The Association of Clinical Scientists is a professional organization with approximately 800 members who have a M.D. or Ph.D. degree and have an interest in clinical science and laboratory medicine. It was organized approximately 40 years ago as a “Clinical Science Club” with informal meetings and became a non-profit scientific organization in 1957. There are regular semi-annual meetings with a Spring meeting that consists of scientific presentations by members and guest speakers and an applied seminar and workshop in the Fall. A bimonthly journal, *Annals of Clinical and Laboratory Science*, has been published as its official journal for the past 20 years. The organization and leadership of the Association has been primarily due to the skills and personal contributions of F. William Sunderman, M.D., Ph.D. who, as a role model, has been a significant factor in the growth and continued vigor of the organization.

As the current leadership moves from its current presence and a developing legacy to the inevitable memorials and memories of the future, the question arises as to what are the unique or unusual attributes that have contributed to and sustained this relatively small, but dynamic professional organization. It has always provided a peer or equal relationship of physicians and the clinical laboratory scientist with a doctoral degree; furthermore, the workshops for the development or honing of technical or laboratory skills have been an integral part of the Association’s activities from its very onset. But what are the truly unique characteristics of the Association and its members?

The majority of members are practicing clinical scientists with varying amounts of educational and research activities or experiences, but with no Nobel prize winners! All are interested in their own continuing education and new developments in laboratory medicine. As a group, the members exhibit inquisitiveness and a sense of curiosity with a pursuit of excellence in all of their activities. Many discipline themselves to present reviews and their research at the meetings of the Association, many times responding to the sustained and frequently not so subtle prodding of Dr. Sunderman in his role as the Association’s Director of Education! In general, the members have strong clinical interests with the majority having people-oriented personalities and a focus not only on science and research in its relation to the practice of medicine, but also on one of the highest attributes of our Judeo-Christian tradition, caring for people, i.e., our patients and our colleagues. This characteristic has resulted in the relatively small size of the organization as an acceptable modification of a clinical science club that has maintained a personal fellowship aura of its membership rather than the impersonality of a large national group.

Another, but similar, attribute of the group includes the cultural interests that are an integral part of each meeting, i.e., a day or afternoon free with no competing events to visit the communities’ attractions, cultural interests, or facilities of the area and the historical aspects of the host city. This is designed for the members of the Association, and not only their spouses as is the usual practice.
of many other scientific organizations. Equally important and unique are the musicals, recitals, chamber music, etc. presented by the Association members, spouses, and occasionally a guest as a traditional part of an evening program. All of these reflect the unusual characteristics of the Association, the merging of the science in laboratory medicine and the arts or humanities of our cultural base or heritage. The biannual field trips to the Bermuda Biological Station for Research are an example of an activity that attracts those members who are interested in the ecological aspects of an unusual microcosm that represents world wide issues or concerns and at the same time provides the opportunity to cherish the fellowship of colleagues and their spouses.

In summary, the Association consists of a group of clinical scientists who are intellectually curious or inquisitive, care for people and their colleagues, cherish the fellowship of small groups, pursue personal excellence in their practice, discipline themselves to share their thoughts and research with their fellow professionals by both the oral and written word and support an unique mixture of science and the humanities in their programs which is a reflection of their interest in the arts of living and the science of medicine.

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