

MY CREDENTIAL STORY



Alan Hoffstadter, MT(ASCP)SBB

I have held my Medical Technologist, MT(ASCP) credential [now called MLS(ASCP)] for more than 50 years now, and it won't be long before my Specialist in Blood Banking, SBB(ASCP) reaches that age. It has been a very satisfying career.

According to the numbers of the time, the mid-to-late 1960s, I had over 60,000 colleagues when I took my board examination. I had trained at Mt. Sinai Medical Center, in Chicago, a mecca for pathology. It was also a center of excellence for immunohematology. It wasn't long before I decided on a blood banking career. As ASCP was located not far from the hospital, our blood center began offering training for pathologists and MTs. I learned how to teach and decided I needed to know more. By the early 1970s, I sat for my SBB boards. In those days, passing the board exam only gave you the right to take the ASCP/AABB practical exam. If you passed that, you were entitled to the SBB. I had the good fortune to be trained by Shirley Busch, MPH, SBB(ASCP), the very first SBB.

Had I not been a board-certified MT(ASCP)SBB on Christmas Eve, 1974, I might not have met my wife of 42 years, Lynn, herself an MT(ASCP)SBB, DLM, CPHQ. We "met cute" over the deglycerization of several units of frozen red blood cells (RBCs), and it was the proverbial match-made-in-heaven. We met at Cook County Hospital, the site of the first blood bank, established March 15, 1937.

Today, deep into retirement, I continue to teach others who are preparing for their careers, serving as a volunteer instructor in at least three programs. This year, I have been asked by my alma mater to speak to their students about careers in clinical laboratory science. I can't wait!