

MY CREDENTIAL STORY



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Had someone told me in 2013 that I would become a certified medical laboratory scientist, I would have laughed. When I graduated from the Clinical Laboratory Science program at the University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point (UWSP) in May 2012, I was 22, a mother, a member of the National Society of Leadership and Success—and a drug and alcohol addict.

I hid my using quite well. From the outside, it appeared my life was just opening up. Truthfully, I wasn't going anywhere fast. I ignored my teachers' advice and never took the ASCP Board of Certification (BOC) exam. I held onto my hard-earned free time, and did absolutely nothing with it for 11 months.

On April 13, 2013, I was close to giving up on life altogether. My family intervened, and I went to treatment. By the grace of God, I have been clean ever since.

Fast forward to year four of my recovery. My boss at Hsu's Ginseng Enterprises encouraged me to move up in the organization. I couldn't tell him about a position that I was interested in. Yet I just couldn't see myself working in the business setting for the rest of my life. I was faced with two options: continue living as is, or accept my calling to work in a medical laboratory. I decided that I would never be able to live with myself if didn't even try to take the ASCP BOC exam. I had less than a year to prepare for the exam before my five-year window was up.

I reached out to one of my teachers from UWSP, Susan Raab (former head of the School of Health Care Professions). Together, we devised a study schedule and met every Tuesday. I would wake up and study. Go to work and study on my lunch break. Get home, eat, spend an hour with my son and my boyfriend, and then study. It was like climbing Mt. Everest. I had little self-esteem, an overwhelming feeling of guilt for wasting so much time, and a fear of failure. In late 2016, I ran out of steam and experienced a breakdown. I checked into treatment in January 2017. I am grateful for that experience. Subsequently, I persevered and forged ahead in my studies.

On May 16, 2017, two days before my five-year window was set to expire, I took the BOC exam and passed. Words cannot describe how incredible that moment felt.

To say that my ASCP BOC certification has positively affected my life is an understatement. I am living my dream! I was hired on as a medical technologist at Ascension St. Mary's Hospital in Rhinelander, WI, on July 24, 2017. I am now capable of handling my own and am so proud of that. I have the respect of my colleagues, which means the world to me.

I can see now how my experience can benefit others. I have the ability to show empathy to patients who are struggling. I am giving my son the life he deserves. I am happily married. My ASCP BOC certification represents much more than the ability to work in the medical laboratory. It symbolizes that hard work pays off, no dream is out of reach, and that I was born to be a medical laboratory technologist.