# Slide 1

**PATHWAY TO PROFESSIONALISM IN MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENCE FOR**

**AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN**

Kathleen M. Kenwright and Linda L. W. Pifer

Department of Clinical Laboratory Sciences

College of Health Professions, University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Memphis, Tennessee,

# 38163Slide 2

KATHLEEN M. KENWRIGHT, Co-Author on Diversity Summit presentation. The paper accepted for publication & The AWP Grant. She is Chair & Program Director of Clinical Laboratory Science department, College of Health professions, UTHSC, Memphis. She is a member of the Tennessee Medical laboratory Board and attending that meeting today.

# Slide 3

We are Medical Laboratory Scientists (formerly called Medical Technologists)

We perform all Lab Tests on blood, spinal fluid, biopsies, etc. ordered by your physician. Without us 70% of all medical diagnoses would be impossible…

# Slide 4

Our Profession has a long history whose deep roots began in Knoxville 221 Years ago at The University of Tennessee at Knoxville (Est. 1794)

# Slide 5

University of Tennessee Health Science Center Est. 1911 (104 years old) in Memphis, TN.

# Slide 6

College of Health Professions Est. 1972 ( 78 years old)

# Slide 7

Clinical laboratory sciences department is 92 yrs. Old & we’ve been a part of UT Memphis since 1923 as outgrowth of pathology…we are 50 yrs. Older than our own college!!!

# Slide 8

What made us decide that African American women students needed a helping hand?

1. This group reflects the demographics of Memphis. (The 1st African American student graduated from our program in 1964).

2. In some years, our classes *are* 50% African American women.

3. Since recession of 2008, several excellent students had to drop out due to the economic situation…it came to a choice of bread or books, rent or registry exam fees, study time or work time. We have a very demanding course of study.

4. All of our lives depend on MLS’s for our lab results. We can’t graduate students with ‘D’ averages because they can’t pass the board of registry exam.

5. So, we decided to intervene because it was clear that they needed some financial help…not a lot, but enough to close the gap…

# Slide 9

We did not achieve universal success by any means.

We were turned down by the Lumina foundation.

We were turned down by the Walmart foundation.

Finally, the alliance of women philanthropists of UT awarded us a grant of $15,500 to assist 14 African American women students.

This allowed us to allot $600/student = textbooks, $100/student = lab attire, $250/student = registry exam fee.

# Slide 10

Outcomes at this point in April, 2015: 2 MS & 2 BS graduates in MLS in 2014
 Kim B. graduated with MS (CLS) in 2014

Research mentors: dr. J. Dale & dr. V. Baselski

Sigma xi: excellence in student research award 2014 for research on streptococcus

Imhotep honor /leadership society award

ASCP natl. Student honor award

Alpha tau mu honor society award

Davis award (highest CLS award to MS student)

Travel award Chicago ASCLS Nat’l. Meeting as delegate in 2014

# Slide 11

Jessica C. received her MS (CLS) in 2014 & received a sigma xi excellence in student research award for her work on oral cancer. Her mentor was Dr. Yanhui Zhang, dept. Of bioscience res., college of dentistry. All MS students are assigned a personal research mentor with whom they study, write & present a paper in a formal seminar at the end of the summer. We feel it’s a unique and enriching experience offered by no other MLS program in the U.S.

# Slide 12

Dez E. Earned her BS (MLS) in 2014, maintaining a high ‘b’ average despite the fact that her son arrived at an academically “roller coaster” time. However, she won the Alice Hitt award for academic excellence during “challenging days”! She has an enviable position at dci transplant labs in Nashville where she does delicate tissue typing and cross matches for organ transplant patients.

# Slide 13

Jackie had been deployed to Afghanistan prior to entering our program. She earned her BS

(MLS) in 2014 & also won the student of achievement award given by the black student association. Soldier, scholar, mother, grandmother & medical laboratory scientist

# Slide 14

Brittany J. is currently on a 2-wk clinical rotation in microbiology at Baptist hospital in Desoto,

MS, advising physicians which antibiotics their patients should be given for greatest success or, if they have an antibiotic-resistant wound infection. She will graduate with her BS (MLS) next month.

# Slide 15

Madelyn D. was elected president of her class, is presently doing a two-week rotation in hematology at the v. A. Hospital in Memphis, and will be reporting any signs of anemia, iron overload or leukemia in our veterans. She will be receiving her BS (MLS) next month, and will be qualified to work at any hospital in the world (as are any of these young women) with her board of registry license & will have an essential, respected profession for life. Unemployment

is <2% in medical lab science

# Slide 16

Yarsha J. will be mentored by Dr. Tayebeh Pourmotabbed, Prof. of Micro., Immun. & Biochem., in a research project on Alzheimer’s disease in June. She has recently done a clinical rotation in blood bank at Methodist Germantown where she has typed and cross matched blood for transfusions during and following surgery. She will earn her MS(CLS) in august, 2015

# Slide 17

Amber D. is currently completing her clinical rotation at Methodist-UT-Lebonheur in chemistry where she measures pediatric enzyme levels, electrolytes, and other biochemical components in pediatric patients. She will receive her MS (CLS) in Aug., 2015. Her personal research mentor in June will be Dr. Stephania Cormier in the dept. Of pediatrics. Her research will focus on the human GI tract microbiome and viruses infecting pediatric patients

# Slide 18

Lekeisha P. will be working with macrophages from arthritic joints in cell culture, and her mentor is Dr. Richard smith, program director of biomaterials and orthopedics. She will study interactions between nanomaterials & cells from synovial fluid. She will also be doing a microbiology rotation at St. Francis hospital in May.

She will receive her MS (CLS) in 2015.

# Slide 19

Brittany R. has been at Methodist-UT-Lebonheur in the coagulation lab monitoring blood clotting times and bleeding disorders in pediatric patients. She will do her research at Lebonheur on Maldi-Tof rapid diagnosis of pediatric bacterial infections with lab director Tekita McKinney this summer, & will receive her MS (CLS) in august. Again, all students do rotations in all divisions of the laboratory to build their expertise

# Slide 20

Brittany J. will be doing her research with lab dir. Rick tucker at Baptist Desoto in MS on Sysmex analysis of urinary tract infections vs. Culture plates. She is currently on clinical rotation at St. Thomas w. In Nashville in special hematology where she does bone marrow analysis in the diagnosis of leukemia & other disorders. She will receive her MS (CLS) in august, 2015.

# Slide 21

Lauren D. will finish her MS (CLS) in august having done her research with Dr. Monica Jablonski of the department of ophthalmology at the Hamilton eye institute. Her research will be on the genetics of macular degeneration and glaucoma. Lauren has completed a rotation in blood bank at Methodist hospital, chemistry at Methodist north, and has experience in each required discipline, as does each of our graduates.

All MS and BS students have done rotations in molecular diagnostics, hematology, chemistry, blood bank, microbiology, special hematology, and coagulation to give them experience in every phase of laboratory medicine to provide doctors with the data required to make diagnoses. They’ve worked St. Jude, VA, BMH, Methodist, St. Francis, etc.

# Slide 22

In conclusion we have, as the saying goes, taught many students “how to fish”, and have provided them with a stable and challenging profession for life.

We have encouraged **Diversity** in our **Classrooms** **and** Profession and **Tennessee** will be far the better for it!

# Slide 23

We’ve proudly taught students from 24 nations.

Pictured are 24 different flags representing each of the 24 Countries

# Slide 24

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world” - Nelson Mandela

# Slide 25

Thank you!

Questions???