President's Message

Colleagues,

If you’re like me, you have a lot of things on your To Do list before the end of this week and next. It’s that time of year.

While we’re busy finishing out 2016, though, I wanted to make sure you were aware that registration is NOW OPEN for the 2017 ASCLD Leadership Academy. The ASCLD Leadership Academy has been a resounding success the last three years, and this year is looking to be no exception. We already have quite a bit of interest from more than 3 countries. If you have been thinking about taking the Leadership Academy, or if you have staff that you’ve been considering sending, 2017 is certainly going to be a great year to participate!

The 4th annual Leadership Academy will consist of twelve weekly, online webinars offered from late January to April and will cover a wide range of essential leadership topics for forensic science supervisors and managers. The Academy will then finish with two intensive days of on-site, hands-on instruction at the ASCLD symposium in Dallas, TX.

The 2017 Academy will again focus on providing quality instruction to new supervisors in the forensic science field and supervisors who have previously had limited opportunity for structured forensic management education and training. Between affordable registration costs and high quality instructors, ASCLD is confident that laboratories will see a valuable return on investment in a time when training budgets are lean across the US.

Registration for the 2017 Leadership academy is $550 for ASCLD members and $650 for non-members and includes all 12 online sessions, the on-site capstone course at the ASCLD Symposium, all the training materials for the academy, AND complementary registration to the entire 2017 ASCLD Symposium (travel and lodging not included). The registration deadline is January 25, 2017.

For more information, please visit the Academy web page at http://www.ascld.org/meetings-and-training/ascld-leadership-academy/ or email Training and Education Committee chair Kris Deters at Kristine.deters@state.mn.us.

Registration for the academy is at: https://www.regonline.com/2017ascldsymposium

Have a great week and Happy Holidays!

Kindest regards,
Jeremy Triplett
Symposium Details...

44th Annual ASCLD Symposium, April 30 – May 4, 2017, Dallas, Texas

The theme for the 2017 symposium is “Continuous Improvement – Leading through Continuous Learning.” ASCLD is interested in presentations that focus on innovative techniques to permit managers to mentor and inspire their employees as they strive to continuously improve their organizations. The key goal of 2017 ASCLD presentations is to provide crime lab leadership with actionable tools and transportable information that can be directly applied to improve their operation.

44th Annual ASCLD Symposium hotel room block for the 2017 Symposium is now available!

https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/events/start.action...
http://www.ascldsymposium.com/hoteltravel

Links can also be found on the ASCLD FACEBOOK page at https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100010477606575

Sponsorship and Exhibits

The ASCLD Symposium is an opportunity to meet the industry leading Crime Lab Directors from the United States and throughout the globe. We invite you to take the opportunity to participate in the Symposium through networking opportunities in exhibiting.

http://www.ascldsymposium.com/sponsors-exhibitors
ASCLD Crime Lab Minute December 19, 2016

Breaking News...

Weekly PCAST news articles:


https://richardbrenneman.wordpress.com/2016/12/07/forensic-criminal-science-based-on-very-few-facts/


PCAST Future Meetings

PCAST will hold a public meeting on January 6, 2017. Online registration for the PCAST public meeting is now CLOSED.

Registration is required to join this meeting.

Date: Friday, January 6, 2017
Time: 8:45am-12:00 pm EDT
Location: National Academy of Sciences
2101 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20418
Room: Lecture Room

Social media: You can join the conversation about PCAST

Message from the FSSB: Consolidating OSAC Registries by January 2017

The OSAC Registries are a trusted repository of high-quality, science-based standards and guidelines for forensic science. Since the program inception, the Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science has operated with two registries, the OSAC Registry of Approved Standards as well as the OSAC Registry of Approved Guidelines.

All approved documents, whether they are a standard, guideline, test method, or other product, will soon be contained on one registry.

The anticipated timeframe to fully transition to one registry is by January 2017.

meetings and activities by following OSTP on Twitter @whitehouseostp and tracking the hashtag #PCAST.

Top Stories

State Crime Lab impacted by Wyoming’s budget cuts
Casper Star-Tribune Online
Forensic chemists work inside the Chemistry Instrumentation Lab on Friday afternoon at the Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation in Cheyenne.

Connecticut case challenges use of cellphone tower evidence
Washington Post
A judge ruled her trial lawyer didn’t evaluate cellphone tower evidence prosecutors used to show she was near the crime scene when the murder ...

How Innocent Man’s DNA Was Found at Horrific California Murder Scene
Cherokee messenger republican
Raveesh Kumra, a millionaire and well-known property owner in Monte Sereno, California, was found murdered in his home in 2012. Police said it ...

Lawmakers must recognize need for state crime lab funding
Bluefield Daily Telegraph
We have one crime lab in our state that is under the purview of the West Virginia State Police. A crime lab that is under funded, under staffed and ...

Preparing for Marsy’s Law: ‘overwhelming’, a ‘mess’ and a ‘nightmare’
The Bozeman Daily Chronicle
Over the past few weeks, the department developed notification forms officers give victims at crime scenes and helped train hundreds of officers from ...

State crime lab scientist sentenced to 3 years in prison
Washington Times
BEND, Ore. (AP) - A judge sentenced a fired forensic scientist at the Oregon State Police crime labs Monday to three years in prison for ...

Evidence on Ice
Santa Fe Reporter
“They had the kits for a long time, and then with the power of sunshine and transparency, they started sending the kits in to the state crime lab.”.

Gun expert revises testimony that helped convict Rockford man of murder
Rockford Register Star
Gunnell concluded that bullets and two spent shell casings found at the crime scene had come from a Taurus 9 mm semiautomatic pistol recovered ...

New DNA testing confirms Homestead man's 1989 conviction
Bend Bulletin
HOMESTEAD — A new round of DNA testing on nearly 30-year-old evidence linked to a Pennsylvania man convicted of being a serial rapist in 1989 ...

NIST Research Enables Enhanced DNA “Fingerprints”
National Institute of Standards and Technology
NIST Research Enables Enhanced DNA “Fingerprints”. Starting January 1, DNA profiles will include more data, making them even more powerful at ...

‘Gold’ synthetic marijuana is to blame for mass ‘Walking Dead’ overdose in Brooklyn where 33...
Daily Mail
The drug, also known as AK-47 24 Karat Gold, is already 50 times more potent than the first generation of K2, or synthetic marijuana, said the report.

Regional counties discuss legislative priorities with lawmakers
The Exponent Telegram
A backlog at the State Police crime lab also is contributing to higher jail costs, commissioners agreed. Trials are being postponed six to nine months ...

Despite DNA evidence, suspected serial rapist is acquitted
WBRC FOX6 News - WBRC.com
In spite of DNA evidence, a Memphis man has been accused of an aggravated rape charge, according to Shelby County District Attorney’s Office.

as well as any new documents that are approved, will be located in one place.

Recent OSAC Accomplishments
Documents Approved for the OSAC Working with an SDO Process
- Validation Standards for Probabilistic Genotyping Systems
- Standards for Validation Studies of DNA Mixtures and Development of a Laboratory’s Mixture Interpretation Protocol
- The Wildlife Forensics Subcommittee sent their Wildlife Forensics Morphology Standards to ASB for review. The document will now move through the ASB process where it hopefully will be converted into an SDO approved standard. It can then be considered by the OSAC for inclusion on the OSAC Registry.

Upcoming Schedule - On the Horizon
(Open to the Public) OSAC Scientific Area Committees Public Status Reports & Open Discussions occur at the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) in New Orleans, LA on Feb. 13-14, 2017. (Save the Date)
February 13, 2017 (Monday)
8:00 AM – 10:00 AM OSAC Digital/Multimedia Scientific Area Committee Public Status Reports & Open Discussion
10:15 AM – 12:00 PM OSAC Biology/DNA Scientific Area Committee Public Status Reports & Open Discussion
1:00 PM – 5:00 PM OSAC Crime Scene/Death Investigation Scientific Area Committee Public Status Reports & Open Discussion
February 14, 2017 (Tuesday)
8:30 AM – 12:00 PM OSAC Physics/Pattern Interpretation Scientific Area Committee Public Status Reports & Open Discussion
1:00 PM – 5:00 PM OSAC Chemistry/Instrumental Analysis Scientific Area Committee Public Status Reports & Open Discussion
(Internal OSAC Meeting) Full OSAC Meeting, April 2017 tentatively in Leesburg, VA.

Dear OSAC Professional Association Representatives:
We understand that your members may have interest in recent OSAC events. If so, we have announced the SAVE THE DATE for the OSAC Scientific Area Committee Public Status Reports & Open Discussion Events at the 2017 AAFS Conference in New Orleans.

https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/osac-newsletter-november-2016#SaveTheDate
Also, please feel free to forward this email and its attachments to a colleague.

Thank you,
Pam

Pamela J. Staton, Ph.D.
Professor & Graduate Programs Coordinator
Marshall University Forensic Science
1401 Forensic Science Drive
Huntington, WV 25701
Ph: 304-634-5263 Mobile: 304-691-8931 Office
staton1@marshall.edu
www.marshall.edu/forensics

Bode Cellmark Forensics provides advanced forensic solutions offering crime labs ways to reduce their workloads and budgets.

Bode's newest offerings include:

Sexual Assault Kit Backlog Reduction Program streamlines processes to eliminate backlogs of untested sexual assault kits.

Bode Buccal 2™ is uniquely designed to improve DNA databanking collecting and automate processing. The Bode Buccal 2 is a DIRECT COLLECTION SYSTEM that requires minimal training. There is NO Transfer Step Required.

Independent Validation Services are customized to meet your laboratory's needs. Validation services provide completely unbiased analysis on your equipment, chemistries, or process.

MSP Forensic Scientist Supervisor, Maryland State Police – Forensic Sciences Division, Hagerstown, Maryland, Expires: December 27, 2016


Forensic Scientist (Firearm Unit), Sedgwick County Regional Forensic Science Center, Wichita, Kansas, Expires: January 31, 2017

Forensic Scientist, Virginia Dept. of Forensic Science, Manassas, VA, Expires: January 2, 2017

Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences Forensic Sciences, Ohio Northern University, Ada, Ohio, Expires: March 9, 2017

Forensic Toxicologist or Trainee, Virginia Dept.
Date and time: October 4, 2016, 2-3pm ET  
Speakers: Marie Garcia, Social Science Analyst, and Greg Dutton, Physical Scientist  
View the recording  
Read the transcript  
Download the slides (pdf, 22 pages)  
• Real-Time Crime Forecasting Challenge  
  Date and time: October 6, 2016, 1-2pm ET  
  Speakers: Howard Spivak, Principal Deputy Director, and Joel Hunt, Senior Computer Scientist  
View the recording  
Read the transcript  
Download the slides (pdf, 19 pages)  

NIJ Forensic Science R&D Reports for ASCLD Crime Lab Minute Vol 7.  
These research reports have been submitted by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) especially for their relevance to crime laboratory activities. ASCLD has not reviewed nor does it necessarily endorse the findings of this research.  

National Institute of Justice Invests $63 Million in Nation’s Crime Labs  
The National Institute of Justice announced awards of more than $63 million to 132 state and local jurisdictions to increase laboratory capacity and reduce the number of DNA samples awaiting analysis through its DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction Program.  

Local cold case victims’ buried remains puzzle pieces for renowned forensic expert  
Abstract from the Times Leader:  
The project, headed by State Police and Luzerne County District Attorney’s Office, wasn’t going to be cheap. Digging up one body from a single grave can cost upwards of $10,000, according to Chuck Heurich, a senior scientist and program manager of the Department of Justice’s forensics division [the National Institute of Justice].  

Genome-Wide Association Study Reveals Multiple Loci Influencing Normal Human Facial Morphology  
NIJ-supported researchers from the Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis recently published an article in PLOS Genetics. Author summary retrieved 10/12/2016:  

Improving the confidence of “questioned versus known” fiber comparisons using microspectrophotometry and chemometrics  
NIJ-supported researchers from the Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis recently published an article in Forensic Chemistry. Abstract retrieved 10/12/2016:  

A cooperative-binding split aptamer assay for rapid, specific and ultra-sensitive fluorescence detection of cocaine in saliva  
NIJ-supported researchers from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety recently published an article in Chemical Science. Abstract retrieved 10/12/2016:  

An Examination of the Conditions Affecting Forensic Scientists’ Workplace Productivity and Occupational Stress  
The NIJ-supported research team at Michigan State University surveyed 899 crime lab technicians and forensic scientists regarding work conditions, job satisfaction, and working relationships with police and prosecutors. By and large, forensic scientists exhibited very high rates of job satisfaction but also exhibited the similar stress levels as other criminal justice professionals.  

Dried Blood Spot Analysis as an Emerging Technology for Application in Forensic Toxicology  
Investigators often encounter dried blood spots as they examine a crime scene, but such evidence often isn’t collected because very little work has been done
in the analysis of dried blood for forensic applications. Researchers at RTI International, noting that dried blood spot analysis is well established in newborn testing, conducted this NIJ-supported project to see if newborn testing of dried blood has broader applications in forensic toxicology. After analyzing dried blood samples for 28 drugs, the researchers showed it was comparable to more routine blood tests and useful in forensic investigations.


For decades, questioned document examiners (QDE) have conducted handwriting comparisons based on the assumption that no two people write the same way and no one person writes exactly the same way twice.

**Analysis of Drugs of Abuse in Human Hair: Surface Contamination and Localization of Analysis**

For more than two decades, researchers and scientists have utilized hair testing for drug abuse in addition to blood and urine tests. Despite considerable research and current analytical technologies and interpretive methods, environmental contamination remains an unresolved issue for hair, and controversy exists over the source of drug residues found in hair and the potential for environmental contamination to cause false-positive test results.

**Characterization of Designer Drugs: Chemical Stability, Exposure, and Metabolite Identification**

Designer drugs, such as synthetic cannabinoids and cathinones have become increasingly prevalent, as have their health and societal consequences. Currently, little is known about the pharmacological and toxicological profiles of these products. The consequences of long-term use have yet to be studied, and behavioral and metabolic studies have only been performed on a relatively limited number of compounds. The objective of this research is to gain a more thorough understanding of designer drugs with respect to their chemical exposure profiles and biological elimination pathways.

**Separation and Identification of Drugs by Electrospray Ionization-Ion Mobility Spectrometry-Mass Spectrometry**

Ion mobility spectrometry (IMS) has been described in scientific literature as both a stand-alone separation technique and as a hyphenated technique to enhance other analytical determinations. Despite this flexibility and versatility, the applications of IMS have not grown as quickly as those of gas chromatography (GC) or liquid chromatography (LC). This research describes the use of IMS as a lab-based analytical technique able to perform separations on par with GC and LC separations.

**Error Rates for Latent Fingerprinting as a Function of Visual Complexity and Cognitive Difficulty**

The comparison of forensic fingerprint images for purposes of identification is a complex task that, despite advances in image processing, still requires highly trained human examiners to achieve adequate levels of performance. This NIJ-supported project by researchers at the University of California aims to determine more about the relationship between the measurable, visual dimensions of fingerprint pairs and...
the level of comparison difficulty for human examiners, both experts, and to a lesser degree, novices.

**TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

**Fighting Bias - Self-Paced Online Professional Training**

This self-paced online professional training program focuses on Minimizing bias in Forensic Decision Making. This program covers brain and cognitive issues relating to bias and cognitive processing. It then connects the cognitive science issues to practical and specific issues in forensic decision making. In addition to knowledge about the cognitive factors in forensic decision making, the program also provides practical solutions to address weaknesses as well as best practices to enhance forensic practices.

This program is directly relevant to the document recently adopted by the National Commission on Forensic Science (NCFS). The practical implementation of this document (“Ensuring That Forensic Analysis Is Based Upon Task-Relevant Information”) is presented and discussed, as are the recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences report on forensic science.

Minimizing Bias in Forensic Decision Making

Learning Objectives:

- Describe background information regarding the human mind and cognitive system
- Describe how information and knowledge is acquired, processed, represented, encoded, stored, utilized, retrieved, compared, and evaluated
- Describe how decisions are made
- Demonstrate the connection between information and a variety of forensic decision making processes that forensic examiners typically use
- Describe how cognitive factors can be utilized to make forensic experts’ work more efficient
- Describe the pitfalls and errors that can occur in forensic decision making

Visit the website for registration or abstract submission:
or contact Glenn Langenburg (glenn.langenburg@state.mn.us)

The American Society of Crime Lab Directors, along with RTI, have made the below webinars available.

**ASCLD Train the Directors Latent Prints Webinar - Archival**
**ASCLD Train the Directors DNA Discipline Webinar - Archival**
**ASCLD Train the Directors Controlled Substance Webinar – Archival**
**ASCLD Train the Directors Digital Multimedia Evidence Webinar – Archival**
**ASCLD Train the Directors Toxicology Webinar – Archival**
**ASCLD Train the Directors Firearms Webinar – Archival**
**False-Positive/Negative Error Rates in Cartridge Case Comparisons**
**ASCLD Rapid DNA Webinar 1 – Archival**
**ASCLD Rapid DNA Webinar 2 – Archival**
**ASCLD Rapid DNA Webinar 3 – Archival**

**Conferences**

**January 17-19, 2017:  3rd Annual Middle East Congress of the International Association of Law and Forensic Sciences (IALFS) – Cairo, Egypt**

**ASCLD/RTI Backlog Series**

Archival versions of the ASCLD/RTI Backlog Series can be found at the following links:

The Paradox of Backlog Reduction – How Doing Less Can Be

The NIJ Forensic Science Research and Development Symposium is a free and open meeting where attendees can learn about NIJ-funded research across a variety of forensic science areas.


**Agenda**

https://rti.connectsolutions.com/p609pi5jsjmsm/

**Project FORESIGHT**

FORESIGHT is a business-guided self-evaluation of forensic science laboratories across the globe. The participating laboratories represent local, regional, state/provincial, and national agencies. Faculty from the WVU College of Business and Economics provide assistance, guidance, and analysis. We link financial information to work tasks and functions. Laboratory managers can use these functions to assess resource allocations, efficiencies, and value of services—the mission is to measure, preserve what works, and change what does not. To participate, simply complete the LabRAT workbook and submit to Paul

Doing More
Taking the First Steps Toward Backlog Reduction
Managing Customer Expectations and Education
How to Increase your Staff without Increasing Budget
Efficiency Improvements
Developing a Statewide Approach to Backlog Management
Case Acceptance Policies and Guidelines

Speaker at email paul.speaker@mail.wvu.edu. Please send any questions to the same email address. For additional information, please visit the program website http://be.wvu.edu/forensic/foresight.htm.

We are targeting a submission date of December 15, 2016.

Regards,
Paul J Speaker