

## Meet the Laboratorian - Lois Carmody

*Compiled by Josh Rowland, State Training Coordinator, NPHL*

Lois Carmody, BSMT(ASCP), is the Resource Specialist in Microbiology at the Alegent Core Laboratory in Omaha, Nebraska. The Alegent Core Laboratory does all microbiology testing for Alegent Health System Hospitals and Clinics in Eastern Nebraska and Western Iowa. Lois recently celebrated her 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a laboratorian.

### **What got you interested in pursuing a career in laboratory science?**

While attending high school in Mondamin, Iowa I was interested in Chemistry, Biology, History, and basketball. My interest in laboratory science started after the principal, who knew about this career field, said that I might enjoy the science and medicine field.

### **Where did you attend medical technology school?**

I attend the College of Saint Mary in Omaha. After my internship at Bergan Mercy Hospital in Omaha, I accepted a job there as a generalist.

### **How long have you worked in your present location?**

I have been working for 40 years, first as a generalist and currently in microbiology. Prior to Alegent Health merging with Bergan Mercy hospital, I worked my entire career at Bergan Mercy. I now work at the Alegent Health Core Laboratory as a microbiologist.

### **What is the biggest challenge you face in your job today?**

As a resource person in microbiology, my biggest challenge is to continue to encourage and train generalist technologists in microbiological procedures that they will be performing in the laboratory. Another challenge for laboratories is to use the most current technology available in a cost effective way.

### **What advice would you give to a first year medical technologist?**

As a new technologist, there are many opportunities in the laboratory field. The laboratory is a valuable part in patient care. One can work on front-line of laboratory testing in hospitals, use the career to specialize in a certain field of laboratory medicine. The laboratory technology education serves as a wonderful basis for continuing career development in such areas as medical school, pharmacy, nursing, public health, and others.

### **What is the single biggest change in the laboratory since you started?**

The biggest change in the laboratory has been advanced technological developments for the diagnosis of a variety of diseases. For example, learning about molecular microbiology is one of the current challenges for workers in the microbiology laboratory.

### **What do you like most about your job?**

The best part of my job is the people with whom I work and my job activities I perform in the Department of Microbiology to include the day-to-day reading and interpreting of cultures. I also enjoy working with infectious disease physicians by providing information that helps them manage their patients. Finally, I enjoy helping other technologists in the department with their questions.

