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## Alison Gasset

During the summer of 2019, I worked as one of the Carter Stephen Ainsworth Fellows for the American Society for Clinical Pathology's Institute of Science, Technology, and Public Policy in Washington D.C. I am medical technologist, so I was familiar with some of the work done by ASCP, however through this experience I learned so much more about the ways that ASCP is impacting the field through their research and public policy work.



My main focus during the fellowship was a project assessing the racial and ethnic diversity of the medical laboratory workforce. First, I conducted research on diversity in other health care professions and efforts to foster a more inclusive workforce in order to address health disparities in the United States. Next, I analyzed results from the ASCP 2017 Wage Survey, looking at the diversity of the workforce in different parts of the country, as well as the impact of race on career advancement and occupation. Finally, I summarized my findings in a written report, and created graphs and other visuals which I presented to the D.C. office staff at the end of the fellowship. I also attended policy briefings on a variety of topics, both on Capitol Hill and with other organizations. I summarized one of these briefings in the ASCP ePolicy piece "Rural Health Panel to Examine Workforce, Reimbursement".

During my visit to D.C. I was also able to explore the city. I visited nearly all of the Smithsonian museums and many of the monuments and memorials on the National Mall. I was able to celebrate Independence Day by attending a parade and fireworks display. This summer was also the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing, so I was lucky to attend several events in the city celebrating this event.

This fellowship served as my practicum for my Master of Public Health degree and was a great opportunity to apply the knowledge I had gained during my program. I was able to improve my research, writing and data analysis skills. The fellowship was very organized, which helped me stay on top of weekly deadlines. I was given a lot of independence to decide how I would complete my project, but staff were always available when I had questions. Everyone in the office was very welcoming and went out of their way to explain their many ongoing projects so I could learn more about the organization. I feel like they really valued my experience as a medical technologist and it was encouraging to see people so passionate about improving the field.

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**Anna Kemmerer**

My name is Anna Kemmerer and I am an undergraduate student at Georgetown University studying Healthcare Management and Policy with a minor in Psychology. This past summer, I worked on a laboratory personnel recruitment project for the Science, Technology and Public Policy branch of the American Society of Clinical Pathology. I researched the higher education necessary for laboratory professionals to raise awareness and provide resources for high school and collegiate students interested in the field. To further encourage students, I curated a list of scholarships and grants available for students interested in this career path. Lastly, I established a connection with schools in the DMV by creating a contact database of high schools and colleges within the area. On the side of performing research for my project, I attended various policy briefings held by institutions such as the Pew Charitable Trusts, the National Academy of Sciences and the Bipartisan policy institute to write articles for ASCP's ePolicy monthly newsletter.



My experience at ASCP was wonderful; I enjoyed working with a small team and the location of the office. My one suggestion for future fellows would be to involve students in a greater number of side projects to expose them to various career roles. I really enjoyed attending the health policy events which allowed me to explore many different careers in the healthcare field. I think the number of events attended could be increased or involving the fellow in smaller side projects around the office.

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**Deanna Giraldi**

This summer, I worked as the Carter Stephen Ainsworth Fellow for the American Society for Clinical Pathology's Institute of Science, Technology, and Public Policy in Washington, D.C. Each week, I spent four days researching and writing in my ASCP office and one day at a conference or hearing in D.C. My specific role involved conducting research, crafting recommendations and other educational resources on a variety of issues, attending briefings on Capitol Hill, and providing support for ongoing programs. I had the opportunity to write an ePolicy brief entitled, "VHA Subcommittee Endorses Additional Pharmacological Testing," which has since been published in ASCP's July 2018 ePolicy edition. In addition to this ePolicy piece, I also was able to publish a paper with my colleagues on healthcare disparities across the United States entitled, "Disparities in Rural Health Care: A Look at the Field of Laboratory Medicine."



In addition to my work as a Fellow, I created a "D.C. intern bucket list," with the goal of exploring Washington, D.C. and delving into the neighborhoods surrounding me. I visited 12 museums, including the National Portrait Gallery, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the National Museum of African American Culture and History. I also visited eight memorials including the FDR, MLK, Korean War, World War II, Lincoln, and Jefferson monuments. I went to a Washington Nationals baseball game, attended a Fall Out Boy concert, and was in the city during the Capitols' Stanley Cup victory. I attended the "Stop Family Separation" rally in Lafayette Square in front of the White House, in which thousands gathered to denounce the atrocities occurring on the border. During this protest, Lin Manuel Miranda, the creator of Hamilton, America Ferrera, and Alicia Keys each spoke about the importance of keeping families together.

This fellowship presented me with an opportunity to gain hands-on experience and insight into the intersections of science, policy, and practice in laboratory medicine, while building and strengthening professional skills, particularly in research and analysis. As a Fellow, I was afforded numerous opportunities, including working alongside the most supportive coworkers, building on prior knowledge while learning new subject matter every day, and exploring the city.

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## Mollie Davidson

As I entered into this summer, I was faced with the excitement of moving to a big city and starting a new fellowship; however, I was fairly unsure of what to expect. In the past, I lived in the fairly small towns of Clemson and Summerville, South Carolina, so this would be a large change for me. I had primarily a science background, meaning that this position would require me to work slightly out of my comfort zone.



In the beginning of June, I moved into GWU housing with strangers I would soon call friends and started my fellowship at ASCP. Immediately, everyone in the office kindly greeted me and provided the other Fellow and me with the chance to get to know everyone in the office. That same day, I received my projects that I would be expected to work on and complete throughout the summer. The two projects I received focused on the impact of the opioid epidemic on pathologists and laboratory professionals, as well as a study examining the laboratory workforce trends from 1960 through present day. Each project required detailed research of various topics and analyzing the information. My research generally entailed online research of published articles, but I also received the opportunity to visit and pull articles from various archives in the National Library of Medicine. While I allocated time to each project to meet weekly deadlines and organizing my collected research in a form to report to other staff, I quickly realized it would demand variations in my normal researching techniques. Throughout the summer, I continued to collect information, outline trends, and draw conclusions from my research.

My project on the impact of the opioid epidemic on pathologists and laboratory professionals was especially interesting, as I've previously been employed at a pharmacy and I aspire to become a physician. The research I completed revealed the need for a larger workforce and funding needs for pathologists and laboratory professionals. The data demonstrated that efforts toward the epidemic have had an effect; however, continued future efforts will be needed. The findings from the laboratory workforce study presented evidence that the workforce has been struggling with similar challenges throughout the previous six decades; and there need to be efforts toward creating a practical solution that will actually provide meaningful results.

The two months I spent in D.C. were filled with new food finds, adventures through the city, and the visits to historical museums. From the moment I arrived, until the day I left, I found myself admiring impressive architecture and discovering monuments and memorials I had never seen before. The activities and sightseeing opportunities in D.C. are endless, making the summer pass in the blink of an eye.

I sincerely appreciate my time spent at ASCP. I cannot express how helpful and kind the staff was throughout the summer. Their feedback allowed me to grow personally and improve my skill set. Every person in the office gave me the impression that they would go out of their way to not only assist me with my projects at ASCP, but also do their best to help me excel in the future. I learned a great deal about health policy, the laboratory profession, and professional style writing. I felt as though my work was meaningful, and I could collaborate with the team at ASCP while also having the chance to work independently. The opportunities provided by this fellowship were unlike others I have experienced, and I believe that my time spent at ASCP will be impactful on my future path. My experience there has been invaluable, and I truly enjoyed getting to know Jeff, Matt, Edna, Iman, and Raven. I can only speak highly of this organization and the people I had the privilege of meeting. My only suggestion for the future would be to publicize the fellowship to a greater extent and potentially move up the notification of decision date, as it takes time to arrange housing and finances.

## Benjamin Harper

The internship at the American Society for Clinical Pathology's Institute for Science, Technology and Public Policy gave me an incredible professional and exciting experience in policy and research. I interned at ASCP from June 2017 to May 2018 and included my internship experience as a capstone for graduation from the University of Maryland, College Park. I entered the internship with goals of improving data analysis skills and professional writing, creating surveys, and strengthening my abilities as a public health researcher. I met these goals by working on projects closely with my preceptor and the staff at ASCP on their *Choosing Wisely* initiative, policy action alerts, and reporting on briefings and conferences on a broad range of topics in health policy and technology impacting patient outcomes.

I enjoyed getting a vast amount of experience in health policy from a new perspective. Coming from a background in community health without much laboratory experience, I was able to learn a great amount of information and combine it with my academics. The most helpful thing from my internship at ASCP was being able to conduct a study on access to medical laboratory services in Indian Health Service regions. Developing a research protocol, questionnaires, and interacting with the Institutional Review Board are all steps to developing important transferrable professional skills further in a career in the public health community. I would recommend interns take this opportunity to investigate a gap in research important to them and the laboratory community using the opportunities provided by ASCP.

