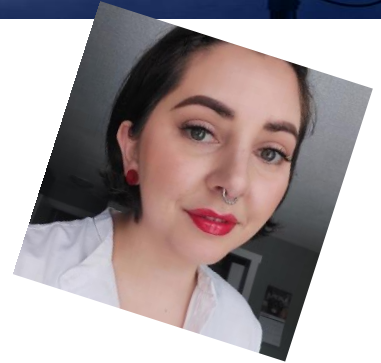




Meaghan Kidd



1. What professional designations do you have, what school and city did you attend for your lab education, and what year did you graduate?

I have a BSc in Biology from UVic in my hometown of Victoria. After working for a few years in an unrelated area I decided I wanted to start my career in something that would derive more satisfaction. I embraced my inner nerd and went to BCIT in Burnaby, graduating in 2018 with a diploma in Med Lab Science. My first day working for VIHA was almost exactly 3 years ago on June 13.

2. What lab did you first start working in as a new graduate? What part of the lab?

My first lab position was at the Saanich Peninsula Hospital (SPH), a lovely community hospital with an attached long term care facility. As a smaller hospital, the lab is staffed by just a few techs and lab assistants and is able to support basic chemistry, hematology, and transfusion needs. I did night shifts as the sole employee in the lab, doing every task involved in getting results out after the doctor has ordered it. One time a nurse said I often had lovely glowy skin and I was flattered but informed her it was just sweat from trying to get all my work done.

3. After you graduated and started working, what surprised you most about your profession?

The most surprising thing was the frequency of being called a vampire by strangers. Besides this, being immersed in the emergency room at SPH revealed more of the whole picture of how many people are involved in a health care team. Even for a small hospital, it is people like the cleaning staff and unit clerks working alongside the ordering physicians and nurses that keep the place running. For our contribution, the lab assistants are so essential and undervalued, dealing daily with non-stop phone calls, paperwork, and potentially unruly patients.

4. What advice would you give to current students?

My advice is to support each other. I went back to school with this competitive mentality leftover from high school but shifted that quickly. Think of your classmates as your future colleagues and the people who will be doing your loved one's bloodwork. In the real lab, we are often creating dialog about

troubleshooting, interpreting procedures, and giving constructive criticism. I think explaining a concept to someone is a great way to learn and solidify your own knowledge.

5. What do you like to do in your spare time?

The pandemic has really cut down on the time I usually spend talking about blood with(/at) my dear friends. These days I have embraced the quarantine lifestyle through copious online shopping, pretending to enjoy exercising, jigsaw puzzling, volunteering, and generally annoying my lovely boyfriend. I can't wait until it is safe enough to return to supporting local bands where I can discuss the need for blood donation in between sets.

6. If you could live anywhere, where would that be?

I now work down the hallway from where I was born, here at the Victoria General Hospital, but I am okay with it. I love Victoria and all my friends and family here. If I could bring said people with me I would live in one of the Nordic nations where the politics are progressive, higher education is free, and stroopwafels are readily available.

7. What is the funniest thing that has happened to you at work?

I have had some funny-after-the-fact encounters with patients in the emergency room which have solidified my personal resolve to never try meth. Besides that, I have a lot of fun with my coworkers. Especially during these days of quarantine, the people at work are the people you may spend time with the most. Our recent idea is to create an MLT dance troupe, complete with a costume designer, Dance Mom, and hype-man. Our current favourite name is The Pipettes but suggestions are welcome.