

American Medical Technologist 81st Educational Program and National Meeting in Chicago
Delegate Report 2019
by Lurleen Chivrell, RMA, RPT(AMT)

I would like to thank Juanita Stocke, MT, from the lovely State of Nevada for encouraging me to attend the National AMT meeting this year. I would also like to thank the entire American Medical Technologists for planning this awesome event in the windy city of Chicago, Illinois.

This was my 1st AMT National Meeting and I have got to tell you, it was AMAZING! I was blessed to learn alongside a diverse group of AMT peers. This gave me the opportunity to meet and network with other allied health professionals from a variety of different medical professions. I had the opportunity to meet some amazing people and I attended some inspiring educational sessions.

The opening ceremony and keynote address were held in the gorgeous Grand Ball Room of the Hilton Chicago. It was an absolutely beautiful and stunning architectural building. The keynote address was presented by Chip Madera, MS, CSP. Mr. Madera was a very motivational speaker; he was encouraging and comical and kept the audience laughing. His words of wisdom touched my heart when he spoke about his Disney World story. My son Tyler (now 27 years old) was a "Make A Wish" child, who got to experience all those wonderful smiling and caring characters at Disney World that Mr. Madera talked about. It brought tears to my eyes thinking of the memories of that that week-long vacation. I knew exactly what he was talking about. Mr. Madera talked about never getting bored with the basics:

1. Smile... positive energy flows out of you
2. Surprise and delight your patients
3. Create exceptional moments and go the extra mile

He recommended "It's never crowded on the extra mile" written by Zig Ziglar. Mr. Madera challenged all of the healthcare professions to do a little bit more... to be present in the moment, to focus and to create an exceptional experience with every patient. He also asked us to remember our why... To genuinely care about our patients, to be gentle with our touch. Mr. Madera taught me that my job as a Phlebotomist/ Medical Assistant is to create exceptional patient experiences for every patient every time. Mr. Madera stated "the secret ... is ATTITUDE! A good attitude is like peeing your pants... EVERYONE can see it but, you're the only one that can FEEL it." Mr. Madera really inspired me and I do believe that attitude makes a big difference.

The general session that pulled at my heart strings is the topic "A Glimpse into the world of Dementia" presented by Sharon Young, PAC Certified Dementia Consultant. I learned that Dementia is not a disease, Dementia is a group of symptoms that affect mental cognitive tasks such as memory and reasoning. Sharon taught us that dementia is a heart connection. The brain is shrinking and going backwards. We've got to learn how to get into their world. We have to break it down to them. They can't help what they're doing. Look at their body language, smells and sounds can trigger dementia patients. Communication is key. They can get combative; we have to learn how to slow our roll says Ms. Young, stating that we must learn how to take the person-centered care approach:

1. Take time to connect
2. Behaviors are a desire for communication
3. All action is meaningful
4. We must maintain and uphold the value of the person
5. Use compassion, gesturing and gentle touch

Sharon stated “it’s like watering a plant that has been wilting”. Play some music for the patients, talk to them, interact with them, engage them in meaningful activities that they can relate to. The more you can exercise the brain, it can slow the process but not stop it. I thought this was interesting: A normal brain weighs 3 pounds, but at the end of life, a dementia patient’s brain weighs 1 pound. We need to learn to see the world through their eyes.

At the National Meeting AMT delegate responsibilities are to learn specific requirements from our States Society leadership. I learned that the delegate must be credentialed prior to the Annual Business Meeting. I was credentialed on 07/01/2019. I attended so many meetings and learned about so many interesting topics. Just to name a few; the new delegates orientation, first time attendee orientation, general sessions, CE sessions, committee meetings, meet the candidate’s session, resolution presentation, town hall session, the western district meeting, the editor’s workshop, AMTIE and AMT annual business meetings. Let’s not forgot the awesome and fun welcome party and awards banquet. I had a blast. I think my favorite part of the welcome party was watching all my new friends and AMT family have a good time out on the dance floor—especially the little person dancing up a storm, he must have been about 2 years old. I am unsure of his age but if you were there you know what I’m talking about. The important thing is we all had fun.

We assembled at the designated place and time to enter the Annual Business Meeting with my State of Nevada delegates, I have to say this process was very interesting to be a part of. I’m getting tired just writing about all the meetings I attended in Chicago. But I am looking forward to attending next year’s American Medical Technologists 82nd Educational Program and National Meeting at the Hyatt Regency in breathtaking Albuquerque, New Mexico on July 13-17, 2020. I hope to see you all of you there and am looking forward to meeting new people!