

Laboratory Leadership: A Look Beyond the Bench

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Director of Laboratory Services, East Alabama Health

East Alabama
Health 



EAST ALABAMA HEALTH

900
Camp Auburn
Road

East Alabama Medical Center

Main Campus-Opelika, AL



Clinical Lab – 5
departments



Anatomic Pathology
Lab



Lab Outreach



EAMC | Lanier

Valley, AL

❖ Clinical Lab

❖ Chemistry,
Hematology/UA/Coag, Blood
Bank, limited Microbiology



Freestanding ED *Auburn, AL*

- ❖ STAT Lab
- ❖ Chemistry, Hematology/UA/Coag



Spencer Cancer Center *Opelika, AL*

- ❖ Limited Chemistry and Hematology services to serve the patient needs



Education

B.S.
Laboratory
Technology,
Auburn
University

2005

St. Vincent's
School of
Medical
Technology,
Jacksonville,
FL

2006

B.S. Medical
Technology,
Auburn
University

2006

Executive
MBA, Auburn
University
Montgomery

2012

Experience

Generalist

Chemistry
Supervisor

Manager,
Laboratory
Outreach

Manager,
Clinical
Laboratory

Director of
Laboratory
Services

2006–2007

2007–2014

2014–2016

2016–2021

2021-
Present

Objectives

- Describe my responsibilities as Lab Manager
- Identify challenges when moving into Lab Manager position
- Discuss increased responsibilities as Lab Director
- Leadership qualities

Generalist

2006–2007

Chemistry
Supervisor

2007–2014

Manager,
Laboratory
Outreach

2014–2016

Manager,
Clinical
Laboratory

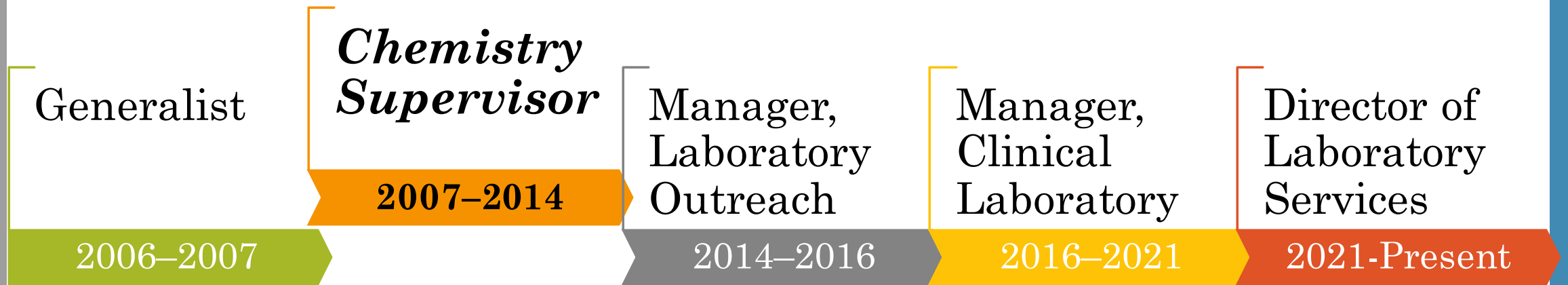
2016–2021

Director of
Laboratory
Services

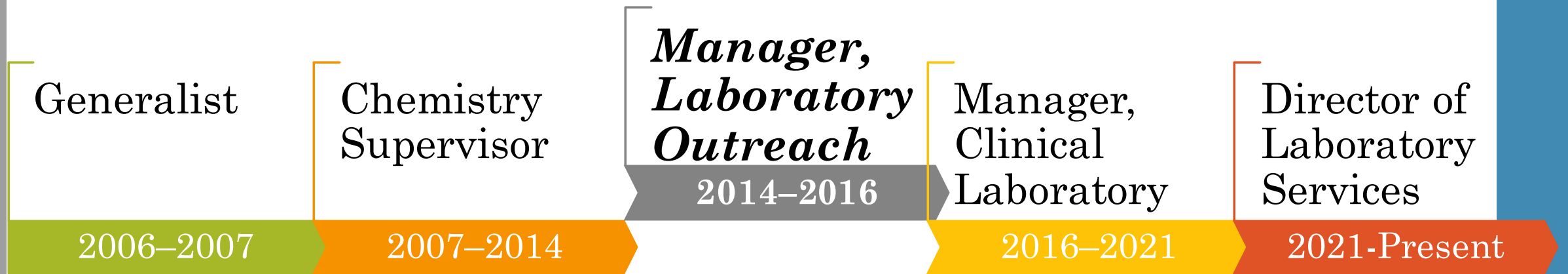
2021-Present

My Journey Begins...

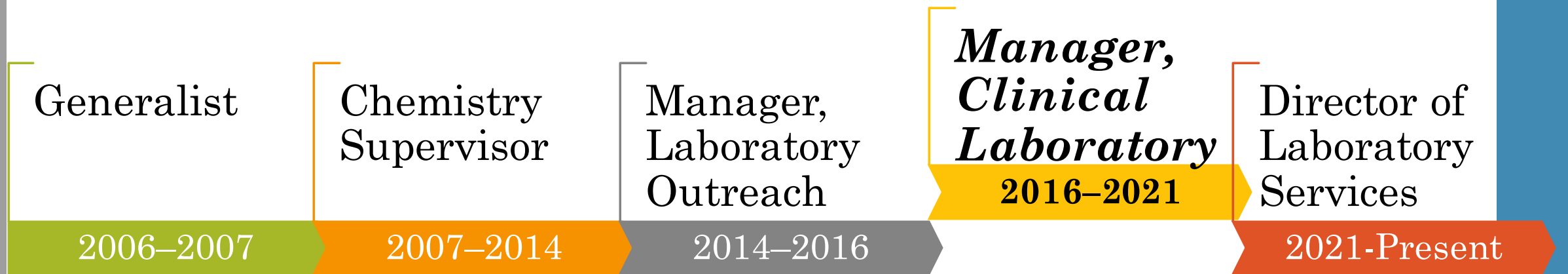
- Trained throughout all departments of the lab
- Primary departments worked were Chemistry and Blood Bank
- Learned a lot during this time



- Responsible for day-to-day operations of Chemistry department
 - Policies and procedures
 - Weekly/monthly QC review
 - Proficiency testing
 - Monthly and quarterly reports
- Working supervisor
- New instrumentation and automation system
- Leaned on “seasoned” co-workers



- Stepped out of comfort zone of lab testing
- Responsible for the Lab Outreach department
- Small department but very important part of lab services and East Alabama Medical Center (approx. 15 employees)
- Challenges along the way
 - Brand new staff
 - Decentralized staff



- Moved back into the clinical lab; able to spend some time with retiring manager
- Big shoes to fill
- Had support of staff, however, there were challenges when taking on this role
- Allowed me to network with other departments/leadership among the organization
- Was able to work alongside previous Lab Director to get better understanding of what that position entailed

Responsibilities

Responsible for entire lab (approx. 40 direct reports) and scheduling

CAP Accreditation

Quality Assessment/Improvement
(QA/QI)

- Compiling several reports, both monthly and quarterly, including transfusion medicine audits, blood utilization, and quarterly summaries
- Leading PI/QA meetings
- Track and monitor key metrics

Responsibilities

Track and monitor various HR related items

- Ongoing education as required by The Joint Commission (TJC)
- Attendance reports
- Organizational competencies

Personnel

- Hiring employees
- Employee appraisals/evaluations
- Counseling employees
- Administering disciplinary actions

Challenges

Responsible for entire lab (approx. 40 direct reports)

Staffing

Time management

Not pleasing everyone

Generalist

2006–2007

Chemistry
Supervisor

2007–2014

Manager,
Laboratory
Outreach

2014–2016

Manager,
Clinical
Laboratory

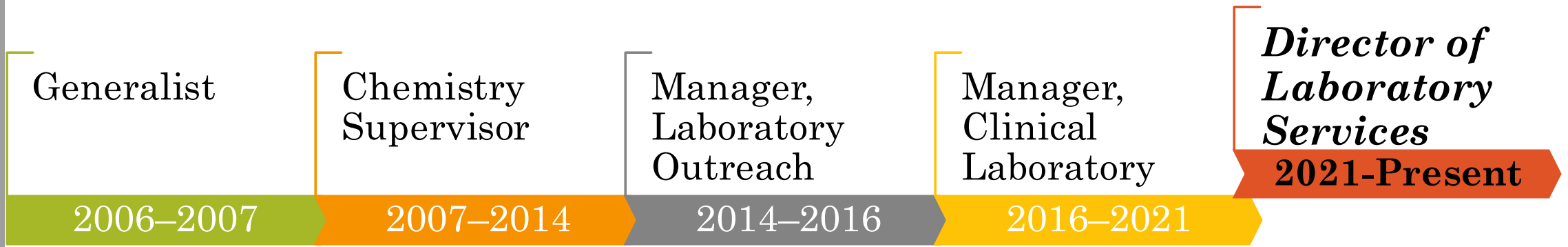
2016–2021

*Director of
Laboratory
Services*

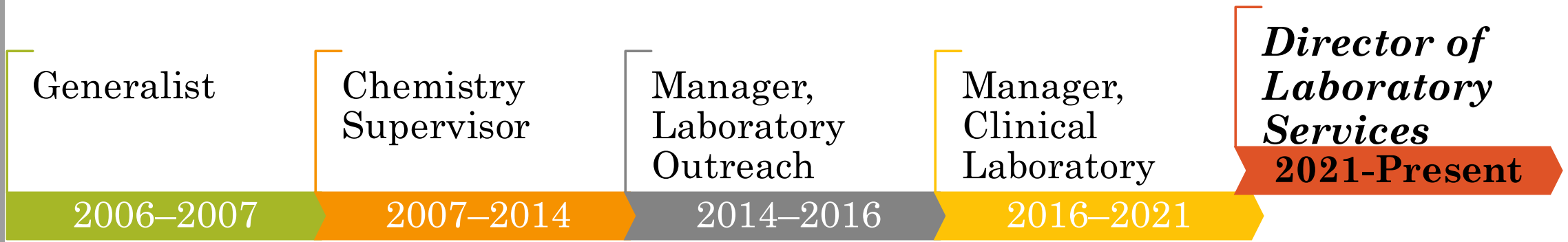
2021–Present

- Lab Services includes:
 - Four clinical labs
 - One anatomic pathology lab
 - Lab Outreach services
- 3 direct reports and approximately 100 employees
 - Weekly meetings





- Responsible for financials across service line
 - Monitoring monthly financial reports and report key elements to VP
 - Building capital request list annually
 - Annual budgeting with accounting and VP
 - Submitting invoices for payment
- Participate on several committees
 - Infection Control
 - ED Patient Experience
 - Policy and Procedures (as needed)
 - Antimicrobial Stewardship
 - Stroke Team



- Lots of emails and meetings, both in-person and virtual!!
- Work with various lab vendors on current instrumentation, new projects, contracts, etc.
- Monthly division meeting
- Monthly offsite lab meetings
- Monitor and track statistics
 - Biweekly and monthly volumes for all labs

Challenges:

- Plate got A LOT bigger
- Learning to say “no”
- Anatomic Pathology

Qualities

Communication

- Honest and clear
- Helps with engagement

Patient First

- Make decisions based on patient care
- Patient safety and quality are top priority

Listening

- Make staff feel heard
- Promotes buy-in

Adaptable

- Must embrace change
- Healthcare changes constantly

Thank you!

Questions or comments welcome!

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