



ASCLS is excited to introduce the ASCLS Voices Under 40, a monthly recognition of one of our many, talented and committed young professionals under 40 years old. The ASCLS Voices Spotlight has been developed to honor ASCLS members who have shown exceptional commitment to ASCLS, the laboratory profession, and their community at large at a younger age in their professional career. Each month we spotlight one of the shining voices who was selected from many nominations across the country.

Meet Elizabeth Dahlgren, MLS(ASCP), who is the director of laboratory services at the Aurora Healthcare in Grafton, Wisconsin. She is responsible for Grafton and Hartford hospital laboratories, along with 15 other clinical laboratories. Her team includes 180 members she is responsible for in her daily duties. Amazingly, for a person as young as she is, Elizabeth is responsible for a budget of \$6.5 million annually. She turned around a vacancy rate of 8-13 vacancies annually to now having less than three and has reached a retention rate of nearly 100 percent! Her goal in her role as a high-level supervisor is to "remove barriers, improve workflows, find efficiencies, and ultimately improve the quality of patient care and the patient experience." Just like any good laboratory leader, she also actively grows her staff into future leaders by providing them with any direction they may need. With Elizabeth's guidance, her organization has gone from a "location that people were afraid to work at to a site that quickly attracts top talent within the organization." This shows that Elizabeth is a special young leader that we all should hope to be.



Elizabeth is not only an amazing young professional, but she is also a leader in ASCLS in that she is already a past president for the ASCLS-Wisconsin constituent society. In her opinion, her greatest accomplishment is her work during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. She was able to effectively grow the organization during that time and help ASCLS-Wisconsin board members grow closer to their members and potential members. She has participated in ASCLS-Wisconsin's Scholarship Fund Committee, was the Award chair, and served as a Convention Planning Committee co-chair. She is also involved at the regional level of ASCLS for her state, including being part of the Leadership Academy for Regional V and a council board member for Region V.

Laboratory medicine is in an employment crisis and Elizabeth is working to try to grow the base for our industry through the Wisconsin Guidance Counselor Convention. The purpose of the convention is to ensure that we attract students before they leave high school. This is not just a hope but a true goal with objectives that ensure that we "promote the profession and encourage others to join."

Additionally, she has worked to meet students where they are by attending Milwaukee Public School STEM Job Fairs. We need to have more young people entering our field to address the retirement and burnout issues currently facing our industry. Thank you, Elizabeth, for reaching young people before they join other professions!

Elizabeth is not just focusing on high school students to bring more people into our industry. She is also working to bring current entry level staff deeper into laboratory medicine, including phlebotomists. She has worked with a phlebotomy school to help them join higher level laboratory medicine ranks. We have a deep pool of potential colleges requiring laboratory medicine workers if we are willing to open our eyes to the possibilities, and Elizabeth is one of those visionaries.

Congratulations to Elizabeth Dahlgren for earning this award. You are helping to guide both ASCLS and laboratory medicine into the future.

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