

IN PROFILE

Biomed Reaches Out To Spanish- Speaking Students



Carlos Villafane

When Carlos Villafane, CBET, got into the biomed profession, he noticed there were hardly any study materials in Spanish. So Villafane, a BMET III with Baycare Health System in Tampa, FL, decided to write one himself. In this issue of AAMI News, he talks about his desire to spread the word about the healthcare technology management field.

AAMI News: Why did you decide to put out a textbook in Spanish?

Carlos Villafane: When I was studying biomedical engineering, information about the field in my native language of Spanish was lacking. All our books were in English and they were often limited to theory.

I decided to write a book that explained what the biomedical field entails, with real-life examples of a biomedical equipment technician's (BMET) job. I tried to explain things in a very simplified way, so that a new student or someone completely outside of the healthcare technology management field could easily understand. I also translated the book to English.



Carlos Villafane works on a piece of equipment at his facility in Tampa, FL. Villafane wrote a biomed textbook in Spanish to help increase the amount of Spanish-only resources.

AN: You've traveled to Puerto Rico to talk about the healthcare technology management field and collaborated to write articles for a Mexican science magazine. Why have you worked so hard to spread the word about biomed in Spanish-speaking countries?

CV: BMETs do a really important job. Surgeons can't perform a procedure safely without a

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biomed certifying their equipment. We work with equipment that can save or maintain lives. As it happens here in the United States, many people, including healthcare professionals in Spanish-speaking countries, still don't know what we do. Some people have called our department believing that we work on the disposal of biomedical waste! That's why I try to inform everyone about our field through books, magazines, and using the Internet. Education is a powerful tool that we can use for our profession to gain the respect that it deserves.

AN: From your time talking to local schools, what is the biggest misconception that students have about the profession?

CV: I think the biggest misconception is the idea that they will become "bench technicians," and repair medical equipment all day in a shop. Our job description is much bigger than that, and our field is evolving quickly.

There are so many opportunities for development. You can specialize in digital imaging, laboratory equipment, lasers, surgical equipment, computers and networking, and so on. Our feedback is even required from hospital administrators when purchasing capital equipment. When students realize how broad the opportunities are, they feel much more motivated.

AN: You are the webmaster for the Bay Area Association of Medical Instrumentation. What do you think is the biggest flaw an association's website can make?

CV: The biggest flaw is not having a clear vision/mission statement. If you visit an organization's website that does not explain clearly what their goals are or how they help the community then that website is useless. Informing the community about the importance of our healthcare technology management field should be a priority. ■

MEMBERS ON THE MOVE

- **Dennis Duck, CBET**, has been promoted to senior biomedical equipment technician (BMET) at Baylor Health Care System Biomedical Technology Services located in Plano, TX. He will support critical care departments and manage onsite projects. Duck was previously a BMET, and joined Baylor four years ago after retiring from the U.S. Navy.
- **Charles Sidebottom** has been nominated to serve a three-year term on the Board of Directors for ASTM International, formerly known as the American Society for Testing and Materials. ASTM develops international standards on a wide range of materials and products, such as plastics and paper. Sidebottom, the director of corporate standards for Medtronic, Inc. in Minneapolis, MN, will bring a healthcare perspective to the board. He is also the immediate past chair of the AAMI Board of Directors and will officially join the ASTM Board in January.
- **Costel Rizescu, PhD**, has been named vice president of biomedical technologies at MediSend International in Dallas, TX. Rizescu designed the curriculum for the MediSend Biomedical Training Program, where he serves as director. In his new capacity, Rizescu will continue to create innovative training programs, including MediSend's new Advanced Technologies and Clinical Lab Sciences Programs. ■



Dennis Duck, CBET



Charles Sidebottom

NEW MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

For a complete list of new members, see www.aami.org/publications/AAMINews/members.html.

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