

AMAZING EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS

CHAT WITH ATTENDEES



2026

Joint Spring Seminar

Virtual

April 30 - May 1, 2026

## Program Grid

Time	Thursday, Apr 30	Friday, May 1
8:00 - 9:00 am	The Hidden Work of Saving Lives: Inside the Organ Transplant Journey	Looming Liabilities of Morgue Management
9:30 - 10:30 am	Rapid Identification + Fast Phenotypic Susceptibility Testing	Leveraging Generational Differences in the Laboratory
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	My Supervisor Just Assigned Me A Student. Help!	Cytokine Testing in a Pediatric Hospital Setting
12:00 - 1:00 pm	Break	Break
1:00 - 2:00 pm	Red Flags & Gray Zones: When Anemia Doesn't Add Up	Current And Emerging Tumor Markers
2:30 - 3:30 pm	Updates from the Washington State Department of Health	Quality Improvement and Clinical Impact Evaluation
3:45 - 5:00 pm	Student Meet and Greet	



**Times for all sessions are Pacific Daylight Time.**

*Presented by the Alaska,  
Oregon, and Washington  
ASCLS State Societies*

ASCLS-WA is approved as a provider of continuing education programs in the clinical laboratory sciences by the ASCLS P.A.C.E.® Program.



**8:00 - 9:00 AM Session 1** 1 Contact Hour

**Discipline: Immunohematology**

**Level: Intermediate**

## **The Hidden Work of Saving Lives: Inside the Organ Transplant Journey**

- **Wendy Hofeling, CHT**
- **Ashley Rose, BS, BB (ASCP)**  
Bloodworks Northwest Seattle, WA

This presentation will offer a comprehensive look at the organ transplant process in the Pacific Northwest, highlighting the regional systems and collaborations that make timely transplantation possible. We'll review the full testing pathway for transplant recipients—from initial pre transplant evaluations through post transplant monitoring—and outline how donor infectious disease screening is performed to ensure safety and successful outcomes. Throughout the talk, we'll focus on how each step connects, demonstrating how laboratories, transplant centers, coordinators, and clinical teams work together to support patients and deliver life saving transplants.

- ⇒ Describe the structure and function of the organ transplant system across the Pacific Northwest.
- ⇒ Outline the step by step testing pathway for patients undergoing transplant evaluation
- ⇒ Describe the infectious disease screening processes used for organ donors.
- ⇒ Recognize how multidisciplinary teams collaborate throughout the transplant process to ensure safe and effective patient care.

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**Bloodworks Northwest**

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**9:30 - 10:30 AM Session 2** 1 Contact Hour

**Discipline: Microbiology**

**Level: Intermediate**

## **Rapid Identification + Fast Phenotypic Susceptibility Testing**

- **Carissa Harvest, PhD**  
bioMerieux Lake Forest Park, WA

This session explores the challenges of treating sepsis and bacteremia, focusing on rapid blood culture organism identification and volatile organic compound (VOC) detection for susceptibility testing. Attendees will learn the technology behind VOC analysis and practical considerations for antimicrobial stewardship and implementing these methods in laboratory workflows.

- ⇒ Describe the clinical and antimicrobial stewardship challenges in sepsis and bacteremia management.
- ⇒ Evaluate the impact of rapid blood culture organism ID on clinical management.
- ⇒ Review the rapid phenotypic AST landscape with an emphasis on emerging volatile organic compound (VOC) technologies.

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**bioMerieux**

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**2026 JOINT SPRING SEMINAR  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS | THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2026**

**11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Session 3** 1 Contact Hour

*Discipline: General*

*Level: Basic*

## **My Supervisor Just Assigned Me A Student. Help!**

**- Grace Leu Burke, MS, MLS(ASCP)**

University of Alaska Anchorage | Anchorage, AK

It can be a challenge when a clinical rotation student is assigned to your bench. You are already busy! This session will provide teaching insight, tools and practical tips to help you develop a meaningful learning opportunity for the student.

- ⇒ Establish an effective learning environment, including the importance of communication.
- ⇒ Develop goals to assist in organization and assessment of learning.
- ⇒ Recognize different learning styles and how you can effectively approach them.

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*University of Alaska Anchorage*

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**1:00 - 2:00 PM Session 4** 1 Contact Hour

*Discipline: Hematology*

*Level: Intermediate*

## **Red Flags & Gray Zones: When Anemia Doesn't Add Up**

**- Demetra (Toula) Castillo, M.Ad.Ed.,  
MLS(ASCP)CM, AHl(AMT)**

University of Cincinnati | Mount Prospect, IL

When the hemoglobin drops but the story doesn't fit, it's time to look closer. This session highlights subtle laboratory red flags and gray-zone anemia cases that challenge routine interpretation. Attendees will gain practical strategies for recognizing when further evaluation or escalation is needed.

- ⇒ Identify at least four laboratory or morphologic red flags in anemia cases that warrant further investigation or escalation beyond routine interpretation.
- ⇒ Differentiate between reactive (benign) anemia patterns and early marrow or clonal processes by correctly interpreting reticulocyte response, RBC indices, and peripheral smear findings in at least two case-based scenarios.
- ⇒ Apply a structured decision-making approach to a gray-zone anemia case by outlining appropriate next steps, including reflex testing, consultation, or documentation strategies.

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*University of Cincinnati*

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**2026 JOINT SPRING SEMINAR  
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EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS | THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2026**

**2:30 - 3:30 PM    Session 5    1 Contact Hour**

***Discipline: Microbiology***

***Level: Intermediate***

## **Updates from the Washington State Department of Health**

- **Emily Schneider, MPH,**  
AR Lab Network West Regional Epidemiologist
- **Sopheay Hun, MBA, MSL(ASCP)<sup>CM</sup>**  
Washington AR Coordinator
- **Chelsea Stacy, MPH**  
Emerging Infections epidemiologist and influenza subtyping lead for RESP-NET
- **Jason Sisk, MPH**  
Coordinator for RESP-NET and NREVSS surveillance  
Washington Department of Health | Shoreline, WA

The Washington Department of Health (WA DOH) Office of Communicable Disease Epidemiology (OCDE) and Public Health Laboratories (PHL) work in conjunction to improve public health surveillance. In this session, presenters will highlight select activities and opportunities for clinical lab engagement with WA DOH. Presenters will share updates on Antimicrobial Resistance Lab Network (AR Lab Network) testing for carbapenemase-producing organisms and *Candida auris*. Presenters will also describe influenza subtyping surveillance for the Respiratory Virus Hospitalization Surveillance Network (RESP-NET), including how hospital laboratories can participate and how subtyping data are linked to broader hospitalization information. A brief overview of the National Respiratory and Enteric Virus Surveillance System (NREVSS) will also be discussed.

- ⇒ Gain awareness of highlighted activities occurring at WA DOH.
- ⇒ Describe AR Lab Network activities carried out by WA PHL, particularly testing for carbapenemase-producing organisms and *Candida auris*.
- ⇒ Outline the role of hospital laboratories in influenza subtyping surveillance.

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***Washington Department of Health***

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**3:45 - 5:00 PM**

## **Student Meet and Greet**

This is a session for students in the NAACLS approved MLS or MLT programs in AK, OR, and WA. Cathy Otto, PhD, MLS(ASCP), will moderate the session. Cathy is an ASCLS Past-President and was a faculty member for four MLS programs most recently at the Master's program in Clinical Laboratory Science at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

Since our meetings are virtual, it is difficult to have a face-to-face meeting where students can interact with each other. This virtual session provides a unique opportunity for students to meet each other through a Zoom meeting format and provides an opportunity to discuss various areas of concern or answer general questions that you may have.

NOTE: The program directors or program staff members from the NAACLS approved AK, OR, and WA MLS and MLT programs will NOT be in attendance at the meeting so as to not hamper the ability to discuss issues that might be of concern in your program.

Please plan to join us at this session at the 2026 Virtual Joint Spring Seminar. We hope to see you there!

**8:00 - 9:00 AM**    **Session 6**    1 Contact Hour  
*Discipline: Management*  
*Level: Basic*

## **Looming Liabilities of Morgue Management**

**- Nick Nell**

MorgueBoard LLC | Springfield, IL

**- John Baci**

Boston Childrens Hospital | Boston, MA

Death care is a critical part of the patient care continuum, yet it remains one of the most under-supported areas in healthcare. Today, death care management is often fragmented, manual, and disconnected—creating operational challenges, regulatory risk, and stress for staff and families.

Managing death care requires coordination across many stakeholders, all while continuing to provide dignity and care to the patient. However, traditional Electronic Health Record systems were never designed to support these workflows, leaving significant gaps in visibility and communication.

In this session, we'll explore the current state of death care management and why the future depends on connecting these processes through technology—bringing real-time visibility, improved communication, and risk mitigation to elevate the quality of death care.

- ⇒ Describe the current gaps in death care management, including fragmented workflows, multiple stakeholders, and the limitations of traditional EHR systems.
- ⇒ Identify the key stakeholders involved in death care and the importance of coordination, accountability, and communication.
- ⇒ Recognize why death care is a critical extension of patient care and understand the clinical and operational risk when it is not managed well.
- ⇒ Outline how technology can connect death care processes, providing real-time visibility, improved communication, and reduced risk.

**9:30 - 10:30 AM**    **Session 7**    1 Contact Hour  
*Discipline: General*  
*Level: Basic*

## **Leveraging Generational Differences in the Laboratory**

**- James McVey**

ARUP Laboratories | Salt Lake City, UT

As Millennials and Generation Z grow to represent more than 60 percent of the workforce, organizations face new opportunities, and new challenges in attracting, training, and retaining talent. Shaped by technology, multitasking, and work-life integration, these generations require leaders to rethink approaches. Success depends on recognizing generational differences and similarities and leveraging them to motivate teams and strengthen business outcomes.

- ⇒ Recognize the key values, motivations, and strengths that characterize today's multigenerational workforce.
- ⇒ Apply practical supportive behaviors and communication strategies to better engage and motivate employees across generations.
- ⇒ Identify actionable ways to leverage generational differences and shared strengths to improve collaboration and organizational effectiveness.

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**ARUP Laboratories**

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**2026 JOINT SPRING SEMINAR  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS | FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2026**

**11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Session 8** 1.Contact Hour

*Discipline: Molecular  
Level: Intermediate*

## **Cytokine Testing in a Pediatric Hospital Setting**

**- Lisa Johnson, PhD DABCC**

Seattle Children's Hospital | Seattle, WA

This session will describe a laboratory quality improvement initiative in which an older, manual ELISA was converted to automated assays for cytokine testing in a pediatric hospital setting. Clinical case examples will be used to illustrate the clinical utility and interpretation of cytokine test results, including applications in CAR-T therapy and the evaluation of hyperinflammatory states in children.

- ⇒ Describe laboratory-related issues associated with cytokine testing, including analytical and pre-analytical considerations.
- ⇒ Through case-based learning, identify clinical scenarios in which cytokine testing may be ordered in pediatric patients.
- ⇒ Describe the appropriate test utilization of cytokine testing to support clinical decision-making in certain diseases in children.



**1:00 - 2:00 PM Session 9** 1 Contact Hour

*Discipline: Chemistry  
Level: Intermediate*

## **Current And Emerging Tumor Markers**

**- Laura Bechtel, PhD, DABCC**

Siemens-Healthineers | Littleton, CO

Tumor markers are substances produced in response to cancer. They are detected in blood, urine, stool, or tissue and aid in cancer management. This presentation will discuss established and new biomarkers used clinically for screening, early detection, tracking disease progression or recurrence, and evaluating treatment response.

- ⇒ Describe clinical tumor markers used for organ specific cancers.
- ⇒ Describe the sensitivity and specificity for markers of recurrence.
- ⇒ Recognize limitations when interpreting tumor marker results.

*Siemens Healthineers*

### **Thank you to our Amazing Sponsors**

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Check out the [Sponsor's page](#) on the website for links to company websites and contacts.

**2026 JOINT SPRING SEMINAR  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS | FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2026**

**2:30 - 3:30 PM Session 10** 1 Contact Hour

*Discipline: Microbiology*

*Level: Intermediate*

## **Quality Improvement and Clinical Impact Evaluation**

- Laurianne T. Mullinax MS, MLS(ASCP)<sup>CM</sup>
- Richard E. Davis, PhD, D(ABMM), MLS(ASCP)
- Zac Ziegler, MLS (ASCP)<sup>CM</sup>  
Providence Washington/Montana | Spokane, WA

This session will include presentations of MLS student projects evaluating the impact and success of quality improvement projects, or areas for improvement in current laboratory procedures and practices.

### **Variables Impacting Time-to-Results for Multiplex Syndromic Panel Testing**

- Autumn Bailey, Martin Liu, Doris Tsai

The turn-around-time of Biofire FilmArray syndromic panels were investigated to highlight frequency of delays in critical patient testing. Pre- and post-analytical factors contributing to potential delays were assessed to determine whether the procurement of additional testing units was indicated.

⇒ Recognize the potential factors that contribute to delays in multiplex PCR testing.

### **IQCP and You: Microbiology Culture Media Quality Control**

- Kris Potts, Dominik Sretenovic

Quality control (QC) records for microbiology culture media were analyzed to identify potential candidates for an Individual Quality Control Plan (IQCP) with the intent of reducing the frequency of unnecessary QC testing.

⇒ Recall the requirements for implementation of an Individual Quality Control Plan.

### **Recovering Viridans Streptococcus and Skin “Contaminants” in Duplicate Blood Cultures**

- Sharan Purewal, Jarred Rensvold

Recovery of Viridans streptococcus species (VS) in blood cultures often represents contamination, yet recovery in multiple sets collected concurrently suggests a higher likelihood of a true infection. Blood culture data was analyzed to uncover the frequency of patients where phenotypically identical VS were recovered in multiple blood culture sets, highlighting the prevalence of potential bloodstream infection by common skin colonizers.

⇒ Explain the clinical significance of recovering the same commensal organism in multiple blood culture sets.

### **IV Catheter Tip Cultures**

- Kathlynn Hilfiker, Diana Ouk, Clara Plenty

Recent guidance from the Infectious Diseases Society of America suggests the discontinuation of intravenous catheter tip cultures for the discovery of bacteremia caused by colonized catheters. This study assessed the incidence rate and growth results of catheter tip cultures across Providence hospitals to support a systemwide removal of this test.

⇒ Recognize the drawbacks of using IV catheter tip cultures to aid in the discovery of bacteremia caused by colonized catheters.



# Registration Form

**2026 Joint Spring Seminar**  
April 30 - May 1, 2026  
Virtual Meeting

**Online registration and credit card payment is available at  
[www.asclswa.org](http://www.asclswa.org)  
Spring Seminar Tab**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
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Institution \_\_\_\_\_  
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Category		Fee	Total Fee
<b>ASCLS/AMT Professional/Technical</b> .....		\$40.00	\$
ASCLS #	AMT #		
<b>Non-Member</b> .....		\$60.00	\$
<b>Student</b> .....		\$10.00	\$
<b>Total Fee</b> .....			\$

**Your fee covers two days of the Spring Seminar.**

**The live sessions will be recorded and available to  
registered attendees for 30 days after the meeting.**

## To Register by Mail:

Complete the registration form and mail the registration form and check payable to

**Spring Seminar** to:

Spring Seminar  
Brenda Kochis  
44 West 26th Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99203-1818

If questions, contact Brenda Kochis:

Email: [BrenKoch@comcast.net](mailto:BrenKoch@comcast.net)

## To Register Online:

Go to <http://www.asclswa.org/SpringSeminar.html>. Click on "Online Registration" to go to the online form. Credit cards can be used to pay for registration.

## Registration Deadline: **April 27, 2026**

This deadline is to allow us to provide the information for access to the Virtual Joint Spring Seminar.  
Registration is still open after this date.