

Education Update: Broome Community College

Rachael M. Hagerman, MA MLT(ASCP) Chairperson, Clinical Laboratory Technologies Department, Broome Community College

New York State (NYS) requires that histological technicians, like other laboratory professionals, become licensed in order to practice. While licensure helps to improve wages, standardize educational background, and elevate the occupation to a professional level, it also further exacerbates the drastic labor shortages. As of January 4, 2010, NYS has only issued 138 Certified Histological Technician Licenses for the entire State, not nearly enough to fill current vacancies, not taking into account future retirements. The Histological Technician Certificate Program proposed by Broome Community College (BCC) will exponentially increase the number of students qualified to fill these positions and provide a program of study that is available to potential students across NYS.

The Clinical Laboratory Technologies Department at BCC houses the Clinical Laboratory Technician Degree (CLT) and the Phlebotomy Certificate program. Our fully accredited, clinically based program offers three pathways that all lead to an Associate in Applied Science degree in CLT as well as qualification for NYS licensure and national certification. Area students complete their coursework in a traditional classroom setting on-campus in four semesters. Also, certain qualified students can enter the fast-track program and complete coursework in a blend of distance (online) learning, hospital-based practicums, and traditional classroom settings. Finally, students across NYS can complete the entire degree online in four semesters through a blend of didactic courses offered through the Online Academy and hospital-based practicums within their local area. Broome Community College's Clinical Laboratory Technician program is the only fully online laboratory science curriculum offered in New York State, designed to meet CLT shortages through the education and licensure of new technicians across NYS. We have also gained the distinct honor of being the first licensure-preparing program approved by the NYS Department of Education.

Building upon the success of the fully online CLT program, last fall BCC began the process of developing a fully online Histological Technician Certificate Program. The program announcement was accepted by SUNY this past spring and the formal program proposal will be forwarded to SUNY this fall. We expect to start the program in the Spring of 2011. The proposed HT ProOn Stage

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Inside this issue:

Education Update: Broome Community College	1
SUMMER 2010 LETTER FROM YOUR PRESIDENT	3
NYSHS Annual Symposium Recap	6
NYSHS Career Day 2010	8
Legislative Update	12
Excel Tips and Tricks for Histotechs	14
Region 1 Director's Report	23
New to the Field of Histology	24



SUMMER 2010 LETTER FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

It is with mixed emotions that I begin my last letter to you as President of NYSHS. Over the past 20 years I have served on the BOD, holding almost every office at onetime or another, and I must admit I am looking forward to now moving into the seat of Past President. Over the years by serving the society, I have had the opportunity to meet and work side by side with some amazing histotechs, and I have been greatly enriched by the experience!

I have been fortunate during this time to be enriched by the mentoring of past presidents who have grown to be dear friends, Judy LaDuc, Sandy Cummings and Sandy Mendel. I owe a great debt to them all for the endless phone calls and emails, mulling over one issue or another, and their wisdom to see the big picture.

I also would like to thank all of the members BOD that I have had the pleasure to serve with, we have some wonderful (as well as some stressful) times to remember, and I will reflect on those memories fondly!

And last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank you, the members for your vote of confidence and trust in electing me as your President. I have tried my very best to represent you to the best of my ability, and it has been an honor to serve you.

In closing I would like to say a special thank you to a dear friend and colleague, Sandy Mendel. Sandy and I have worked together both at the NYSHS and the NSH, traveling together to meetings and sharing the landscape of life, from failing parents, to teenage escapades while Mom is out of the house at a conference to, wow, the first grandchild! Through it all Sandy has had unfailing personal and professional belief in my ability to succeed, and it has been a gift of a lifetime....thank you my friend.

To the incoming officers I wish the very best of luck and success as the NYSHS moves forward, I can't wait to see where we go from here! Mary Georger

3

gram will provide a licensure-preparing histotechnology program available through distance learning. The goal is to train laboratory scientists and technicians for entry-level positions in histology and pathology laboratories to fill these drastic shortages. The program will be available to students enrolled in the BCC Clinical Laboratory Technician program and individuals who have met the prerequisite requirements, including those who have earned or will have earned an Associate's Degree upon completion of the certificate program. Didactic courses will be taught online through the distance learning platform Angel. In lieu of classroom-based student labs, the laboratory component will include a blend of online-simulated laboratories and time spent in an affiliate clinical laboratory completing a predetermined set of competencies. Finally, the student will complete an eight-week clinical practicum at an affiliated laboratory. BCC currently has fifteen clinical affiliates across NYS and we are in the process of bringing six new affiliates on board. All curriculum, laboratory competencies, and clinical competencies were developed and will be taught by histological technicians from across the State. Upon graduation, students will be eligible for Certified Histological Technician Licensure as well as ASCP certification. As with the online CLT program, the online HT program allows hospitals to recruit within their geographical area and allows facilities to "grow their own" technicians by offering advancement opportunities to phlebotomists, laboratory aides, and other entry-level hospital positions as well as current clinical laboratory technicians.

Broome Community College is constantly striving to not only provide the best education for our students, but also meet the needs of our community and New York State. We are pleased to offer yet another opportunity to partner with institutions to meet their employment needs. Please feel free to contact me by phone (607-778-5211) or e-mail (hagerman_r@sunybroome.edu) with any questions.

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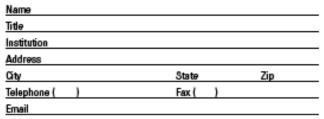
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NYSHS Annual Symposium Recap, Buffalo 2010 By: Amy Farnan, HT (ASCP), Albany Memorial Hospital



Wow, the spring Buffalo meeting came and went in a blink of an eye just like our spring season. What many of you may not know is that it takes the board an entire year to plan our spring symposium. A lot of collaboration, communication, time and effort are involved to ensure we meet the needs of our members. It is hard to meet everyone's needs but the board makes a great effort to try. Well the Buffalo meeting

was no exception and this was in large part due to the hard work of Kathleen Caleri and Sandy Mendel our meeting coordinators and Mary Georger our education coordinator. Kate did an exceptional job as this was her first time coordinating meeting (hopefully not her last!).

We had a good turn out. The educational seminars were quite diverse from the Lyons Eye Bank speaking on tissue and eye donations, to Dr. Adam Rich of SUNY Brockport discussing the use of A Zebra Fish Based Model for Human Gastroin-



testinal Motility. The attendees were very interested and asked some really great questions. All the speakers were excellent and a special thank you goes out to each of them for donating their time and sharing their valuable information with us. Another special thank you is extended to all the vendors. Without you, the annual meeting could not take place. The New York State



Histotechnological Society appreciates your continued support.

The awards banquet was held on Friday night and the following members received an award: The Thermo Fisher Scholarship Award was given to Loralie Schad, Leica Microsystems Scholarship award was awarded to Jenna Van Der Volgen, Gulf Coast offered two scholarship awards this year. The first was given to Dominique Colbert and the second was given to Carrie Lindberg. The Dominique Europa Award was awarded to Laurie Marien as well as the 2010 President's Award. Congratulations to everyone!

The spring symposium was proud to offer its first Career Day for high school students. This was a huge success! See Laurie Marien's article <u>Career Day 2010</u> for the full story! Next years meeting will be held in Albany at the Desmond Americana, be sure and join us so you don't miss a thing!





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NYSHS Career Day 2010 By Laurie Marien, Sisters of Charity Hospital



I will begin with my thoughts on how this day came to be. While volunteering at our national career day for the NSH I dreamt of making this day possible for students on a state level at the NYSHS annual meeting. It seemed like such a wonderful day for these students, and having it only happen once a year in one location just made me sad and somewhat determined to change that. I am acutely aware of the shortage of histotechs and also knowing the main reason is many folks, young and old, simply just don't know about our important profession. So, last summer as the NYSHS meeting was

taking shape here in Buffalo I decided to call the chairperson of the meeting, Kate Caleri, and asked why we didn't have a Career Day. Next thing I knew, I was going to spearhead the first Career Day at our state meeting. Yikes, I was both scared and excited.

After many months of planning and making sure all the details were covered it was here! We had the support of our wonderful vendors behind the scenes supplying us with everything we needed from equipment to disposables. Sakura came through with an embedding center, paraffin and microtome, Leica contributed a microscope and water bath, Source Medical/Statlab provided slides, cover slips, blades, cassettes and many other disposables, Simport supplied molds for embedding. Also, USLabs (FYI Leanne Strope was the first to do-



nate) Poly Scientific and Cardinal Health came through with great bag stuffers. Many thanks to our wonderful vendors...be ready for next year!

The most important ingredient to our day would be the students. We had two sessions scheduled. I wanted to make sure we were able to give our students the individual attention they needed. So, the number of students attending had to be limited and unfortunately I had to say no too many schools. The lucky schools were Lakeshore High School with 23 students and 2 teachers and Attica High School with 32 students and 3 teachers.

Next, we needed plenty of volunteers for hands on help to make this day a complete success. Mary Vaughan did a great job with an overview of all the career possibilities in the world of histology. Then it was time for hands on fun! Robert Daeschler was in charge of "grossing" them On Stage



out and explaining processing of the tissue. Emily Ash took over after that and showed them the skills needed to embed. We had the students pre-label cassettes as they signed in and pick out some fun little props to embed. This way they were able to experience labeling cassettes and when it was time to embed they could open their own cassette, giving them a good idea of what we do everyday. They were also able to take their blocks with them to show everyone. It is always a difficult task trying to explain to someone what our blocks look like.

Now they can show others and spread the word about histology!!! Next, it was on to Liana Murray to keep all their fingers attached. Success, no blood! They mastered the microtome quickly and had some lovely sections, which was a good confidence builder seeing their sections on a slide. Then, last but not least, Carrie Lindberg explained routine staining and the students took a look at some slides under the microscope. Carrie put a great deal of time into finding some interesting cases to show them. We also had Deb Kassays help to keep them all in line and the groups moving from station to station.

My thanks to all the wonderful people in helping to making my dream day come true. It was such a joy to witness the excitement in the students as they were learning about histology. As Mary Georger said, "it gives me hope". It was a pleasure to hear those words. Funny thing is I have

been thanked by most of the volunteers for letting them help! How cool is that? I think we all love our profession and it feels good to be given a venue in which to share it with these students. The teachers are asking if they can come back next year. Isn't that a great thing? Excitement and interest in our wonderful world of histology!







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Legislative Update

By Vernon Pilon, MD State Issues Advisor for NYSSPATH and Member of the Federal and State Affairs Committee for CAP



This legislative year has kept the State Affairs Office of the CAP (College of American Pathologists) and NYSS-PATH (New York State Society of Pathologists) busy with 3 bills dealing with extending licensing to out-of-state laboratories, amending New York State anti-self referral laws and amending public health and insurance law for access to out-of-network laboratories. The state of politics in Albany is as crazy as it gets and getting anything accomplished in this environment can be very difficult. Below I will outline the status of these 3 bills:

S5972/A7913 With the help of a lobbyist, we have seen the passing in the senate of the bill that would require out-of-state laboratories that are permitted by NYSDOH (New York State Department of Health) and perform testing on New York residents to meet NYS clinical laboratory licensure requirements. As an example, this law would require histotechnologists in out-of-state laboratories preparing slides for NYS residents biopsies to meet equivalent licensing requirements as NYS located histotechnologists. Much support for this bill was received when some of us visited a number of key legislators in April. We are now awaiting action by the assembly and hopefully then, the Governor's signature. We have been working on passage of this bill for many years. The bill is supported by most laboratory organizations. The difficulty has been in dealing with the SED (State Education Department) and DOH, which must be involved with administration of the licensing (SED) and enforcement (DOH).

S6955/A9933 Recently, assemblyman Gottfried, chair of the assembly health committee and his senate counterpart Duane introduced a bill at the request of the NYS Bar Association that would bring NYS self referral laws in line with the less strict federal Stark laws. While this may seem like a logical step, it opens the door for laboratories to try and entice practices to send specimens to them by offering free EMRs (electronic medical record systems) which is allowed by the federal government. This bill would also allow pathologists to read slides in an intraoffice path laboratory as an independent contractor instead of an employee as now required by NYS law. This could encourage more intraoffice path laboratories where there is much less regulatory oversight than takes place in NYS permitted laboratories. CAP and NYSSPATH oppose this bill. The bill has passed the assembly but has not seen action in the senate. The powerful sponsors of this bill make it difficult to stop.

53620 This bill sponsored by senator Espada this year is similar to last years bill that just missed passing. The bill seeks to make sure that health insurance companies cover laboratory testing performed in out of network laboratories. While we are in agreement with this, the bill went too far in requiring the out of network laboratories to accept the same payment as if in the network. This would have allowed health insurance companies to set payment rates for all laboratories regardless if they participate and regardless of the cost of performing the test. This might have been construed to include anatomic pathology as well. Last year we were able to remove the onerous part of the bill. This year the bill has a new senate sponsor and the onerous language was back in. CAP, NYSSPATH and the Medical Society of the State of New York strongly opposed the current bill unless amended to drop the payment requirement. The bill was amended to drop this payment language on June 4th. As of publishing time there has been no action on this bill.

Bills passed into law can have profound impact on the practice of laboratory medicine. Many bills are put forth by special interests looking for an advantage in the marketplace and most legislators do not have an in depth understanding of what we do to base their vote on. Our organizations must remain diligent in observing and acting on what is happening in Albany to attempt to educate legislators and keep laboratory practice fair and patient centered.







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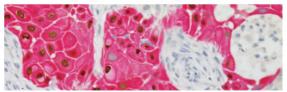
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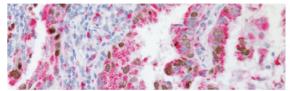
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Excel Tips and Tricks for Histotechs

By: Michelle L. Fuller, MT, HT (ASCP) University of Rochester

As a Histotech gone IT, I would like to share with you some tips and tricks I have learned using Excel over the past 4 years. Excel has so many features but it is sometimes hard to know where to start. Below you will find some functions that I have found to be very useful especially working with lab data. These are just a few of the "hidden, unknown, and undiscovered" features. There are hundreds more to learn! These were demonstrated using Excel 2003.

Locking Columns and Rows:

It is possible to freeze a header row to make it easier to see them as you enter data further down your spreadsheet. To lock your header row:

Use your mouse to select the row below or the column to the right of where you want to freeze. Under the **Window** menu on your toolbar. Click **Freeze Panes**.

Creating a Drop-Down Menu:

If you find yourself entering the same information or data in different cells of a spreadsheet, instead of typing it each time, you can create a drop-down menu to save typing time. In this example, I used the days of the week. You could also use the names of special stains if you needed to list them in a column.

Open your worksheet and label your header row in A1 (Days of the week for example) in the top cell of the column.

Enter the data (days of the week) in the cells below your header row (in A2 to A8).

Highlight the list including your header row (A1 - A8)

Click Insert on your toolbar, then select Name, and then select Define.

In the box under **Names in workbook** you will see the name of the range of data (Days_of_the_week). In the **Refers to** box, it should list "=Sheet1!" followed by all the cells in the data range (=Sheet1! \$A\$1:\$A\$8).

Click on Add and then OK.

Select any cell or range of cells in which you would like the drop-down menu to appear so you can enter the data.

Click on **Data** on your toolbar and then select **Validation**.

In the Allow drop-down menu, select List. In Source, type in "=" and the name of your data range (=Days_of_the_week). (Also make sure that the In-cell dropdown box is checked.) Click OK.

If you click on one of the cells you highlighted, your drop-down menu appears. Choose from the drop down menu the item you want to enter in the cell. (Figure 1)



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Excel COUNTIF Function:

This counts the number of cells in a range that meets a certain criteria. If you have an Excel spreadsheet that contains how many slides were cut each day of the month, you can count the number of days that you cut more than 100 slides.

Click the cell that you want your results to fall.

Click the down Arrow next to the AutoSum button on your toolbar.

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Select More Functions.

Select (Highlight) COUNTIF and click OK.

The Function Arguments box will appear. With the courser blinking in the **Range** field box, go directly on your spreadsheet and highlight the cells you wish to apply this function to (say A2 through A30). Once you have done this, it will automatically drop the correct data range in the box.

In the **Criteria** box, enter the condition (number, expression, or text). In our example, you will use >100. (Figure 2)

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Criteria is the condition in the form of a number, expression, or text that defines which cells will be counted.									
Formula result =									
Help on this function	OK Cancel								

Click on OK

This will count the number of days where you had greater than 100 slides.

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Automatically Number Rows in Excel:

The trick below is to automatically number rows in Excel. This will make the number of the row viewable when you print it out. In my example, I added the entire staff of pathologists that work in the department and gave each of them a row number.

Select the first cell in the range that you want to fill.

Type the starting value for the series.

Type a value in the next cell to establish a pattern. (Figure 3)

For example: If you want the series 1, 2, 3, 4, 5..., you type 1 and 2 in the first two cells. This works with days of the week too. If you want Monday, Tuesday,...., you type Monday and Tuesday in the first two cells.

Select/Highlight the cells that contain the starting values. (Figure 4)

Use the fill handle and drag it across the range that you want to fill in with the series. (The fill handle is the small black square in the lower-right corner of the selection cell. When you point to the fill handle, the pointer changes to a black cross)

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If the fill handle is missing from your cell: Go to **Tools** on your toolbar, select **Options**, click **Edit**, and select the **Arrow cell drag and drop** check box.

Press [Ctrl] ~ To Display Your Formulas.

This trick will help you so you can see what formula you entered into a current cell or all cells. This is helpful if you need to troubleshoot your data.

Open any worksheet that contains at least one formula and press [Ctrl]~. My example contains two SUM functions and tow Average functions. Press [Ctrl]~ again to close out this function. (Figure 5)

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Subtotals:

This trick has saved my life and many hours of time. My example below is a very easy excel file, but you can use this to get more complex data sorted and totaled for you.

Always save your worksheet under a working copy name. If you go to **File**, select **Save As** and add "_work" to the original file name. You never want to practice Subtotals on the original copy of your data worksheet. If you mess it up, it is hard to get it back.

Sort your data under the column in which you want to subtotal. In my example, I want to see how many slides each tech cut during the week. I will sort the data by tech name.

- + Highlight all data you would like to sort. (Figure A)
- + Click Data on Toolbar.

Under Sort by select criteria (Figure B) and click OK.

(Make sure if you have a header row, that **Header row** is selected below so the name of each column appears in the pull down menus)

Figure C shows data sorted by Tech name.

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Highlight sorted worksheet again.

Click on **Data** on your toolbar.

Select Subtotals.

Enter subtotal criteria (Figure D)

+ At each change in: = which column do you want subtotaled

+ Use function = how do you want it to total (i.e. sum, count, average)

Add subtotal to = what column do you want the subtotal shown

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Click on **OK** . Your data now has subtotals. (Figure E)

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If you click on the #2 on the worksheet, it will give you the totals for each category. (Figure F)

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On Stage

Convert One Column Into Two:

For example: this is used if you have a list of full names in a column, and you want to separate out the first and last names. (Figure 6)



Select the column that you want to separate and click **Data** on your toolbar.

Select the **Text to Columns** button.

Choose Delimited.

Click Next and check off Space under Delimiters (or whatever options applies). (Figure 7)

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Click Next again to view your data. Click Finish and you now have two columns. (Figure 8)



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Automatically Add Dashes to Phone Numbers:

This function is can same some time and keystrokes.

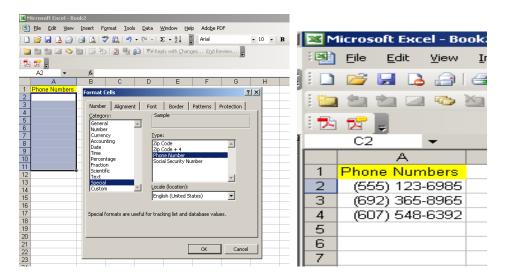
Select the cells that will contain the phone numbers (or select a group of numbers that already contain the numbers without the dashes).

Select the Format menu on the toolbar and Select Cells.

The Format Cells box appears. Click on the Numbers tab.

Under Category, click Special.

Under Type, click Phone Number, (Figure 9) Click OK. (Figure 10 shows the final product)





Region 1 Director's Report Summer Report 2010

I hope everyone is delighted that we are enjoying some warmer weather. I for one do not miss the snow!

The Region 1 Meeting in Mystic, Conn was a success! There were 106 attendees. The weather was great. The educational sessions were varied, most interesting and educational. The Vampires in New England given by Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni was excellent. The vendors were plentiful and had many new products to display. Many attendees got to visit the Mystic Seaport and Aquarium. I think a few made it to the casinos just down the road as well.

The Region 1 Histotechnologist of the year was Judy Keller from Rhode Island.

NSH News Update

The NSH Histology Career Video should be completed by the Symposium in Sept.

Membership update was 3064. Remind everyone to renew their membership.

- 2010 Election Info-Vote-Now is the vendor for electronic voting. All members with valid email addresses will receive the on line notification. The voting will be via a link to a secure site for the voting. Links and info will be sent by Friday, May 28th. Those without valid email addresses will receive voting info via first class mail. Remind the members the importance of updating their contact information (email and mailing addresses). Voting will conclude Monday, July 26th 2010.
- Histotechnology Professionals Day was a huge success. We need to start planning for next year. Date change or keep? Extend to a week? Change the slogan or logo? Suggestions are welcome.
- Educational Events were reviewed. There are 12 monthly teleconferences. Looking to increase them to 18. VIR will be added to the teleconferences. The new teleconference series is great for those with limited funds for travel. Check out the <u>www.NSH.org</u> website for more information.

CAP/NSH HistoQIP is going well. 1223 have enrolled. New contract was discussed.

Debra Wood from Indiana was selected for the NACCLS committee to replace Floyd Grimm.

HNP meeting will be in Washington DC. See the report in the NSH Spring On Stage Newsletter.

The NSH BOD discussed joining the American Association of Laboratory Animal Sciences there will be more information to follow.

Lastly, reminders to all, don't forget to renew your NYSHS membership dues and to recruit new members.

Respectfully submitted: Angela M Fogg, Region 1 Director's Report June 2010





New to the Field of Histology

My name is Dominique Colbert. I have a B.A. in Biology from Saint Rose, as well as, A.A.S. in Histotechnology from SUNY Cobleskill. I am currently working on my summer clinical at Albany Memorial Hospital in Albany, NY. I am eligible for the ASCP certification and the NY State license. I am looking for a full time job in Upstate NY, hopefully the Capital region. For a copy of my resume I can be reached at <u>dommey1127@yahoo.com</u>. Thank you

My name is Julian Gogo, I graduated from Erie Community College with an MLT degree on May 19, 2010. I also have Bachelors degree in biology from Buffalo State College. In addition I am a certified Phlebotomist. I plan to take the board exam at the beginning of July 2010. After getting some experience in the workforce I plan to take the MLS examination. I want to get a job as a Medical Technician but I would prefer a job in a Histology lab. gogoj15@hotmail.com

Michael Holcomb

- Performing my clinical at Wilson Memorial Medical Center in Johnson City, NY
- I am eligible for the ASCP certification exam, as well as NYS licensure.
- I am looking for employment in the NY/New England area and the Mid-Atlantic.
- My email is <u>mihol44@yahoo.com</u>

- I am a non-traditional student. I am a US Navy veteran. I have a wife, Merrie, and three children, Devin, Morgan, and Kristin. I plan on continuing my education in the bio-medical field, and will be working on attaining my bachelor's degree.

My name is Loralie Schad. I am one of Dr. Colony's students at SUNY Cobleskill, I am doing my clinical in Hudson at Columbia Memorial Hospital, Angela Fogg being my supervisor. I would be interested in working possibly in Southern New Hampshire, Dutchess or Ulster County in New York. If I moved to New Hampshire, relocation assistance would definitely be a plus. You can reach mea at email - <u>SCHADL313@qmail.com</u>, or my cell phone number - 845.242.4642.

My name is Grace Schneider. I just completed the Histotech program at SUNY Cobleskill. I am working on my summer clinical at Bassett Hospital in Cooperstown, NY, and will finish in late



July. I am eligible for the ASCP certification and NY State licensure and plan on taking the test in August. I currently live in Worcester, NY. I am undecided where I would like to attain a position, and I am considering relocation at this time. I can be reached at my permanent email address: <u>keever4ever32@hotmail.com</u>.

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