Dear students,

I extend a warm welcome to each of you on behalf of the Department of Pathology and the Division of Medical Laboratory Sciences. The University of Utah is an outstanding educational institution that offers countless opportunities and experiences to aid you in your intellectual and personal growth.

The mission of our division is to provide you with the highest standards of learning and scholarship, and to prepare competent, advanced-practice medical laboratory scientists with the necessary skills, attitudes, and professional integrity to become contributing professionals and leaders in the healthcare community. In Fall 2019, you are a part of a diverse community of students comprised of approximately 215 pre-MLS students, 36 first year MLS students, 3 returning part-time MLS students, 27 second year MLS students, and 22 Master of Science students.

As students in the Medical Laboratory Sciences division at the U, you have the advantage of studying at a major research university and medical school, while still enjoying the benefits of small classes and individualized mentorship in a wide array of laboratory medicine disciplines. Our teaching facilities are outstanding and are complemented by dedicated and knowledgeable faculty and staff members. We are committed to help you be successful in your academic endeavors and eager to assist you on this journey.

We also want you to enjoy the campus and take full advantage of everything the University of Utah has to offer and, in doing so, we encourage you to take appropriate personal and collective precautions when living, learning, working, and playing at the U. We take your safety very seriously and we want you to do the same.

On behalf of the MLS faculty and staff, I would like to extend an open invitation to reach out to us whenever you have questions, concerns, or simply just want to visit! We look forward to working with you as you begin the new academic year.

With warm regards,

Diana G. Wilkins, MS, PhD, MT(ASCP)
Professor and Division Chief
Medical Laboratory Sciences, Department of Pathology,
School of Medicine

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Research Article: Immunometabolism

Congratulations to Rickesha (Ricky) Bell, a student in the Master of Science in Laboratory Medicine and Biomedical Science Program! Under the mentorship of Dr. June Round and colleagues, Ricky was a co-author on a recent publication in the July 26, 2019 issue of Science.

The complete article, ‘T-cell mediated regulation of the microbiota protects against obesity’, can be found on their website: AAAS- American Association for the Advancement of Science journal.

Karen Hageman Brown Scholarship Alert!

Karen Brown retired in 2018 after many years as an educator, teaching hematology, hemostasis, phlebotomy and education courses. Professor Brown established this scholarship to recognize and support MLS students in their educational endeavors. One, $1000 scholarship will be awarded for the upcoming spring 2020.

Submit a complete application by January 6, 2020. For more information, visit the MLS website.
The Junior League CARE Fair

The annual, two-day event organized and directed by the Junior League of Salt Lake City for families needing routine medical, dental, and vision services along with community assistance information. Major barriers (i.e., language, financial, and transportation constraints) prevent some Utah families from receiving many basic health services, these services are provided to attendees free of charge.

Our MLS team and students participated this year! We performed screening tests for anemia in 247 patients and for diabetes in 24 patients. Of those patients, we identified 44 patients with an abnormal hematocrit and 12 with an elevated hemoglobin A1c.

Thank you very much to our amazing faculty and student volunteers! Special thanks to our student leaders, Chloe Lim and Addison Reed and to the Medical Laboratory Science Division for their financial support!

Want to volunteer at CARE Fair 2020? Email Takara Blamires for more information!

Greetings from Ghana

Professors Buxton and Leetham were recently in Ghana in support of Public Health Learning Abroad research projects, and building bridges with Medical Laboratory Science programs at some of Ghana’s major universities. Research in the rural communities of the Barekese Subdistrict near Kumasi involved sampling community latrines to screen for antibiotic-resistant organisms. That was one brave group of student scientists! More information about the 2019 antibiotic research project can be found here.

One major task for Becky and Mallory was to renew the University of Utah’s longstanding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi. They also initiated a new Exchange Agreement especially for MLS students at each University to participate in elective clinical rotations at the partner institution. Both proposals were well-received. They also met with the executive board of the Ghana Association of Medical Laboratory Scientists (GAMLS). One hot topic of discussion was the potential for Ghana MLS graduates to sit for the ASCP International Certification exam and then be credentialed to work in US labs, such as ARUP. Those meetings included a comprehensive tour of the laboratories at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital in Accra, which includes the national tuberculosis laboratory.

It wasn’t all work. The weekends included trips to the Mole National Park in the north, to visit the elephants, crocodiles, and monkeys; the jungle Canopy Walk at Kakum National Park near the coast; the historic slave castles of Cape Coast and Osu; and the Manhyia Palace in Kumasi, historic home of the Ashanti king, the Asantehene.

Four U of U MLS students will travel to Ghana in October 2019. More information about the Global Public Health Learning Abroad in 2020 can be found here.