

MY CREDENTIAL STORY



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It all began in 1989, in a medium-sized outpatient lab called Mission Viejo Medical Lab, in California, where I received on-the-job training for phlebotomy. I pursued this job because of my interest in the medical field, as I contemplated my future career. Several phlebotomy and lab technician jobs later, I went back to college for a degree in medical laboratory science (MLS). During my earlier lab years, running lab tests without the background knowledge and critical thinking left me uncertain about the results I was turning out. Becoming an educated and certified MLS felt like the best solution.

On November 18, 2015, I sat for the Medical Laboratory Scientist, MLS(ASCP) certification exam. I was nervous, but felt ready. The exam was difficult, but I kept on going, remembering all the formulas, cascades, genotypes, phenotypes, microbes, and so on. Mostly, I recalled advice given by my professors: Go with your first impression, and relax and remember your training. When I saw the word "Passed" flash on my screen, I screamed a silent scream of joy. (I was still in a quiet testing center with other test takers!)

It's been three years, and I just recertified. I love learning about every area of the laboratory field so much that I didn't realize I had exceeded the 36-credit requirement. This year, I was humbled to receive a nomination for the Employee of the Quarter award from our hospital's volunteer services and foundation administrator. That was followed by another nomination from the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS) for New Professional of the Year. I am certainly not one to publicize my accomplishments, but I feel my MLS credential story can easily be anybody else's in the laboratory. In the end, it's about doing our duty for our patients and for our profession.