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From the Chair

Hello Certified Microbiologists,

My first months as Chair have already been challenging, yet rewarding. I want to share with you the plans I have proposed. Since achieving NRM certification, I have made it a mission to encourage others in industry to become certified. Over 20 years we have moved some key barriers aside to make certification more accessible, easier to take an exam, and simpler to recertify. All of us are poised now with adequate tools to move our certification to the next level of visibility.

My vision (shared in the last The Loop) is to have all industry microbiologists certified. The way to make this happen is to unite and leverage our experience and our passion to promote the importance and benefits of NRM certification. We all know how critical our work and decisions are to the consumers, the patients, and the organizations for whom we work. We also are aware of the benefits of reward and recognition, including salary based on level of experience (which certification can represent) that is gained by other professions who require certification/licensing (e.g. doctors, nurses, accountants, lawyers). Indeed, it is our time to change the industry’s thinking from acceptance to need. If we can influence more microbiologists in the field of Quality to become certified, our leverage will increase.
The NRM Board would like to have a brief chat with each of you, even if only 15 minutes of your time are available, to ask if you can share with us your views and thoughts on the following questions:

1. How would you influence others to become certified?
2. What are the key benefits that certification brings to your organization?
3. How can you help develop this unity across the industry?

In addition to our questions, we are looking for some volunteers to take part in a Stakeholders Forum (by teleconference) to share ideas of how to make certification more valuable to you.

Please consider this approach as a new journey towards helping improve the influence we all have in our careers. Marsha, Marie, Bob, Tim and I will be in touch. Feel free to help us jump start this process by emailing us (see addresses below).

Thank you for your continued support.

Regards, Don Singer, SM(NRM)
Chair, National Registry of Microbiologists
Donald.C.Singer@gsk.com

Robert Hawley: bhawley@mriresearch.org
Marsha Morley: marsha.g.morley@pfizer.com
Tim Nicoll: tim.nicoll@hospira.com
Marie Pflager: cpflager@amgen.com

NRM Welcomes Newly Certified Registrants

The NRM welcomes 34 new Registrants who were certified in October 2008. They are—

Specialist Microbiologists in Biological Safety Microbiology
Claudia Gentry-Weeks, Ph.D. - Colorado State University, Fort Collins
Karen Gillis, M.S. - University of Florida, Gainesville
Eric Jeppesen, B.S. - Midwest Research Institute, Kansas City, MO
Mitchell Pate, Ph.D. - Southern Research Institute, Birmingham, AL
Ericka Pearce, M.S. - University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA
Brian Petuch, M.S. - Merck Research Laboratories, West Point, PA
Brian Ranger, M.S. - University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Martha Schnieerman, Ph.D. - University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Rueyjing Tang, Ph.D. - Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, St. Lawrence
John Tonkiss, Ph.D. - National Biosafety and Biocontainment Training Program (NBBTP), NIH, Bethesda, MD and Boston University, MA,
Jennifer Wright, M.S. - Genentech, Inc., South San Francisco, CA
Vivian Xian, Ph.D. - Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center at San Francisco, CA
Specialist Microbiologists in Consumer and Industrial Microbiology
Allison Hazen - TOLMAR, Inc, Fort Collins, Co
Kim Hellenga, M.S. - Covidien, St. Louis, MO
Todd Hillam - Nelson Laboratories, Inc., Salt Lake City, UT
Christopher Justi - Synthes, USA, West Chester, PA
Michael Sheedy, M.S. - Bordentown, NJ

Registered Microbiologists in Consumer Products and Quality Assurance Microbiology specializing in Pharmaceuticals/Medical Device/Cosmetics or Food and Dairy
Karla Aberle, M.S. - Enzon Pharmaceuticals, Indianapolis, IN
Bradford M. Booth, Jr. - Sandoz, Inc., Broomfield, CO
Michael Chen - Kimberly-Clark Corporation, Neenah, WI
James Gebo - Microtest Laboratories, Inc., Agawam, MA
Kim Hellenga, M.S. - Covidien, St. Louis, MO
Larry Jeff Hone - Nelson Laboratories, Inc., Salt Lake City, UT
Nina Moreno - Nelson Laboratories, Inc., Salt Lake City, UT
Candace Oliveira - Nelson Laboratories, Inc., Salt Lake City, UT
Mary Rose Pezzutti - Medtronic, Jacksonville, FL
Xin Tang, Ph.D. - Medtronic, Jacksonville, FL
Weston Turner - Nelson Laboratories, Inc., Salt Lake City, UT
Emily Waller - 3M, St. Paul, MN
Heather Webb, M.S. - 3M, St. Paul, MN
Seth Weil - Genentech, South San Francisco, CA
Aye Aye Win - Fremont, CA
David Woolley - Nelson Laboratories, Inc., Salt Lake City, UT

You are encouraged to welcome the new Registrants. You can find their contact information on the online Registrants’ directory.

The Benefits of my NRM Certification
By: Dean Jobe, RM(NRM)

During my senior year at the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse, my academic advisor recommended that I take a certification exam offered through the NRM. After thinking it through, I came to the conclusion that obtaining certification through the NRM would enhance my microbiology degree and make me more attractive to graduate school programs and future employers. Therefore, I took the exam shortly after graduation and received my certification later that summer. I then went on to attend graduate school at the University of Wisconsin – Madison in the Department of Bacteriology. Following graduation, I accepted a position as a Research Microbiologist in the Microbiology Research Laboratory at the Gundersen
Lutheran Medical Center in La Crosse, WI. During my 19 year tenure at Gundersen Lutheran, I have been part of a team that studies the borreliacidal antibody response to the Lyme disease spirochete, *Borrelia burgdorferi*. Our research has been productive and I have had the opportunity to present our findings at both national and international meetings. Most recently, I have been given responsibility for developing, validating, and implementing molecular testing in our newly formed Molecular Diagnostics section. To date, we have implemented a modest menu of real-time PCR tests for the detection of several infectious disease agents and anticipate the introduction of several more by early 2009.

As I look retrospectively at my career, I can honestly say that the certification I received through the NRM has provided me with added confidence, professional credibility, and has assured me that I was building my career on a firm foundation. It is for these reasons that I am a firm believer in what the NRM has to offer via its certification programs. I highly recommend them to microbiologists at all stages and ages – especially those just beginning their careers.

- Dean Jobe, Laboratory Supervisor, Microbiology Research and Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory, Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center, La Crosse, WI

Feel free to email Dean at dajobe@gundluth.org with any questions and comments.

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**Food Microbiologist At Work**

*By: Maya Achen, RM(NRM)*

When Peggy McNult of the NRM mentioned that she had never profiled a microbiologist in the Department of Agriculture, I jumped at the opportunity to showcase a little known side of microbiology, namely food microbiology, in addition to presenting my profile.

I supervise the microbiology section of the Ohio Department of Agriculture’s Consumer Analytical Laboratory (CAL) which is the regulatory laboratory for the State of Ohio. It analyzes products collected by the Meat, Food, and Dairy divisions’ state inspectors.

I joined CAL in 2000 as a Microbiologist, after graduating from The Ohio State University with a Master’s degree in Food Science and Technology. The valuable laboratory experience that I gained while conducting graduate research on *E. coli* O157: H7, as well as my deep interest in developing and validating rapid methods for various food matrices, prompted me to seek employment in a laboratory environment. The food analysis/testing at CAL, being regulatory in nature, provided the perfect environment to utilize my proficiency in validating methods in order to ensure that they meet Association of Analytical Communities (AOAC), USDA or FDA standards.
Currently, I supervise a staff of 11 microbiologists at CAL. I ensure that my team undergoes periodic job-rotations which allow them to enhance their skill sets and also be cross-trained in all sections of the laboratory.

My team is responsible for testing produce/food samples for *Salmonella* sp, *E.coli* O157: H7, *Listeria* sp., *Shigella* sp. and other food-borne pathogens. Dairy products are tested for total microbial counts, coliforms, alkaline phosphatase and for trace amounts of antibiotics. In case of a food borne outbreak, CAL microbiologists test suspect food samples following USDA or FDA guidelines. Positive testing outcomes lead to a recall of the “tainted” food from retail markets within the state. The laboratory is also a part of several Federal Cooperative Agreements, such as the USDA Microbiological Data Program (MDP)--to test produce samples for pathogens; Food Emergency Response Network (FERN)--to conduct validation studies to improve detection methods for biothreat agents in food; and a program in conjunction with the EPA to test the efficacy of hospital disinfectants based on their label claims.

This year has been a very interesting albeit challenging one at CAL since food safety has garnered so much national media attention. The increased consumption of imported food products and the threat of intentional biological agents in the nation’s food supply have made food testing a top priority in the Departments of Agriculture. This has resulted in increased testing at laboratories such as CAL. However, new and improved detection methods and the use of molecular methodologies have resulted in generating more accurate and quicker results.

- Maya Achen, Microbiology Supervisor, Consumer Analytical Laboratory, Ohio Department of Agriculture

*Feel free to email Maya at Achen@agri.ohio.gov with any questions or comments.*

**Continuing Education Opportunities**

Recertification is an opportunity to demonstrate that you are staying current with the science and changes in the field. The NRM encourages all Registrants to recertify every five years by participating in continuing education.

In 2008, the following Registrants recertified—

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Muhammad Amjad, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Marcia C. Finucane</td>
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<td>Susanne M. Anderson</td>
<td>Richard W. Gilpin, Ph.D.</td>
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<td>Mary J. Arndt</td>
<td>Peter C. Iwen, Ph.D.</td>
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<td>Rita D'Angelo</td>
<td>Maryjo C. Lanzillotta</td>
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<td>Jimmy Chan</td>
<td>Gaitree McNab</td>
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<td>Joseph P. Connaghan</td>
<td>Darlene Miller, DHsc, M.P.H.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evelyn F. Der</td>
<td>Krista L. Murray</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jude C. Dike</td>
<td>Keiko J. Oda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marian M. Downing</td>
<td>Susan K. Schneider</td>
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ASM offers many continuing education opportunities through meetings, audioconferences, and webinars. Visit [www.asm.org/meetings](http://www.asm.org/meetings) to learn more. There are also many other organizations that offer education opportunities that may be interest. Here are a few—

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name of Program</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Contact Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>PMF Open Conference on Compendial Change- 2009</td>
<td>Feb. 9-10, 2009</td>
<td>Scott Sutton, High Peaks (888) 844-8561&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:Scott.sutton@microbiol.org">Scott.sutton@microbiol.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk Mitigation &amp; Disaster Recovery for Cleanrooms (High Peaks)</td>
<td>Feb. 23-24&lt;br&gt;Burlingame, CA&lt;br&gt;Feb. 25-26&lt;br&gt;Los Angeles</td>
<td>Scott Sutton, High Peaks (888) 844-8561&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:Scott.sutton@microbiol.org">Scott.sutton@microbiol.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMF 2009 Conference on Environmental Monitoring</td>
<td>March 30-31, 2009</td>
<td>Scott Sutton, High Peaks (888) 844-8561&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:Scott.sutton@microbiol.org">Scott.sutton@microbiol.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacterial Endotoxin Summit</td>
<td>April 25, 2009</td>
<td>Scott Sutton, High Peaks (888) 844-8561&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:Scott.sutton@microbiol.org">Scott.sutton@microbiol.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDA Annual Meeting</td>
<td>April 20-24, 2009</td>
<td>Jason Brown (301) 656-5900 ext. 131&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:brown@pda.org">brown@pda.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMF Conference on Microbial Investigations</td>
<td>May 18-19, 2009</td>
<td>Scott Sutton, High Peaks (888) 844-8561&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:Scott.sutton@microbiol.org">Scott.sutton@microbiol.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDA 4th Annual Global Conference on Pharmaceutical Microbiology</td>
<td>Oct. 5-8, 2009</td>
<td>Wanda Neal-Ballard (301) 656-5900 ext 111&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:neal@pda.org">neal@pda.org</a></td>
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You too are encouraged to seek recertification and continue to certify your worth. Click [here](http://www.asm.org/meetings) to learn how!
NRM Registrants Win Major ASM Awards

Two NRM Registrants have been selected to receive 2009 ASM Scientific Achievement Awards.

Arthur P. Guruswamy, RM(NRM), Scientist, Virginia’s Department of Laboratory Medicine, Richmond is honored with the 2009 Scherago-Rubin Award. He was certified by the NRM in 1979.

This award recognizes outstanding, bench-level clinical microbiologists who are involved primarily in routine diagnostic work, rather than in research. It was established by the late Sally Jo Rubin, an active member of ASM's Clinical Microbiology Division, in honor of her grandfather, Professor Morris Scherago.

Guruswamy earned his B.S. in Biology from Evangel College, Springfield, Missouri, and started his career at the University Hospital, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He is known for his knowledge of mycobacteria, and during his 17-year tenure at the University Hospital, he established its first mycology/mycobacteriology lab. Guruswamy’s expertise in mycobacteria has directly impacted pediatric patients. His work led to the identification of important fungal pathogens, which were relatively unknown in pediatric patients, and emerging species of Candida.

Guruswamy moved to the Mayo Clinic where according to his nominator, David Welch, a Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology, “He continued his dedication toward contributing to high quality patient care through his passionate determination to learn new principles in the field.” He is credited with motivating the lab to work at a higher level and is known for sharing what he has learned at scientific meetings with colleagues.

Today, Guruswamy oversees three major centers’ mycology/mycobacteriology testing services. He is known for his zest to improve the lab and his quest to always learn more to enhance patient care. His work at the bench is exemplary, and his enthusiasm is noted by all who encounter him.

James W. Snyder, Ph.D., D(ABMM), RM/SM(NRM), Director, University of Louisville Hospital, and Professor of Pathology, Department of Pathology, Division of Laboratory Medicine, University of Louisville School of Medicine, is honored with the TREK Diagnostic ABMM/ABMLI Professional Recognition Award. This award recognizes a Diplomate of the American Board of Medical Microbiology (ABMM) or the American Board of Medical Laboratory Immunology (ABMLI) for outstanding contributions to the professional recognition of clinical microbiologists and/or immunologists.

Dr. Snyder is honored for his efforts in bioterrorism preparedness which began several years before the 2001 anthrax attacks. He authored the Cumitech publication, “Laboratory Safety, Management, and Diagnosis of Biological Agents Associated with Bioterrorism,” in 2000, and the American Academy of Microbiology colloquium report, “Bioterrorism Threats to our Future.” These
publications helped form the basis for the training of frontline clinical microbiologists to be prepared for detection and identification of possible bioterrorism agents.

He is a charter member of the Laboratory Response Network (LRN) that was created by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), to prepare the laboratory for bioterrorism events. The foundation of the LRN is comprised of the sentinel laboratories that perform diagnostic microbiological testing. Snyder represented clinical microbiologists and provided essential input to the LRN leadership on the laboratories’ capabilities and needs. He has worked on the ASM’s Working Group on Sentinel Protocols, which were adopted by ASM and are the standards for the other professional groups in the LRN. The 2001 anthrax attack was diagnosed by a clinical laboratory using the techniques outlined in the Bacillus anthracis Sentinel Protocol.

Dr. Snyder received his Ph.D. from the University of Dayton and is certified by the American Board of Medical Microbiology (ABMM) and the National Registry of Microbiologists. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology and a Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves.

Transition to Online Dues Payment

The NRM has transitioned from paper dues bills to e-bills. You should have received an email earlier this week about how to pay your dues online through the ASM E-store. If you did not receive it and you are not an emeritus Registrant, please send an email to academy@asmusa.org. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

About The Loop

The Loop is the newsletter of the NRM. The Loop is distributed four times a year to NRM Registrants. It contains articles about NRM certification, Registrants, and the activities of the American Society for Microbiology.

Subscribers receive this newsletter electronically at their request. To unsubscribe from this newsletter, please send an e-mail to certification@asmusa.org.

Ideas, suggestions, and inquires can also be directed to Peggy McNult, Manager, American Academy of Microbiology at pmcnult@asmusa.org. We welcome your feedback for future articles.

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