

**BRIEF OVERVIEW**  
of the  
**AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR CLINICAL PATHOLOGY**  
**BOARD OF CERTIFICATION**

From the American Society of Clinical Pathologists Committee on Registration of Laboratory Technicians to the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Board of Certification (BOC), many changes have taken place in laboratory medicine and in the recognition of medical laboratory professionals.

By the early 1920s, World War I had ended, and the country was moving into the *roaring twenties*. Pathology was a new medical specialty, and ASCP was founded in 1922. At that time, there were no standards for measuring or qualifications for identifying the competency of laboratory technicians. The ASCP Board of Directors established a **Committee on Registration of Laboratory Technicians** (the forerunner of the current ASCP Board of Certification.) The Committee's goal was to "first define a technician and to make it known that a bureau exists which will bring forth applications for registration."

The current ASCP Board of Certification was founded in 1928 as the Registry of Medical Technologists. Over time, the name was changed to the ASCP Board of Registry. As the years passed, additional certifications were added. Credentials titled, "Qualifications," were developed and added to the BOC portfolio of credentials. Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT) was instituted in 1994, resulting in examinations given year round, administered and graded by computer.

A Certification Maintenance Program (CMP) was developed for all certificants who attained certification beginning January 1, 2004 to maintain the competence of laboratory professionals and to provide a mechanism to demonstrate competence. All certificants are strongly encouraged to participate in this program.

In 2006, international certification began (ASCP<sup>i</sup>) with certification for Medical Technologists, Medical Laboratory Technician and Technologist in Molecular Pathology. The ASCP Board of Registry first became accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) under ISO Standard 17024 in the three largest certification categories, Medical Technologist, Medical Laboratory Technician and Phlebotomy Technician in 2007. In 2009, a merger with the National Credentialing Agency for Laboratory Personnel (NCA) resulted in the ASCP Board of Certification (BOC).

The ASCP BOC, now internationally recognized for the integrity of its certifications and qualifications, continues its legacy of excellence by developing new certifications and qualifications to keep pace with the increasing responsibilities and needs of laboratory professionals around the world. In 2014, the ASCP BOC certified the 500,000<sup>th</sup> certificant. These certificants make up the majority of the U.S. medical laboratory workforce. From 2016 through 2018, the following new credentials were added:

- Medical Laboratory Assistant (MLA)
- Specialist in Cytometry (SCYM) and International Specialist in Cytometry
- Specialist in Molecular Biology (SMB) and International Specialist in Molecular Biology
- Qualification in Apheresis (QIA)

The ASCP BOC continues to lead the way in providing a qualified medical laboratory workforce in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.