

ASHI Member Spotlight



Member Spotlight



Name & Credentials: Crystal Usenko, PhD

Title: Director-in-Training

Employment: Northwestern University

Graduated from: Baylor University

How long have you been an ASHI member? 2 years

Where was the ASHI Meeting held the first time you attended? My first ASHI meeting was in San Francisco in 2017. Being new to the field, I was impressed by how supportive and encouraging the people were. Even after the meeting, so many people have been willing to take the time to teach, mentor, and answer questions. Everyone is working to help others, and that's an amazing community to be part of.

What made you decide to work in HLA? Moving into HLA was a switch from my graduate training and research interests, but I love it! I spent almost two years in the lab learning the assays. Now, as a DIT, I am able to focus on learning the nuance and complexity of the field, and how those concepts may apply to some of our more complicated cases. I enjoy the clinical focus, but am also excited about the potential to be involved in research.

Most rewarding aspect: As everyone says, it's all about the patients. Knowing that the work you are doing will help someone is very rewarding. I was able to observe a living donor transplant and was struck by what an incredible gift one person gave to another.

Fun fact: It's the simple things that are the best - I love hiking, working in the garden, and playing with my kids.

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