



MAMLS

**MANITOBA ASSOCIATION FOR
MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENCE**

2020

ANNUAL REPORT





MAMLS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- President's Report
- Capitol Region Academy
- Prairie West Academy
- Valley Plains Academy
- Northern Representative
- MLA Representative
- Professional Development
- Marketing & Communications



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The year 2020 was a very challenging year for all laboratory professionals. It was a year of overwhelming diagnostic testing for Covid-19 during the first and second waves, implementation of innovative training techniques, and increased national awareness of the medical laboratory profession. Although this created many obstacles for MAMLS to fulfill its mandates, the Board actively pursued ways to advocate and promote the profession to support its members.

This year:

- MAMLS welcomed the new Board members: Maggie MacFarlane as Treasurer, Angela Bueckert as the MLA Representative, and Virginia Leifso rejoined us in the newly created position of Northern Manitoba Representative. Lorenne Friesen was also welcomed as the newly elected President of Valley Plains Academy.
- LABCON 2020 in Winnipeg was cancelled due to Covid restrictions, but members were able to attend LabConnect, a virtual continuing education opportunity hosted by CSMLS for a minimal cost.
- Other events normally attended or sponsored by MAMLS and the Academies were cancelled: Rotary Career Symposium, PWA/Shared Health Symposium, Manitoba School Science Symposium, National Med Lab Week activities, MCMLS Congress, Red River College graduation ceremony & awards, and Valley Plains CE Dinner Event.



Highlights of 2020:

- MAMLS was able to support Spring Fling hosted by Capitol Academy in March. Many members attended and were able to enjoy continuing education sessions while networking in person.
- Development of a virtual platform for Board of Director meetings, Academy meetings, training sessions and Continuing Education events.
- In response to member concerns, in collaboration with IMPACT Public Affairs, MAMLS created a one-page Advocacy promotional document for the medical laboratory profession. This is available for future audiences with stakeholders and government officials, and highlights the challenges and current needs of our profession.
- MAMLS hosted an advocacy session on October 3, 2020. This session offered training on government relations and communications provided by Christian von Donat from IMPACT (Ottawa). All members were invited to attend this virtual event which offered many tips and strategies for professional advocacy.

I would like to thank all of the passionate and dedicated Board members for their efforts and support during my time as President. I feel that we all persevered through our challenges and were able to make some innovative adaptations to continue to serve our members. It was a pleasure to work with you to build upon our skills as leaders in promoting the Medical Laboratory Profession throughout Manitoba.

Noelle Cater

MAMLS President 2020

CAPITOL REGION ACADEMY

Capitol Region Academy was affected by the pandemic in 2020 as all other parts of the world. We held two Board meetings and were unable to meet in person after March 2020.

Fortunately, we were able to host Spring Fling in March before venues were shut down, in conjunction with our 2020 Annual General Meeting. This was a very successful sold out event, with 142 members in attendance for the amazing sessions, networking and subsequent Wine & Cheese. Session topics included Gunshot Wounds, Syphilis and the STBBI Syndemic, Blood Product Utilization, and a presentation from the Paramedic Association of Manitoba to name a few. Thank-you to the Capitol Region Academy board and our members for making the event another huge success!

Darrell Nazar
CRA President 2020



PRAIRIE WEST ACADEMY

No one would have guessed at the start of 2020 that we would be faced with a global pandemic.

With the onset of the Covid-19 virus, our members have had to contend with many challenges, and Prairie West Academy was not exempt from this.

Due to social distancing precautions, several events such as the Western Manitoba Science Fair and LABCON were forced to cancel, which left our spring feeling quite unremarkable. PWA was further affected when other continuing education events had forced cancellations, including our Annual General Meeting that normally takes place in May.

With the many disappointments, the pandemic has also had some positive outcomes in 2020. Public awareness of our profession has increased significantly!! Never before have we seen so much media coverage and awakening interest in the Medical Laboratory profession. It has been truly exciting to witness the immense support and appreciation that we have received in these trying times. This has intensified our pride in our profession, which PWA decided to show off during National Med Lab Week.

Planning for NMLW during a pandemic proved to be quite the undertaking for our committee, with all the heightened Social Distancing, Hand Washing and Food Preparation precautions.

However, this was an effort well worth pursuing as our members deserved to be celebrated for all of their hard work. PWA persisted and showed the members our appreciation by organizing activities, prizes, dress themes, and goodie bags, as well as reimbursing rural labs so they could join in the fun. The festivities may have taken place differently this year, but in the end, I know our members appreciated our efforts.

2020 also brought organizational changes to PWA. In order to balance the workload more fairly, PWA created some additional positions. We now have the following positions: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Liaison, NMLW Coordinator, NMLW Assistant, Nominations & Equipment Manager, WMSF Coordinator, and Events Coordinator.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF DAVE KOWAL

Although we lost a valuable member of our medical laboratory community when Dave Kowal passed away in 2019, the Prairie West Academy has honored him in a unique and lasting gesture.

Dave Kowal worked as a MLT at Westman Lab for many years before his passing in 2019. During that time, he was a great advocate for the laboratory profession, as well as a beloved friend and teacher. Many of us will remember him fondly and with great respect. For this reason, Prairie West Academy has decided to rename the Post-Grad Legacy Fund to the Dave Kowal Education Fund to honor his memory and to pass on his love of life-long learning in the medical laboratory science field.

Continued on Page 4



We are hoping that this will distribute tasks more evenly, make volunteering less daunting, and highlight PWA's purpose and how it functions.

It has been a true honor serving the Prairie Mountain Region these past four years as your PWA President. The final year has been, without a doubt, an interesting one! However, I feel that PWA still managed to make 2020 a success. We would not have been able to do this without our wonderful membership! To ensure continued success in the future, I encourage our members to send suggestions and/or questions to our email prairiewestacademy@gmail.com. Also, if anyone is interested in a volunteer opportunity with either PWA or MAMLS, please feel free to contact anyone on our committee! We look forward to serving you in 2021!

Katherine Nicholson
PWA President 2020



VOLUNTEERISM: INSIGHTS AND REWARDS

When I accepted the role as PWA President, I was not sure what I was agreeing to--thinking about the responsibility and added stress.

During the past 4 years of my Presidency role, I have found it to be so much more. I have been privileged to meet many of our members and to work alongside some truly talented individuals--both on the PWA and MAMLS. Getting to know my colleagues in this manner has filled me with amazement and awe at the immense passion shown for our med lab profession. It fills me with great pride that I was able to be a part of that passion.

This opportunity has allowed me to grow and learn so much about our lab community, and has given me great insight into myself. Being your Academy President has given me new experiences which have allowed me to become a better MLT and a stronger person.

By Katherine Nicholson

VALLEY PLAINS ACADEMY

During 2020, we had to learn how to navigate through the new Coronavirus pandemic. Our work changed drastically, we had to figure out how to complete our daily tasks amongst changing PPE protocols, and were constantly worried about PPE and supply shortages. This added a lot of stress to our already pressing jobs.

Due to the restrictions on group gatherings, Valley Plains Academy had only one meeting in 2020. We used Google Meet for our first ever virtual meeting, and were unable to find a CE speaker. As we have been struggling to find volunteers, the committee discussed whether we should consider closing down VPA. As we were able to find a volunteer to step into the Secretary/Treasurer position, the Academy has decided to continue for the time being, and will host the next meeting in 2021.

Lorenne Friesen
VPA President 2020



NORTHERN REPRESENTATIVE

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

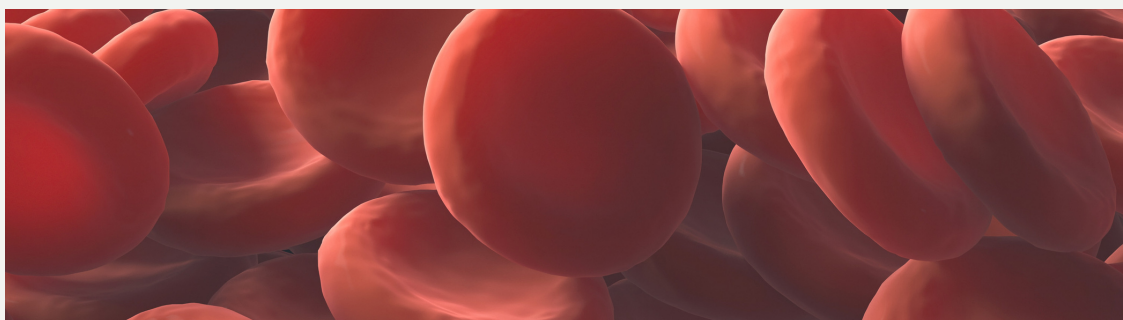
- MAMLS & Academy Board member
- Manitoba Schools Science Symposium Volunteer Judges
- High School MLS Recruitment Presentations
- Red River College Skills Assessors
- MAMLS Professional Development committee
- Advocacy Committee
- Career Symposium Booth monitors

In January 2020, after a two year struggle, the NorMLS Academy was dissolved due to lack of volunteers. At the request of the MAMLS BOD, I remained on as a representative for Northern Manitoba in this newly created position.

I attended four Board meetings during the year and kept current with the Board emails. I provided input on the proposed By-Law and Standing Rules changes. Whenever possible, I forwarded information for various events and postings to Northern Manitoba members, such as the Call for Volunteers, Spring Fling, MAMLS Advocacy and Training, and the MAMLS AGM notices. I was very excited for Winnipeg to host the CSMLS LABCON 2020 and planned to not only attend, but to volunteer at the event. It was quite a disappointment when this event was cancelled due to the pandemic, but I did attend the CSMLS Virtual AGM in June. Due to the pandemic, MAMLS was unable to hold the 2020 AGM, and the Board was looking at virtual methods of hosting one. In December, I was able to set up a Zoom training session with an associate from another organization on how to host an AGM. All Board members were invited to attend the session, which was also recorded and shared with those unable to attend. The training session was very informative, and highlighted various aspects necessary to ensure a successful virtual meeting.

It was an honor to continue to be an important part of the MAMLS BOD. I applaud this group of hard-working volunteers who continued to advocate for the medical laboratory science profession even after the long hours they put in at their jobs during the Covid pandemic throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted by Virginia Leifso



MLA REPRESENTATIVE

It was an honor to be nominated as the first MLA to represent our profession for the MAMLS Board. Often it can be difficult for the MLAs to be recognized as an important part of the Med Lab team. This was a challenge that would arise during my participation in various volunteer functions during my term. Encouraging feedback and participation by fellow MLAs was also quite challenging, but I am hoping that this will continue to improve in the future.



With the strain on the health care system in our region, it was difficult to summon the energy to assist in promotional activities in 2020. Although there were plans to attend high school MLS

information sessions, and to liaise with MLA training programs, Covid restrictions did not allow for any of these activities to take place.

2020 marks the end of my second two-year term as MLA Representative. I enjoyed my time with the MAMLS Board, especially while attending educational events. I strongly encourage my fellow MLAs to consider volunteering with MAMLS in the future. I look forward to passing on my knowledge to the new MLA Representative that will join the Board for 2021.

Respectfully submitted by Angela Bueckert, MLA

DIRECTOR OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This year I started my second two-year term as the Director of Professional Development, sharing the position with William Younger. I encourage MAMLS members to join the Professional Development Committee and to fill the role of the Director for future terms. I would like to thank William Younger again for his continual support and guidance. My responsibilities include managing the Hilda Fleming Fund and Professional Award applications, and assisting with CE opportunities for the membership.

2020 was the year when CSMLS was to hold LABCON in Winnipeg after 17 years. Unfortunately, the pandemic hit and put a halt to in-person events. March 2020 brought many challenges to the Medical Laboratory profession, including the availability of continuing education events. With events cancelled and members working tirelessly to provide laboratory services, there was a noticeable affect on award applications and nominations.

The following is the report for the awards given out this past year:

Hilda Fleming Fund

There were no applications for the Hilda Fleming Fund this year. It is very important for members (both MLTs and MLAs) to access these funds for their continuing education activities and to promote this opportunity to their colleagues. My hope is that next year members will utilize the funds again.

Continued on Page 7



Joseph M. Scott Award (student)

This year we updated the application form. Changes include providing references instead of a reference letter, and changes to criteria to make it easier for students to apply. The application can also be directly emailed instead of being mailed in.

Congratulations to Patrick Levesque as the successful recipient of the \$500 award.

There were no submissions, applications or nominations for the following awards in 2020:

Crocus Award

Honourary Member

ANC Delaat Memorial Award

Professionalism Award (Student)

We look forward to receiving any award applications or nominations in 2021. Information on the above rewards can be accessed on the MAMLS website.

Submitted by Sana Chaudhry,
Professional Development Director

WEBSITE RESOURCES

The website update in 2020 provides links to some suggested industry continuing education events under the Membership/Continuing Education tab.

Please access those that interest you and feel free to suggest additional resources for MAMLS to post to the website. These suggestions can be forwarded to the Director of Professional Development at profdevelopment.mamls@gmail.com

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

With the success of 2019 still with me, I was looking forward to showing off our new MAMLS marketing products at the Rotary Career fair this year. Unfortunately, the pandemic ensued and the Rotary Career fair was cancelled. The pandemic also cost us many other medical laboratory marketing opportunities, including the Transcona Collegiate Tri-school Career Fair, the Manitoba Schools Science Symposium in April, Louis Riel CAPS fair and our annual student professional night at Red River College.

2020 marks the end of my term as Director of Marketing and Communications with MAMLS. I am very proud and appreciative of the support I received while holding this position. I have learned a lot about MAMLS, leadership, and growing outside my comfort zone. I also enjoyed meeting new people and interacting with great minds.

I would like to thank all the volunteers that helped me along the way, my fellow board members for their support, and Denise Fudge, my predecessor, for her patience and guidance during my first few months while I learned my new position.

I wish you all good health while we continue to wade through the uncharted territory of living through a pandemic. I am honored to have contributed to MAMLS and to be a part of such a great organization, as we continue to advocate fervently for our profession.

Thank you.

Uchenna Nnadi
Marketing & Communications Director



MAMLS

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