

## Cytotechnology Educators Forum: Designing Together a Bold Future for Cytotechnology Education

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Cytotechnology Educators convened in St. Petersburg, Florida on April 19, 2009, to begin the process of designing a bold future for cytotechnology education. The participants of the Forum developed “Five Key Issues” that were identified as being significant to the future of cytotechnology education ([Table 1](#)).

The purpose of the Forum was to bring together cytotechnology faculty to assess the current state of cytotechnology education and begin the process of collaboratively designing a bold and innovative plan to ensure the future of cytotechnology education. The meeting focused specifically on discussions regarding the immediate needs and future directions for all cytotechnology education programs in the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

The Forum was a great success by all measures. There were a total of 33 participants at this important gathering, with 24 individual programs represented. With only 36 active programs, this means that 67% of all programs in the U.S. and Puerto Rico were represented. The Forum was sponsored jointly by the ASC Student Recruitment and Resources Committee, the ASCT and most importantly by the ASC Foundation. The ASC Foundation made funding available to assist faculty from each program the opportunity to attend.

The Forum began with a brief presentation by Amber Donnelly, Chair of the ASC Student Recruitment and Resources Committee. Dr. Donnelly summarized the findings from a survey sent out prior to the Forum, initiated by the ASC Student Recruitment and Resources Committee. The survey addressed issues related to cytotechnology program curriculum, content and scope of practice for recent graduates. The survey functioned as an excellent springboard for later discussions, and provided useful background information for the Forum.

The agenda for the day was then created by the participants after interviewing each other and discussing their reactions to two prescribed scenarios. One addressed the current reality of cytotechnology program survival in today’s climate, and the other their best case scenario for the future of cytotechnology education. Break-out discussion sessions were then planned for the morning and afternoon to address the topics identified during the interview process. Reports were prepared for each break-out session, which were later used to identify “Key Issues for Action Planning.” After the Action Plans were developed for the Key Issues, the day concluded with Moving Forward strategies and Next Steps.

Immediately following the Forum, the outcomes were shared via the ASC Cytotechnology Educators List Serve. This afforded those who were unable to attend the opportunity to see the Five Key Issues, and have the option to participate in the corresponding Workgroups if they were interested in doing so.

Since the Forum, workgroup leaders have organized their workgroups and have been engaging

the Action Plans developed for the Five Key Issues identified at the Forum (*Table 1*).

Tangible results are already being realized from the Forum. Recently, the ASC Foundation approved a funding request from the “Core Molecular Pathology Curriculum” Workgroup for the development of a core molecular curriculum that would be available to all accredited cytotechnology programs. The ASC Student Recruitment and Resources Committee is charged with overseeing the workgroups post Forum. Recent progress reports to the Committee indicate that each of the workgroups will have important findings to incorporate into the Future of Cytopathology Summit in November 2009.

On behalf of the ASC Student Recruitment and Resources Committee, we would like to thank participants for their time and effort at the Forum. Also, we would like to thank the ASC, ASC Foundation and the ASCT for their wonderful support. Without their support, the Forum would not have been successful or even possible. ■

**Five Key Issues**

1. Identify Cytotechnology Program’s Communities of Interest and Survey Their Needs –  
*Barbara McGabey Frain, M.S., SCT(ASCP)*
2. Develop a Core Molecular Pathology Curriculum –  
*Marilee Means, Ph.D., SCT(ASCP)*
3. Develop a Career Ladder for Cytotechnology and Identify Areas of Growth for the Cytotechnology Profession –  
*Judy Modery, SCT(ASCP)*
4. Develop a Cytotechnology Education Mission and Scope of Practice –  
*Don Simpson, Ph.D., CT(ASCP)*
5. Investigate Public Relations Initiatives that would present Cytotechnology in a Positive Manner  
*ASC Recruitment and Resources Committee*

**Table 1**