

September 2023

WASHINGTON BRANCH AALAS

SAVE THE DATE!
2024 District 8 Trade Fair



Venue: Sheraton Grand, Seattle
Dates: April 22nd-24th, 2024
Theme: Caring Toward Cures



DISTRICT 8 AALAS MEETING
APRIL 22 - 24, 2024
SEATTLE, WA

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CATCHING UP WITH WBAALAS

ELECTIONS ARE COMING

There are a lot of obvious benefits to volunteering with WBAALAS —a sense of accomplishment, giving back to the LAS community, gaining perspective, and meeting new people. But did you know that volunteering is a **RESUME BOOSTER**? In these times of slim budgets and limited promotions, volunteering with WBAALAS offers you the opportunity to build transferrable skills!

Here are 3 reasons volunteering with WBAALAS is a smart career move:

- 1. Develop new skills or sharpen existing ones.** Volunteering can be a way to get training and practice in areas your current role doesn't provide.
 - Project management: organizing events or fundraising efforts are highly desirable skills
 - Communication skills: consistently ranked in the top ten desirable skills by employer surveys
 - Managing a team: many projects require a group effort, and a leader to coordinate it
 - Accounting skills: familiarity with accounting enables you to manage at higher levels in a company
- 2. Develop professional relationships.** You never know who you'll meet volunteering with WBAALAS. Volunteering helps you develop new networks, through which you will hear about job openings, training opportunities, and networking events.
- 3. Add experience.** Volunteer experience is professional experience and it belongs on your resume. Using your time to gain new skills and help your professional community highlights your willingness to jump in, learn new things, and do more.

Visit <http://www.wbaalas.org/contact/> and inquire about any positions on the upcoming ballot to learn more.

OPEN POSITIONS

- **President Elect** - Becomes president the following year, leads when the President is not available.
- **Treasurer** - Manages branch membership and bank account. Elected two-year term
- **Technician Branch Representative** - Share technicians' activities, ideas, and suggestions with other branches and the national office.
- **Board Member 2** - Helps plan branch activities and support the other board positions. Elected two-year term

CATCHING UP WITH WBAALAS

SUMMER PICNIC EVENT

Thank you to everybody who attended the 2023 Member Appreciation Picnic at Golden Gardens



Thank you to our sponsors who helped make this event awesome for all in attendance.

CATCHING UP WITH WBAALAS

Winner Winner Chicken Dinner!

This year WBAALAS was excited to offer a scholarship for a technician to attend the National AALAS Meeting. This year the award went to Claire B. From Seattle Children's Research Institute. Congratulations Clair!



Claire B , LVT, LAT
Veterinary Technician II
Seattle Children's Research Institute



This person was nominated because they are a valuable part of the Office of Animal Care in their role of Veterinary Technician II.

They have added value to the training program by assisting with creating species-specific training. They have also played a key role in implementing swine surgical program at the new facility by setting up the supplies, crash cart, and medication list; streamlining surgery set up, animal prep, and recovery; and modifying a variety of documents to suit the needs of the vet and Office of Animal Care staff.

They continually provide feedback and suggestions to improve their electronic records and use of Power Apps to improve efficiency for vet staff and the Office of Animal Care department as a whole.

Additionally, they look for new treatment options for common issues, such as dermatitis and eye issues.

Scholarship Sponsored by:
Inotiv, Kizer Learning, and Allentown

CATCHING UP WITH WBAALAS

Ron Orta Member of the year and Bette J Varnnam Technician of the Year



Pictured above: Lauryn N.

The recipient of this award is someone who can be trusted with the more complicated and sensitive work. They consistently excel in areas of animal care, including caring for rats on behavior studies, constant collaboration with the research groups, and adjusting to frequently changing assignments. They are the first to offer a helping hand, no matter how big the task may be, and always goes out of their way to make sure that all new staff are made to feel welcome and part of the team.

They always push their team to think about what they do with a mind toward improvement for the animals under their care. A prime example of this was when they observed an increase in the number of rats found having seizures during cage changing. They escalated the matter to the veterinary staff, did some investigation, found the cause, and was able to come up with a solution to mitigate the seizures. Congratulations to Lauryn N. for winning the **Bette J. Varnnam Technician of the Year Award!**

The recipient of this award is someone who is truly dedicated to the care of laboratory animals. They have been in the industry for many years and aren't shy about taking on new challenges. This person has volunteered their personal time by joining the WBAALAS Board a couple years ago and has been working hard to provide educational opportunities for others in the lab animal field, including but not limited to last year helping plan our first in-person Trade Fair since COVID and leading our technician roundtable events.

This person is consistently one of the first to accept a task to help out others, and most recently has accepted to take on the role of President-Elect when our current President-Elect leaves in November. Next year they will assume the role of WBAALAS President, and will take on a new challenge of hosting an amazing D8 meeting for you all to attend. Congratulations to Melissa R. for winning the **Ron Orta Member of the Year Award**

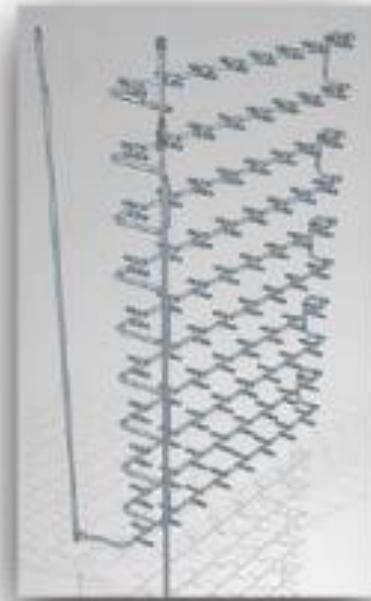


Pictured Above: Melissa R.



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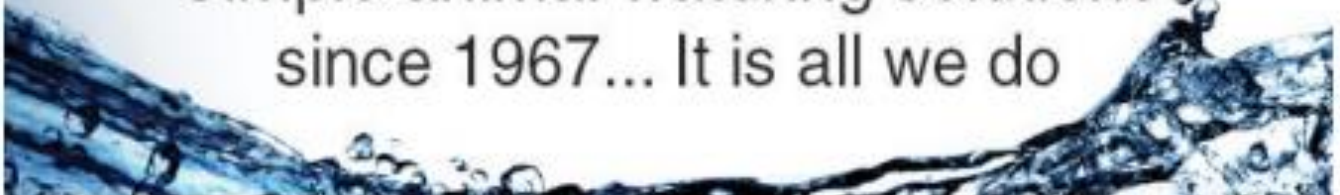
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HeroRAT UPDATE

Your HeroRAT, Carolina, remains on her dedicated mission to detect cases of tuberculosis (TB) in Tanzania. Using her highly attuned sense of smell she carefully checked **2,004 samples** over the last month, with an **accuracy rate of 83.6%**, which allowed an additional 49 patients to be identified for vital tuberculosis treatment.

If left untreated, the mortality rate of TB disease is significant, at approximately 50%. However, of patients with access to the currently recommended treatment of a 6-month course of anti-TB medication, around 85% of individuals are cured. So, Carolina's work is key to identifying missed cases of tuberculosis and saving lives.



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Carolina continues to engage in exercise sessions held in shaded environments, allowing her ample space to play and explore. To make these sessions even more enjoyable, we have enriched her environment with a diverse range of items. These include custom-built running wheels, sand flooring, sisal ropes, tree branches, and wooden ramps and platforms. Carolina absolutely loves these enrichments, as they enable her to express her natural climbing, digging, and running behaviors.

We are delighted to share that Carolina's well-being is thriving, thanks to your generous support and dedication. The research conducted by a student intern revealed that her favorite activities include climbing on the branches, running on the wheels, and exploring the rock arrangements. These enrichments bring Carolina immense joy during her much-deserved downtime.

HeroRAT UPDATE

5 YEAR-OLD NILHAM'S JOURNEY TO HEALTH

In the battle against TB, APOPO's HeroRATs proved to be a beacon of hope for 5 year-old Nilham, who lives in Dar es Salaam with her Aunt and cousin. Concerned by her persistent cough, Nilham's Aunt, her main caretaker, sought medical assistance, leading them to the hospital. Her sputum sample came to APOPO and the HeroRATs detected TB in Nilham's sample that her clinic was unable to find, highlighting the extraordinary impact our team of tuberculosis detection rats, including Carolina, have in diagnosing the disease.



Guided by local healthcare professionals, Nilham embarked on a treatment plan supported by the government's provision of free medication. Over time, her condition has improved significantly, emphasizing the effectiveness of this collaborative effort. APOPO's unwavering dedication and the unique abilities of our HeroRATs offer a vital solution in regions where TB diagnosis can be challenging, underscoring the importance of their ongoing work.

Read more about Nilham's diagnosis and road to full recovery, as told by her aunt.

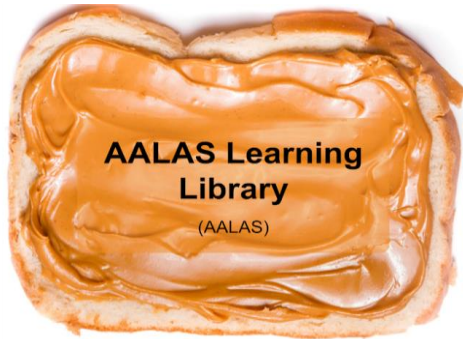
[Read little Nilham's story](#)

Your generous support brings healing, hope, and new opportunities to those affected by TB. Thank you for making a difference and being an invaluable part of APOPO's journey.

The APOPO Team ❤️

LEARNING WITH WBAALAS

Washington Branch AALAS offers members access to **TWO** learning portals!



The AALAS Learning Library provides training that is essential for technicians, veterinarians, managers, IACUC members, and investigators working with animals in a research or education setting.

Washington Branch AALAS is proud to be able to offer free access to the AALAS Learning Library to all Branch members!

Research, husbandry, and veterinary staff can earn continuing education credits to maintain certification and licensure (up to 34 courses approved by AAVSB for RACE CEs). Check out the over 238 courses available by downloading the [course catalog](#).

ALAT course

The WBAALAS ALAT Certification Study Course is a 16-week, paced course conducted fully online (on-demand option available).

LAT course

The WBAALAS LAT Certification Study Course is a 7-week, paced course conducted fully online (on-demand option available).

LATG course

The WBAALAS LATG Certification Study Course is fully on-demand, fully online.

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CATCHING UP WITH DISTRICT 8



D8 Trustee Updates June, 2023



How has it already been 8 months?!?

When I was elected to represent District 8 as Trustee I had NO IDEA how quickly things would move. I'm beyond embarrassed to have not reached out before now to thank you for this incredible opportunity. Since November I have had the honor of being appointed to AALAS' Educational Resource Committee. The ERC has been quite busy updating the LATG manual. It's been fascinating to see 'behind the scenes' of the process, and even more thrilling, be asked to help with the edits. I can't wait to see the finished product!

Has your Branch updated its website lately? A quick look shows several need to update their Officers & Board for 2023 and at least one (San Diego) has a link that's not working..



Visiting the AALAS offices for the first time during ILAM was incredible!

Did you make it to ILAM? How was it? Do you want to go and need some motivation? Reach out to me for some help!

2024 District 8 Meeting *We need YOUR help!*

The 2024 District 8 meeting will be held in the Seattle area. We have a serious challenge facing the NW region...a serious lack of volunteers. I'm sure this doesn't come as a surprise, but our local branches don't have the numbers of the past. Most of the Board members have been active participants for years and we're just not gaining the numbers needed to run meetings.

To put it bluntly – we need YOU.

Who? Anyone working with laboratory animals, equipment, or science within ALL of District 8!

Why? Your voice matters! We want to host a meeting representative of the needs and interests of our local communities.

How? Until the week of the meeting, the majority of our meetings will be online, allowing you to participate from your home or work.

What? We're looking for ideas for talks, for give-aways, for social events. No idea is silly...we want to hear them all. We need help organizing the poster session, mapping the venue, planning the food. ***Come play with us and be the change you want to see in these meetings!***

Send me an email and I'll get you directed to the Planning Committee marshalk@ohsu.edu {note – autocorrect likes to add an L, not helpful}

CATCHING UP WITH DISTRICT 8

AALAS D8 TRUSTEE MESSAGE



Alt images: 1 image of front-facing white rat. 1 image of a black BB8 in front of the Millennium Falcon. 1 image of woman in Disney ears in front of a Disney rainbow ear mural. 1 image of a woman seated on the floor with a New Zealand White rabbit in a seated restraint in front.

**Upcoming meetings?
I'd love to try and
attend!**

**Reach out via email
and let me know when
and where so I can add
it to my calendar!**

marshalk@ohsu.edu

**See you in
Salt Lake
City!**

**October 22-
26, 2023**

A bit about me:

I came into AALAS in the 1990s, when I was a husbandry technician at Genetics Institute (later to become Pfizer) in Boston. I fell in love with the organized chaos of the cage wash room and was often rewarded for completing my duties quickly by being given animal rooms to change. I shifted from GI to MIT as they were willing to accommodate my college class schedule. It was there that I met Macaques for the first time and lost my heart to Alex (African Green) and Marcus (Pigtail). Knowing that there was a primate center in Oregon (ONPRC) I applied for a position once I graduated. Sadly, that dream wouldn't come true for nearly a year as I'd committed to working for MIT through the summer, and then at the VAMC in Portland once I moved.

It was worth it!

27 years later and I'm still here, still loving ONPRC, and still grateful to have found my way into this career. My focus is on training, teaching, and mentoring. I'm two terms into my Master's degree (!!!!) where my major is Educational Technology. Through this class I've had the privilege of developing the OALAS Website, as well as learn more practical elements of Learner accessibility.

CATCHING UP WITH NATIONALS



74TH N A T I O N A L M E E T I N G
OCTOBER 22-26 | SALT LAKE CITY, UT

Each fall since 1950, the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science has held its annual National Meeting. During the five days of the meeting, members and nonmembers come together to enjoy the workshops, lectures, poster sessions, and exhibits. The program is designed to have topics relevant to the entire membership. Exhibitors have an opportunity to interact with AALAS members from the academic community, research institutions, government organizations, and commercial companies. The AALAS National Meeting is the largest gathering in the world of professionals concerned with the production, care, and use of laboratory animals.



Salt Lake City, Utah is known for being part of the old “Wild West!” That’s why the AALAS Foundation is challenging contestants to paint/decorate a wooden 11” cowboy boot – an official wooden cowboy boot will be shipped to contestants upon registration and payment of entry fee.

IN THE COMMUNITY

GetReal!®

Episode 27: Sanctuary Straight Talk

Groups opposed to research with animals insist that studies with monkeys are irrelevant to human health and disease, and that all of these animals should be retired to sanctuaries. Those who believe these groups consider this to be a perfect plan; but is it? Surely a sanctuary would be an ideal place for retired research monkeys to spend the rest of their lives; but would it? Scott Kubisch, Director and Founder of Peaceable Primates Sanctuary, will lay out the facts for us today...on GetReal!

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IN THE COMMUNITY

INTRODUCING LAB RAT CHAT



Lab Rat Chat is a podcast dedicated to providing the public with factual information about the importance of humane and ethical animal research. It was made possible through the Michael D. Hayre Fellowship in Public Outreach, which is sponsored by Americans for Medical Progress. Lab Rat Chat was created by AMP Hayre Fellow Jeff Marshall, a student at the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine. In each episode of the podcast, Jeff and his cohost Danielle Dady, Senior Research Compliance Coordinator at Old Dominion University, examine the importance and applicability of animal research to both veterinary and human medicine. The podcast features easy-to-understand, engaging conversations with a variety of guests including veterinarians, animal care and welfare specialists and researchers.

You can listen to Lab Rat Chat below or on [iTunes](#), [Spotify](#), [TuneIn](#), [Stitcher](#), or wherever you get your podcasts. You can also [find it at Buzzsprout](#). Help increase the visibility of this podcast by listening and leaving a review on iTunes. Thanks in advance for helping to increase opportunities for the public to engage in productive conversations about the important role of animals in research.



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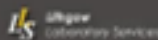
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