

# THE Importance of Caring

MAY 2019

my journey into health care



## Elizabeth Alexander, MT (ASCP)

### LABORATORY DIRECTOR

A drive to do research led Elizabeth Alexander, MT (ASCP) to a career in health care, but chance led her to Columbus Community Hospital (CCH).

Alexander has worked at CCH for nearly 30 years. She started at CCH as a laboratory generalist and then moved into the transfusion services supervisor position before she became CCH's laboratory director about 11 years ago.

But before she came to CCH, Alexander had envisioned a slightly different career path for herself.

Alexander had completed the medical technology program at Wayne State College – which included three years at the college and a one-year internship at Research Medical Center in Kansas City, Missouri.

**“Research was where I originally thought I would go out of the college program,”** Alexander said. **“I thought I would be doing research on cancer studies and other medical research at larger facilities that they have in the larger cities.”**

The year after her internship, Alexander put that plan into action when she went to work at the Community Blood Center of Greater Kansas City.

**“They had an immunology/virology department and that’s when HIV was**

**newly identified,”** Alexander said. **“We performed studies in the blood center. I wanted to do research and work on projects of that sort.”**

Then chance took Alexander in a different direction.

**“I ended up here at the hospital when my husband got a job in Columbus and the most obvious place for a medical technologist would be a hospital facility,”** she said. **“So, I joined the hospital back then and we started having a family and... I’m happy with my job, so we stayed in the community and this many years later, now I’m the director.”**

In her position as laboratory director, Alexander's basic duties involve overseeing the day-to-day operations of that department and managing the phlebotomy and technology staff. In her position, Alexander works with other hospital departments, physicians and patients – solving any problems that may arise and ensuring that doctors and patients get the best quality laboratory testing.

As with most jobs in health care, Alexander said no two days in her job are the same.

**“Every day is different. You’re never going to go to work and do the same thing every day. It’s always going to be something different,”** she said. **“Every day is a challenge and I enjoy challenges.”**

Alexander handles these challenges with the help of her staff.

**“My job is a little part of the lab, but my staff members – their dedication and their commitment to our patients – is what really drives our laboratory and makes it a great place to work,”** she said. **“I work with a great team.”**

Alexander also appreciates the support she gets from CCH leadership. She said CCH prioritizes sending employees to professional conferences to ensure they are up-to-date with all of their standards. The hospital also invests in the latest technology and testing methods.

**“We have a good support system to provide us with what we need to do the best we can every day,”** she said.

Though Alexander's work – and health care work in general – is challenging, Alexander believes the rewards make it worth it.

**“The reward is when you go home at the end of the day and you know that the job you did affected so many people out there,”** she said. **“It’s a great day when I can go home knowing that I’ve helped someone, whether it’s a coworker I helped, or another department or a patient. Those are the days that make it great.”**

For more information on Alexander, or CCH's laboratory, visit our website at [www.columbushosp.org](http://www.columbushosp.org).