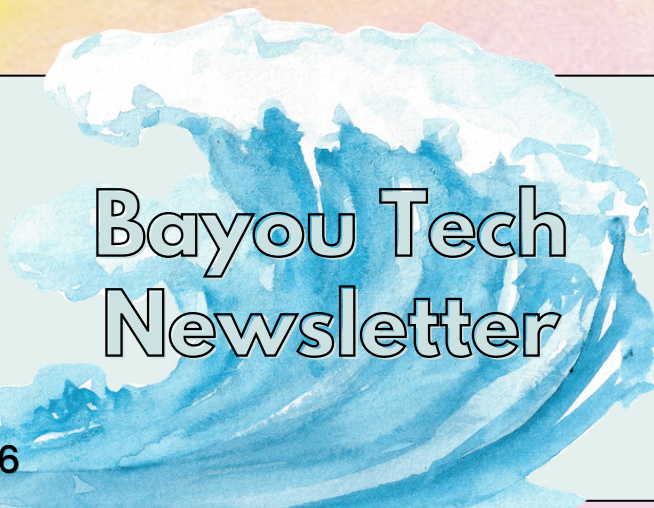




Bayou Tech Newsletter

Summer 2026

@lscls.org

A Warm Hello from Our Society

We are happy to welcome all the new and familiar faces that are helping make big waves for our state society.

Nominations

We are looking for speakers for our next Bistate Meeting and nominations for scholarships & awards!

LSCLS Volunteers @ Career Fair

The St. Tammany Parish High School Career Fairs in Slidell and Mandeville were a fantastic success.

A huge thank you to the LSCLS members who stepped up to volunteer their time, engaging with local students and inspiring the next generation of laboratory professionals

Fall 2025 Wrap Up

President's Meet & Greet:

President Judy Garic kicked off two successful community meet-and-greet events at Lake Charles Memorial Hospital. Members and guests gathered across specialized morning and evening sessions to network, enjoy some breakfast pastries and dinner, and learn more about the benefits of ASCLS/LSCLS.

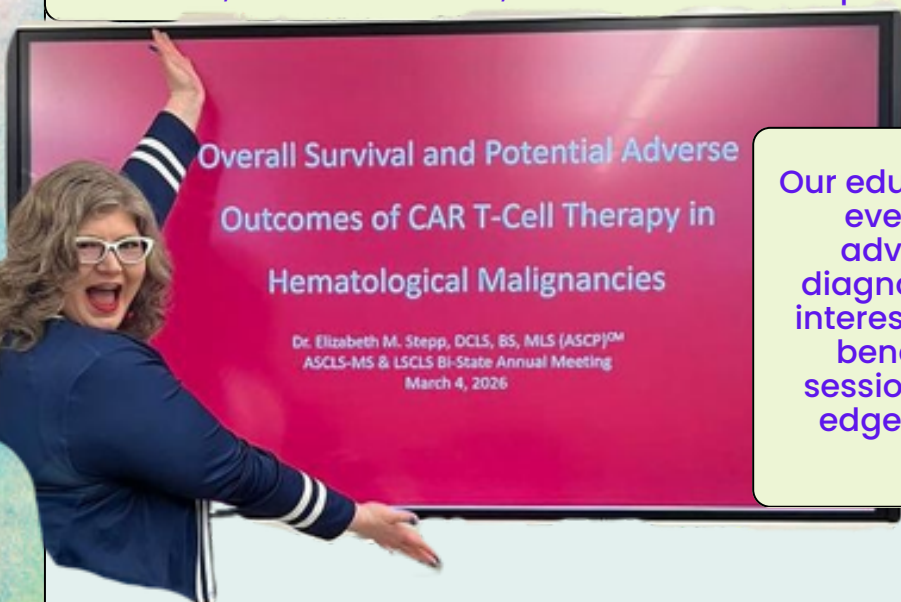


Our next Spring Bistate Meeting will be:
April 21-23, 2027
@ Hilton Airport Hotel in New Orleans!

Spring Meeting Recap



The future of Medical Laboratory Science was on full display! The energy in the room was electric as MLS and MLT students faced off in the annual Student Bowl. We were thrilled to welcome several brand new teams to the brackets this year, showcasing incredible sharp witted talent, fierce teamwork, and a lot of school spirit.



Our educational tracks delivered something for everyone. Practicing professionals took advantage of CE sessions covering new diagnostics methods, laboratory trends, and interesting case studies. Meanwhile, students benefited from ASCP certification review sessions designed to give them the ultimate edge as they prepare to sit for their exams post-graduation.

Behind the scenes, leadership was hard at work mapping out the future of our society with Board Meetings, Officer Elections, and formation of the 2027 Bistate Planning Committee.

It wasn't all business! From casual meetups to evening gatherings, the social events provided the perfect backdrop to catch up with old colleagues, meet new faces, and celebrate the tightly-knit community that makes our profession so special.



Student Bowl Winners



<<<

1st Place:

Seline Nguyen (captain), Allison Cao,
Katelyn Cao, Jonah Evans, and Ashlyn
Neucere – LSU Health New Orleans



>>>

2nd Place:

Meera Patel (captain), Marianne Alexis, Jose
Armenta Munoz, Victoria Delacruz, and Taylor
Wall – LSU Health New Orleans



MLT Student Bowl:

1st Place:

Gulf Coast Community College
(Not pictured)

<<<

2nd Place:

Louisiana Delta Community
College (Monroe)

LSCLS Leadership 2026-2027

President:
Judy Garic

President-Elect:
Carly Preston

Past President:
Melonie Falcon

Secretary:
Emilea Haddox

Treasurer:
Joette Taylor

Ascending Professional
Chair:
Julia Johnson

Developing Professional:

Michaela Griffith- Chair
Alajah Nealy-Vice Chair
Alexander Garcia-Secretary

Area Reps:

Area Rep I: Cheryl Caskey

Area Rep II: Evelyn Tidwell

Area Rep III: Sona Kumar

**Area Rep IV: Sonya
Hidalgo**

**Area Rep V: KayDee
Dennis**

**Area VI Rep: Joanie
Brocato**

Area VII Rep: Danny Held

Nominations Committee:
Christen Diel-Chair
Debbie Fox
Hannah Darden

By-Laws Committee:
Karen Williams-Chair
James Gardner
Carly Preston
Michele Edmiston
Jessica Lasiter

PACE committee:
Hannah Darden-Chair
Karen Williams
Julia Johnson

Scholarships & Awards

2026 Clinical Laboratory Educators Forum (CLEF) Impactful Innovation in Education Award:

Sonya Hidalgo

President's Award

Carly Preston
John Vincent Davis
Elizabeth Duck

Keys to the Future:

Hannah Darden
Daisy Singletary
Isabella Plews

Don't forget to
visit the LSCLS
website for links to
the 2027
scholarship &
awards
applications!

haddox@ulm.edu

lsclsorg@gmail.com

Omicron Sigma:

Melonie Falcon
Karen Williams
Cheryl Caskey
Emilea Haddox
Mikayla Puckett
Sonya Hidalgo
John Vincent Davis
Hannah Darden
Carly Preston
Daniel Held
Elizabeth Duck
Daisy Singletary
Rosalie Hendrix
Isabella Plews
Phoenix Finton
Norma Bivona
KayDee Dennis
Joette Taylor
Alexandra Webre

Student Paper Awards:

Clinical Chemistry/Clinical Microscopy: The Leading Cause of Failure: A Deep Dive into Diabetic-Induced End-Stage Renal Disease by Abi Savage, ULM

Immunology: Chronic Urticaria and Acupuncture: A Case Study by Abi Savage, ULM

Microbiology: Efficacy of Fecal Microbiota Transplantation for Clostridioides Difficile Infection by Vittoria Valderrama, ULM

Hematology: Diagnosis and Clinical Management of Severe Hemophilia B Following Intracranial Hemorrhage: Case Based Analysis by Makayla Westerborg, ULM

The member of the Year was Daniel Held.



JOY HOLM & BETTY LYNNE THERIOT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Lindsey Lee from University of
Louisiana at Monroe



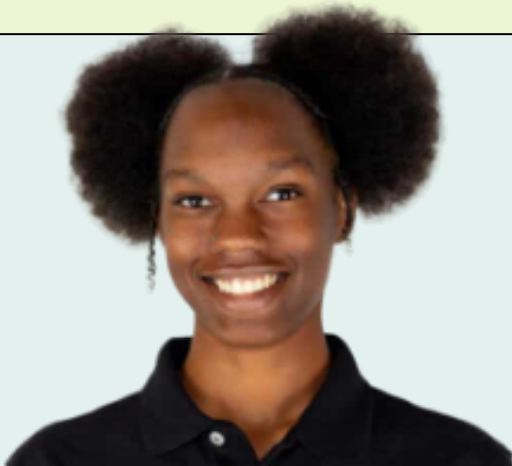
ANNA HARNAN FUND FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

No complete applications received

Member Spotlight

Innovation Spotlight:

Lab-n-a-Bag Sparks Interest in MLS Careers To combat the ongoing workforce shortage and low visibility of Medical Laboratory Science (MLS), McNeese State University faculty and LSCLS member, **Sonya Hidalgo**, launched Lab-n-a-Bag. This innovative outreach initiative provides local high schools with safe, portable, and pre-assembled science kits that simulate real clinical lab work (like synthetic blood typing and microbiology). Funded by an endowed professorship, the project has distributed 32 kits across Louisiana and Texas since 2022. By equipping teachers with ready-to-use, facility-free tools, Lab-n-a-Bag bridges the gap between textbook science and vital clinical careers, inspiring the next generation of MLS professionals



Alajah Nealy was recently elected National Developing Professional Vice Chair for the entire ASCLS Organization. Alajah is a student at Xavier and is the Louisiana Society Developing Professional Vice Chair.

LSCLS President Judy Garic would like to personally thank members **Norma Bivona, Daisy Singletary, Phoenix Finton and Isabella Plews** for their help with the career fairs LSCLS attended last year.



HELP

WANTED

Speakers for
Bistate Meeting

SCHOLARSHIPS

ANNA HARNAN

JOY HOLM &
BETTY LYNNE
THERIOT
MEMORIAL

NOMINATIONS

 **LINK**

Student of the Year

Educator of the Year

Member of the Year

Paper Award
(Student or Member)

Advocacy Spotlight

LOUISIANA LICENSURE:

MLS Trainee Licenses:

Now available, though trainees are not permitted to report clinical results. Ochsner Health is currently working on implementing these trainee roles.

Lab Assistant Licenses:

Implemented directly through employers; these roles are restricted from performing high-complexity testing.

Temporary Licensure:

The LSBME removed temporary licensure

LSCLS Call to Action:

LSCLS Government Affairs Committee Chair, Vincent Davis, attended the Lavocate Symposium in October and was alerted to the Rural Health Transformation Program by our ASCLS lobbyist, Patrick Connelly.

The Rural Health Transformation Program Louisiana has been awarded a historic \$1.4 billion over five years via the CMS Rural Health Transformation Program to overhaul rural healthcare access, technology, and workforce development. Although the official RFI has closed and the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) manages the funds, LSCLS members have a vital window to engage as critical stakeholders.

Vincent reached out to the contacts he was given and LSCLS will have a seat at the table when the state is ready to review ideas. We need to aggressively advocate for the inclusion of laboratory infrastructure, rural training pipelines, mobile lab units, and tele-laboratory initiatives. Please voice your support early to ensure laboratory science is reflected in the state's final plans.

Send stakeholder proposals to RuralHealthTransformation@la.gov, and copy LDH Secretary Bruce Greenstein, the Surgeon General's Office, and Deputy Surgeon General Wyche Coleman to keep the laboratory community on the state's immediate radar.



Connections



Have an idea for an article in Bayou Tech? Is there a topic for which you would like more information? CONTACT US, we'd love to hear it!

Email your suggestions to lsclsorg@gmail.com

There are lots of opportunities to learn and volunteer. Stay updated using ASCLS Connect Community, LSCLS.org, and the Bayou Tech Newsletter!



**ASCLS
Connect**



ASCLS
The American Society for
Clinical Laboratory Science

Bringing the Beat to the Bench

APRIL 21-23, 2027



NOIL A
style