



My Junior Officer Perspective: Are You the Future or the Now?

CPT Jason L. Reeves USA, MS

We have all been in that meeting with our senior leaders that say “the Junior Officers in this organization are the Future of our Force!”... But are you truly the “future”, or are you the “now” in our organizations? Well, that depends on YOU.

When I was commissioned in January 2013, I had six years of enlisted laboratory experience. Some of my experiences were in large Medical Activities (MEDDACs), small clinics, and even a deployed hospital laboratory. Those times in my career were building my future as an Officer. In my mind, if I was to wait to be the future until I got commissioned, it would be too late. So, what did I do? Everything I could to build my foundation to be the best Lab Officer I could be, in the future.

Admittedly, and some of my mentors reading this will agree, I had a lot to learn when I was first in charge of five clinics and two sections at my first assignment. I was thankfully placed in roles that pushed me to learn and experience failures, with little harm, like a parent teaching their child to ride a bike with training wheels. That is the beginning of building the future Lab Officer.

Because I was looking to the future and not waiting for it to come to me, I decided to apply to a Long-Term Health Education and Training (LTHET) in only my second year. I was not accepted, but the board knew I was interested. So, when I applied the next year, I was accepted. That is placing the future in the “now”. Are you doing that?

In late 2015/early 2016 I was approached by a Company Commander to be an Executive Officer (XO) to two Company Commanders. This was a role that did not exist in the organization, but they wanted to create. I was a 1LT and thought this was the perfect way for me to expand my experience outside of the lab and possibly be a voice for us. I took this opportunity and ran with it! I saw the future potential in having this experience, and made it a “now” decision! Would you have done the same thing?

In May 2016 I was then approached by the Troop Command XO and my mentor, LTC Athena Lock, that I was possibly being considered for a position as the Hospital XO. I would possibly replace the MAJ that was in the position for the last two years. Let me remind you, I was a 1LT, not even promotable.

In my mind I had a ton of doubt and questions. This was a huge opportunity for my future, but was it too much, too soon? Was I going to have the respect of the most senior leaders in the hospital, the Commander, the Deputies, and all the civilian leaders as a 1LT? I saw the future potential in having this experience, and made the “now” decision! I was now working side by side with the organizations top leaders, making decisions now for the future. Would you have made the same decision?

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 (scope@safmls.org)

scope@safmls.org

Office 301-319-4073
 270-956-3822

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Editor's Corner

I know that there are incredibly talented laboratorians in the military medical field and you need to be heard! The Society Scope is a great way to show off the talent of you and your staff as well as raise important laboratory issues within our community. Your peers, consultants, and leaders all read the Scope...because they too are members of SAFMLS! SAFMLS is continuing to grow, especially now that we have partnered with CLMA, and this provides a wider audience within the laboratory community. Publishing an article is an excellent way to stand apart from your peers and spotlight the accomplishments and leadership involvement in the laboratory.

The articles do not have to be research in nature. If you look through our previous publications at www.safmls.org (Look for Society Scope on the left-hand of the www.safmls.org webpage), you will see there are articles about regulatory compliance, career corner, clinical applications and leadership development, for example. You can send an overview of your experience from deployment or a spotlight of an event from your current hospital. We love pictures!

There is no length format. If you have published your article in another publication, we can reprint as long as you request permission from the original publication. Don't forget that any article you submit for publication must be approved by your unit/base public affairs office. It is a fairly simple process with far reaching impact. Showcasing the hard work and accomplishments both at your home base and downrange is a great way to keep the SAFMLS organization growing and expanding.

So put those writing skills to the test! Let your voice and experience be heard! You can submit all articles to me at rochelle.hase.1@us.af.mil. I look forward to hearing from many of you.

Maj Rochelle Hase, USAF

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NEW DEADLINES for SAFMLS Society Scope:

Winter	Vol X Number 1	Deadline: 1 Dec
Summer	Vol X Number 2	Deadline: 1 Apr
Fall	Vol X Number 3	Deadline: 1 Aug

President's Message

Finding JOY in Work!

Lt Col Angela Hudson

YOU are the reason SAFMLS exists! Our dynamic organization is designed to enable you to gain valuable educational, scientific, and networking opportunities that will enhance your careers in the clinical laboratory science field. Through your educational growth, the military organization you work in reaps the benefits and in turn, the military members and their families receive the best medical care. Do you actively share your talents and knowledge with your clinical laboratory team and other medical professionals in your facility? Our primary goal in this field of medicine should be to make the patient experience the best it can be. What sets your facility apart from the civilian healthcare options in your area? Do patients want to come to your laboratory as the primary place they receive their care? Patient experience, patient safety and effective care are all related.

The three service Surgeon Generals have highlighted the goal of making military health care the preeminent health platform for our service members and their families by leaning forward in guiding military treatment facilities to become high reliability organizations. One of the ways to do this is by adopting programs like Trusted Care which aims to change the culture of how medical organizations approach patient care. It is a commitment to focus relentlessly on Zero Harm, to improve the well-being of patients, staff, and the communities we all lead and serve. The three cultural enablers of Trusted Care are: Respect for People, Duty to Speak Up, and Commitment to Resilience. Trusted care begins with each of us and should be a guiding principle of our SAFMLS organization and the teams we lead.

As clinical laboratory professionals and leaders we can be the change we want to see in our facilities. The first diagnostic clue a provider needs to treat a patient starts in the laboratory. Our people, our team of teams, are the tip of that needle. They, with or without our leadership, make decisions every day that impact the lives of our veterans, service members and their families. We need to be enable them by ensuring they have the resources, training and empowerment to make the best choices for our patients. Engaged leaders at all levels are critical to advancing patient-and family centered care. From the highest ranking military and civilian employees to the brand new Soldier, Sailor or Airman that is assigned to your organization. The motivation and job satisfaction of our most valuable asset, our people, is paramount to the success of the patient care experience. Poor staff engagement and morale is associated with lower quality of care, decreased patient satisfaction, and increased medical errors. Commit to addressing and improving "joy in work". This joy comes from experiencing meaning, purpose, control, camaraderie, and perceiving fairness in your professional and personal lives.

Your positive example matters. Be involved in SAFMLS and lead others to experience the benefits of associating with officer, enlisted and civilian professionals in their career field. Thank you for your care for our veterans, service members and their families. YOU make a difference!



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In late 2016 there was a call for applications to be the Vice President (VP) of SAFMLS. Who in their right mind as a 1LT would ever submit a packet for consideration for such a position within a large society like this? Well, guess what, I did! That's right. I might have been the only applicant (which was most likely). I might have been competing against 3, 4, 10, or 20 people, all outranking me, but I didn't care. I saw the future potential in having this experience, and made the "now" decision! Would you have made that same decision?

As Junior Officers we ARE the future of our force! We are the future because the decisions we make now make us the leaders of the future! We are molding and guiding the next generation of lab officers; that are probably enlisted right now. We must remember that there is always a future and we all impact it. How we impact that future is your choice, now! If you wait to make that decision, I promise you, someone will make it for you. Be that driving force in your organization that makes the future decisions now that will undoubtedly leave a legacy; leave your legacy.

CPT Jason L. Reeves
USA, MS
Vice President, SAFMLS

**DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY
CENTER FOR LABORATORY MEDICINE SERVICES
7700 ARLINGTON BOULEVARD
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22042**

Laboratory Systems Support Center (LSSC)

The Laboratory Systems Support Center (LSSC) provides Information Technology (IT) assistance in support of Department of Defense (DoD) laboratory operations.

The LSSC is a team of contract personnel with clinical laboratory expertise involving patient-centric information management systems that provide support to DoD medical laboratories in the Military Health System (MHS) Laboratory Information System (LIS) module, Composite Health Care System (CHCS), and related laboratory IT systems to include automation. LSSC supports and supplements on-site efforts to improve LIS functionality.

Some examples of LSSC support items are:

- Assist with lab file/table builds and updates, assist sites with file/table maintenance, and investigate file/table issues.
- Assist with file/table "projects" such as standardization of lab sections on tests and across platforms; update CPT codes; and clean up files.
- Provide file/table support for auto instrument interfaces.
- Provide technical support for Essentris lab mapping deployments.
- Create/modify ad hoc reports. Provide a mechanism to share ad hoc reports within the MTF laboratory community.
- Assist with resolving workload exceptions.
- Investigate lab interoperability and other interface errors.
- Conduct training (i.e. file/table development) and provide technical support documents (mechanism for sharing under development).
- Perform accession/transmittal list/shipping batch cleanup that can be accomplished through either fileman edits or functionality.
- Support projects for lab IT enhancement and improve operational efficiency.

All requests for LSSC support are processed as an email to the respective CLMS Service Director. Email requests need to include: Detailed description of the issue/request; steps that the laboratory has taken to mitigate the issue, and point of contact information to include email and phone number.