

ASSOCIATION OF GENETIC TECHNOLOGISTS  
GENETIC EDUCATORS AND MENTORS MEET AND GREET NOTES  
Tuesday, June 28, 2022  
Grand Rapids, MI  
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. (ET)

AGT Executive Director Denise Juroske Short moderated the event in Education Director Shree Gordia-Merchant's absence. Approximately 22 people attended.

- Denise Juroske Short welcomed all attendees to the meeting.
- A background on the GEMs group was provided.
- Education Director and Executive Director were introduced.
- Denise Juroske Short provided an update on the Cytogenetic Shortage discussions
  - ACMG in Nashville, TN from March 25, 2022
  - ACC on Hilton Head Island, SC from May 18, 2022
  - CGC in St. Louis, MO upcoming
- Denise Juroske Short reviewed Educational Program Updates
  - Virtual survey distributed on May 24, 2022
  - Virtual meeting held on June 2, 2022
- Denise Juroske Short provided summary of questions posed during the virtual meeting and opened the event up for further discussion.

Question 2:

  - Question 1: Are there any constraints or limitations that your educational program is facing, such as securing and retaining rotation sites, attracting more students? Has your program instituted any incentives to assist with these struggles?
  - Question 2: What still needs to be improved in the clinical genetics classroom and clinical genetics laboratory setting to effectively create and/or maintain and continue an environment in which students and new graduates further their knowledge-base and technical skills, so they can be an asset to the institution and to themselves? What curriculum or skills are missing from new graduates?
  - Question 3: Finally, how can AGT better assist this community?
    - Discussion responses included the following:
      - Need for technologists; positions are hard to fill
      - Suggested review of ASH and WHO guidelines
      - Some labs are using non-certified employees to perform portions of the jobs that will the use of technologists for only tasks requiring certification
      - Need to change the narrative that Cytogenetics is going away
      - Need for recruitment to make sure people know about the profession and what cytogenetic technologists do

- It was noted that in some case MGT and CGT program enrollment has decreased due to new areas such as coding
- The idea of cross-training was discussed and noted that the training time would have to increase from one year to two years
- The profession needs to be promoted in high schools and colleges
- There a was discussion on the difference between training and education
- Salary structure and the need for evaluation; increase needed
- Suggested recruitment to bachelor programs and job fairs; increase outreach in a way that would introduce and expose students to the lab
- Push for AGT advocacy and the creation of a tool that could be used to promote the profession at various levels
- Use AGT members for outreach across the country
- Stress clinical importance of profession; important diagnostic tool; patient connections
- University of Wisconsin karyotyping tool was suggested as a resource; University of Utah resources were also noted
- AGT upcoming Cytogenetic workshops were noted as an opportunity for learning Cytogenetic techniques
- Plan needed to train and recruit educators; track needed to move from technologist to educator
- The continuum from cytogenetics to molecular was described
- Need to motivate and change the attitude within the labs was discussed, along with the prime motivator being money
- Evaluation of the ASCP salary survey was recommended

Denise Juroske Short thanked everyone for coming and for their continued support of AGT. An email address was provided for further contact.