-ASCP Spring meeting — *Joining Our Voices, Securing Our Future* - a success. It was my pleasure to meet and chat with every one of you. I hope that you found the educational content enlightening and the comraderie endearing.



The 2007 Spring Meeting has been scheduled for April 18th through 20th at Harrah's Casino in Council Bluffs. The meeting will once again be a collaboration of NSCLS, IACLS, CLMA and ASCP. I hope to see you there!

I will be traveling to Chicago at the end of the month for the annual ASCLS meeting. This year's theme— Knowledge, Fun and All That Jazz— has me ready to kick up my heels. Mellissa, Shelly, Nicole and Emily will be making the



voyage to Chicago as well. Watch for a full recap including pictures in the next edition of *The Filter*.

In the coming year, the NSCLS board will focus on clinical laboratory science recruitment efforts and providing continuing education. Your comments and suggestions about these missions are always welcome. And, as always, any time you can volunteer would be greatly appreciated. Send me a line at [turbby10cj@yahoo.com](mailto:turbby10cj@yahoo.com) if you are interested.

If you haven't visited the new NSCLS website — [www.nscls.net](http://www.nscls.net) - you should soon. Kudos to Martin Steinbeck for taking on the website. If you have suggestions for the website, please forward them to [steinbeckm@hotmail.com](mailto:steinbeckm@hotmail.com).

## SAVE THE DATE!



We can't wait to see you at the 2007 Spring Meeting on April 18th - 20th at Harrah's Casino in Council Bluffs, Iowa! The meeting will be a collaboration between NSCLS, IACLS, CLMA and ASCP



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## Basics of Investing 111: Protecting Yourself

By Cindy Diccianni RN, CSA, CLTC Financial Advisor

Insurance is one of the key elements in life-long financial planning and can minimize a large catastrophic loss. How much insurance and when you need it depends on changing life situations. For example, you need car insurance when you own a car or renters or homeowners insurance when you rent an apartment or buy a house. In this article, we will cover the basic types of insurance and some of the events that they cover. Insurance works by providing protection against catastrophic financial losses. Some of these losses include:

- Income from an illness, disability or death
- Medical expenses which insure against poor health
- Damaged property from an accident, theft, and natural disaster
- Lawsuit if you or your property(s) is involved in an injury or loss to another person.

The premium is determined by the potential size of the loss you want to cover and the level of risk that this loss may incur. Insurance companies pool the money or premiums together from their policyholders and form a fund, which protects against losses by compensating for the damages incurred.

### Automobile Insurance

Automobile insurance protects you against losses due to property damage, personal injury and injury to others. As you may already know, auto insurance for teen drivers is very expensive due to the lack of experience and the increase chance of having an accident. Some of the ways to minimize the cost of auto insurance is to have a clean driving record, meaning no accidents or speeding tickets, and to increase the deductibles, which is the portion you pay out of pocket. It is

felt by many companies that a higher deductible is a way for the insured to keep their own behavior in check and to drive defensively, similar to a “shared responsibility.”

### Medical Insurance

Although most people have medical insurance through their employers, more and more people are being required to buy their own insurance. Medical insurance varies greatly from plan to plan and often your choices are limited by what your employer wants to cover and what they can afford. Some company plans require you, as the employee, to pay a portion of the premium (say 30%) while the company absorbs the balance (70%). In other plans the employer may pick up 100% of the premium. Common variables of medical insurance plans include:

Annual deductibles which is the amount that you must pay on your medical bills each year before your insurance goes into effect

Co-insurance or co-pay which is the percentage of medical costs the insured person must pay (after paying the deductible). The share ratio is typically 20% paid by the insured and 80% paid by the employer. There may be a specific stop loss amount of \$2000, and then the insurance company will pay 100% of the additional costs.

Maximum coverage is the lifetime limit on the total amount your insurance company will pay. Some HMOs have unlimited coverage because they can exercise greater control over costs than traditional plans.

### Disability Insurance (DI)

DI is insurance for the protection of loss of income from a personal disability. This is distinguished





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from an injury that occurs at work that would be covered by the employer's Workers Compensation Insurance. Many larger companies offer some form of disability coverage although it may be limited in nature. Generally DI is limited to one-half or two-thirds of your gross salary. The limit is designed to give a worker an incentive to return to work as soon as possible. It is important to have disability insurance coverage, however it can be very expensive because it is based on the risk factors in your type of profession and your age.

### Life Insurance

In the last article we discussed the different types of life insurance and their uses. Here is a quick review:

**Term Life:** The simplest and least expensive form of insurance, which allows you to buy coverage for a year or a specific period of time. If you die in the insured time frame the face amount of the policy will be paid to your beneficiaries or your estate.

**Universal life:** Allows you to vary your yearly premiums, provides coverage and creates some cash value that is generally a fixed amount of money. The policy can go on a longer time if the cash value is adequate enough to pay the premiums. If you die in the insured time frame the face amount is paid to your beneficiaries or your estate, but the insurance company keeps the cash balance.

**Variable universal life:** Allows you to choose how your insurance money is invested and you decide how much risk you want to take in trying to achieve a high level of return. If you die in the insured time frame the face amount and the cash value in the separate accounts are paid to your beneficiaries or your estate.

### Property Insurance

Property insurance includes real property insurance, which is a house or condominium, and per-

son property insurance, which is furniture, electronics, jewelry etc. This insurance will compensate you for losses due to fire, theft and natural disasters that are spelled out in your contract.

### Liability or Umbrella Insurance

Liability insurance protects you from potential losses due to legal actions taken against you because of some alleged negligence. Liability coverage is included in auto and homeowners insurance. In a homeowner policy it covers lawsuits which may result from a person falling on your sidewalk or being bitten by your dog.

Before you buy insurance you need to compare policies to see how they stack up against one another. You should do business with an experienced agent, financial advisor or broker who understands many different company's coverages and can get you the best policy for your individual needs. Insuring your property, life and health is critical to your financial well being. As you build wealth over an extended period of time, the appropriate insurance will protect you from losses, which could wipe out your assets and undermine your roadmap to financial success.

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*Julie Fuimano, MBA, BSN, RN is a Success Coach working with executives, leaders and professionals who want more happiness, more time and less stress. She is the author of "The Journey Called YOU: A Roadmap to Self-Discovery and Acceptance," the manual for effective living. Learn how to unleash the greatness within you and create a life and a career that works for you! To explore how coaching would work for you or your organization, call (610) 277-2726. Sign up for our e-newsletter or purchase your copy of the book at [www.nurturingyoursuccess.com](http://www.nurturingyoursuccess.com) or write to [Julie@nurturingyoursuccess.com](mailto:Julie@nurturingyoursuccess.com).*



**Phyllis Muellenberg gives advice to students at the social.**

Thank you for making the 2006  
**NSCLS-CLMA-ASCP**  
Spring Meeting a *huge* success!



**Shelly Ballard and Nicole Meier enjoy the entertainment of the Lyp Schtick Improv Comedy Troupe.**



**Paula Garret (Keynote Speaker) and John Koenig (Region VI Director) entertain the crowd.**



**Joyce Colombe presents the Exhibitor Appreciation Award to Kirk Hansen of Laboratory Corporation of America.**



**Linda Fell and Sandra Jameson prepare the PACE forms.**

# AMA Approved Clinical Laboratory Science Programs In Nebraska

CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
[Medical Laboratory Technician Program](#)

East Highway 6, P.O. Box 1024  
Hastings, NE 68902  
Phone: 402-461-2451

Interim Program Director: Shirley Noble, MS, MT(ASCP)  
Education Coordinator: Lori VanBoening, MT(ASCP)  
Email : [lvamboening@cccneb.edu](mailto:lvamboening@cccneb.edu)

MID-PLAINS COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
[Medical Laboratory Technician Program](#)

McDonald-Belton Campus  
601 West State Farm Road  
North Platte, NE 69101

Phone: 308.532.8980 or 800.658.4308 (ext. 254)  
Medical Advisors: Dr. Byron Barksdale and Dr. Lyle Barksdale  
Program Director: Martin Steinbeck, M.Ed., MT(ASCP)  
Email : [steinbeckm@mpcc.edu](mailto:steinbeckm@mpcc.edu)

NEBRASKA METHODIST HOSPITAL  
[Clinical Laboratory Science Program](#)

8303 Dodge St.  
Omaha, NE 68114

Phone: 402.354.4563  
Medical Director: Christine Reyes, MD  
Program Director: Julie Richards, MPA  
Email : [julie.richards@nmhs.org](mailto:julie.richards@nmhs.org)

SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
[Medical Laboratory Technician Program](#)

Lincoln Campus Admissions  
8800 O Street

Lincoln, NE 68520-9989  
Phone: 402.437.2760 or 800.642.4075  
Medical Director: Aina I. Silenies, M.D.  
Program Director: Janis Bible MT(ASCP)

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA MEDICAL CENTER  
[Clinical Laboratory Science Program](#)

987549 Nebraska Medical Center  
Omaha, NE 68198-7549  
Phone: 402.559.8366

Medical Director: James Wisecarver, MD  
Program Director: Linda Feli, MS,MT(ASCP)SH  
Education Coordinator: Karen Honeycutt, M.Ed,MT(ASCP)SM  
Email : [bkouba@unmc.edu](mailto:bkouba@unmc.edu)

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SUMMER Edition—2006

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	Emily Hansen	<a href="mailto:ejh_11@hotmail.com">ejh_11@hotmail.com</a>