Colleagues,

This week I have several updates for you on a variety of topics.

First, your ASCLD Board of Directors was very busy last week posting public comments on behalf of the forensic laboratory community on several National Commission on Forensic Science documents and the proposed Department of Justice Uniform Language for Testimony and Reports (ULTRs).

The ASCLD Board submitted comments on all seven proposed ULTRs and the following NCFS documents:

- Views regarding accreditation program requirements
- Views regarding proficiency testing
- Views on certification of FSSPs
- Recommendation and Views on Documentation/Case Record/Report Contents
- Views on optimizing human performance

A special thanks goes to Past-President Jody Wolf for coordinating the Board’s comments, compiling document revisions, editing the final products, and submitting them all before the deadline. What a task!

Secondly, the New Mexico Department of Public Safety forensic lab is conducting a survey on Controlled Substance analysis and reporting in different laboratories. Individual results will be confidential; however, the laboratory will be pleased to share the aggregate, anonymized results with the community. Please consider participating in their survey at the following link:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ozmoXbcS2mP0304T6Vvmjq1ATiFdO_GpCekekV6YSSj4/viewform?c=0&w=1&usp=mail_form_link

Lastly, there are two upcoming Technology Transition workshops coordinated by RTI with tight deadlines for nominations of individuals to participate. The first is “Discovery and Recovery: Death Investigation in Natural Environments.” The workshop will be held August 2-4, 2016 at the North Carolina State University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Deadline for nominations is July 15, 2016 and additional information can be found HERE. The second workshop is “Courtroom Knowledge of Forensic Technology and the Impact on Frye and Daubert Standards.” The workshop will be held August 9-10, 2016 at Duquesne University in partnership with the Allegheny County Medical Examiner's Office. Deadline for nominations is July 18, 2016 and additional information can be found HERE.

Have a GREAT week.

Kindest regards,
Jeremy

“Leaders don’t look for recognition from others, leaders look for others to recognize.” – Simon Sinek
You’re Invited - July 14-15 Workshop on Developing Personnel Selection Tools for Forensic Scientists

At the request of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine is hosting a 2-day workshop on July 14-15, 2016 in Washington, DC, around developing personnel selection tools for forensic scientists, particularly those who are dealing with various forms of pattern evidence. We would very much like crime laboratory directors and managers to be part of the event and ensuing dialogue.

The workshop will be open to the public and webcast live in hopes of reaching a large audience. A summary of the workshop discussions will be publicly released later this fall. While we have reached out to some ASCLD members through other avenues, we are hoping you can help us reach a broader set of your membership. Please feel free to forward the invitation below to appropriate persons or lists or direct me to anyone particular I should contact. More information on the workshop and links to register can be found below.

Thank you,
Julie Schuck
Associate Program Officer
Committee on Law and Justice

Phone: 202-334-3379
Email: jschuck@nas.edu
http://nationalacademies.org/claj

Register to attend in person or via webcast
Research Reports

NIJ Forensic Science R&D Reports for ASCLD Crime Lab Minute Vol 5

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.

Justice Department Issues Draft Guidance Regarding Expert Testimony and Lab Reports in Forensic Science

The Justice Department announced today the release of draft guidance documents governing the testimony and reports of the department’s forensic experts. These documents, available for public comment through July 8, are designed to ensure that department forensic experts only make statements in the courtroom and in laboratory reports that are supported by sound science.

Using Forensic Botany to Aid Law Enforcement Investigations

The work of NIJ-supported researchers from Sam Houston State University, was recently featured in Newsweek, Houston Matters and Forensic Magazine. Their study uses DNA genotyping of plants to identify exact DNA fingerprints of specific plant life. For example, identifying the exact DNA of marijuana strains could link samples back to their distributors or the DNA of pollen samples could also be used to link pollen evidence to crime scenes.

ASCLD/LAB is a not-for-profit corporation specializing in the accreditation of public and private forensic laboratories. Since 1982, we have been committed to the ongoing accreditation, support, education and oversight of forensic organizations striving for excellence in forensic analysis. Visit our website to learn more about our accreditation programs, the assessment process and training opportunities.

ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB) ANAB provides accreditation for ISO/IEC 17025 forensic test laboratories and ISO/IEC 17020 forensic inspection agencies and a wide variety of training, workshops, and academic programs.

ISO/IEC 17020 and Audit Preparation for Forensic Police Agencies September 15-16, 2016, Alexandria, VA Cost: ASQ member $600, non-ASQ member $650

ISO/IEC 17025 and Audit Preparation for Forensic Test Agencies September 12-14, 2016, Alexandria, VA Cost: ASQ member $750, non-ASQ member $800

ASCLD-LAB Training Training classes to help forensic laboratory personnel understand the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025
The Use of E-Cigarettes for Illicit Drugs

The work of NIJ-supported researchers from Virginia Commonwealth University, was recently featured on the university website and in an upcoming NPR interview. Their study explores how drug users are using e-cigarette devices to vaporize illicit drugs. The team is testing the output of various illicit drugs from an e-cigarette device and whether increasing the voltage on the device would increase the dose delivered. Part of this project will also test claims that e-cigarettes are "safer" than the alternatives.

Forensic Science: A Time of Transformation

This NIJ Journal article addresses some of the ongoing discussions in the forensic, legal, and law enforcement communities over the roles of science and forensic science and the certainty of testimony presented in the courtroom. The article gives special attention to problems related to expressing certainty in non-DNA forensic evidence fields, such as trace evidence, latent prints, and firearms.

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

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 examined the relationship between the measurable, visual dimensions of fingerprint pairs and the level of comparison difficulty for the examiners. The research found that error rates are a function of comparison difficulty and showed that it is limiting and even misleading to talk about an overall error rate for the field as a whole. The researchers noted that one of their experiments provides strong evidence that prints vary in difficulty and that the variations affect the likelihood of error.

Improve the PDQ Database to Enhance Investigative Lead Information from Automotive Paints

In a hit-and-run incident with no witnesses, investigators are often left with automotive paint layers recovered from the victim's clothing as evidence. Modern automotive paint systems consist of several layers – a clear coat over a color coat over two layers of undercoating. In this project, NIJ-supported researchers at Oklahoma State University developed infrared prefilters and a cross correlation algorithm for searching the Paint Data Query (PDQ) automotive database. A prefilter was developed to differentiate automotive paint samples by automobile manufacturer using the clear coat and undercoat paint layers. The algorithm can determine the assembly plant where the vehicle was made.

Investigating the Impact of Forensic Evidence Testimony on Juror Decisions

Under this NIJ-supported project, Arizona State University researchers conducted three different experiments to study different aspects of forensic expert testimony. In the first experiment, juror responses were analyzed to see if the impact of having the type of method scientifically-validated influenced jurors. They found that experience of the expert influences jurors more than the type of method in terms of credibility; but this may not have been translated into verdicts. The second experiment dealt with the forensic expert's level of certainty over whether there is exculpatory evidence. Researchers found that exculpatory evidence did not weigh heavily in the mock juror's decision. The third experiment investigated the influence of whether the forensic expert concedes that the analysis may include errors. The study found that when the trial involved bite mark analysis, the concession decreased the value of the evidence; when the case was a fingerprint analysis, the concession actually increased the certainty of the analysis.

General Requirements for the Competency of Testing and Calibration Laboratories.

ASCLD/LAB-International Assessor Training Course for Testing Laboratories
ASCLD/LAB-International Assessor Training Course for Breath Alcohol Calibration
ASCLD/LAB-International Internal Auditor Training Course
ASCLD/LAB-International Preparation Course for Testing Laboratories
ASCLD/LAB-International Preparation Course for Calibration Laboratories

American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA)
A2LA’s Training Program

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.

Employment Opportunities

Criminalist (4 available), Ohio State Highway Patrol Crime Lab, Columbus, Ohio, Expires: September 8, 2016
Forensic Scientist 2, New Mexico Department of Public Safety, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA, Expires: August 17, 2016
DNA Analyst, WI Department of Justice, Madison, WI, Expires: July 13, 2016
Forensic Latent Print Examiner / Crime Scene Technician, Valdosta-Lowndes Regional Crime Laboratory, Valdosta, Georgia, Expires: September 5, 2016
Forensic Toxicologist or Trainee – Northern Laboratory, Virginia Dept. of Forensic Science, Manassas, VA, Expires: August 5, 2016
Examining the Effects of Environmental Degradation on the Optical Properties of Manufactured Fibers of Natural Origin

Synthetic fibers derived from natural, biological sources – known as Manufactured Fibers of Natural Origin (MFNOs) – are becoming increasingly popular in textiles and clothing. NIJ-supported researchers at the McCrone Research Institute theorized that because the underlying polymer in MFNOs is naturally derived, the materials are more likely to be affected by environmental conditions over time, and any changes in their optical and physical properties due to degradation may have consequences in the forensic laboratory. The researchers evaluated three types of MFNOs exposed to six different environments and found that the properties of the materials were largely unchanged. Some samples showed morphological changes when exposed to ultraviolet light or submerged in water, but “these results may potentially strengthen an association if the same optical and morphological changes are seen in both the questioned and known MFNO fibers.”

Identifying and Communicating Genetic Determinants of Facial Features: Practical Considerations in Forensic Molecular Photofitting

Researchers at Pennsylvania State University, with NIJ funding, utilize the modeling of human facial features so that they can be analyzed and then related to underlying genetic variation. An important finding of the project is methodology for giving researchers a way to work with facial features to accomplish new analyses especially in helping to identify the roles played by variation at particular genes. By jointly modeling sex, genomic ancestry, and genotype the independent effects of particular alleles on facial features can be uncovered. Results on a set of 20 genes showing significant effects on facial features provide support for this approach as a novel means to identify genes affecting normal-range facial features and for approximating the appearance of a face from genetic markers.

The Effects of Acquisition of Blood Specimens on Drug Levels and the Effects of Transportation Conditions on Degradation of Drugs

NIJ-supported researchers from the Iowa Department of Public Health address the practitioner need of examining three different peripheral blood specimen collection/shipping procedures in order to determine whether significant differences in drug concentration could be detected.

Separation and Identification of Drugs of Abuse Using ESI-IMS-MS

This NIJ-supported research by Florida International University developed a method for performing rapid and inexpensive analyses of seized drugs commonly encountered by law enforcement, particularly controlled amphetamine substances and the emerging designer drugs that are similar in structure to amphetamine-based substances. The results suggest that chiral separation by an achiral modifier in the gas phase and the detection and identification of designer drugs are possible using the ESI-IMS-MS with an optimal solvent system.

Microfluidic System for Automated Dye Molecule Extraction and Detection for Forensic Fiber Identification

This NIJ-supported project succeeded in identifying and creating the optimum extraction conditions for different dyes and fabrics, and it developed an automated microfluidic dye extraction system that produces these conditions. This report provides information on the extraction solvent, the extraction chamber material, cavity shape, valve configurations, extraction temperature, and the macro fluidic extraction and analysis. The developed system enables objective comparisons of fiber dyes and a statistical error calculation useful in court testimony.
News Around the Globe

Kelowna RCMP waiting for toxicology report in suspicious death
KelownaNow
While her death is still being treated as suspicious, investigators are still awaiting the toxicology results before classifying her cause of death.

Broward public defender questions crime lab's DNA ID process
FORT LAUDERDALE — Questions over DNA identification process used by the Broward Sheriff's Office crime lab has led to the suspension and Inventory: At least 43 untested sexual assault kits in Dubuque
Dubuque Telegraph Herald
Dubuque Police Lt. Scott Baxter said many of the kits provided to police are not sent to a state crime lab for testing. He said that could be "for a number .

House Committee OKs Bill Letting the FBI Use Rapid DNA Profiling
Nextgov
Currently, only DNA swabs analyzed in a crime lab, a process that can take many weeks, are permitted to be run against the FBI's central DNA ..

Albuquerque launches new program to tackle rape kits backlog
KSNT
APD has its own crime lab that processes rape kits, but officials say the department also sends some kits to the state lab. APD says one reason they...

Department Reorganizes After Split
Firehouse.com (press release) (registration) (blog)
"I served on the special response unit for six years and when a position in the crime lab opened up I was able to get promoted over to a crime lab .

An inside look at investigating gun crimes
WDBJ7
When it's a complex case, those bullets, guns and casings can wind up at the ATF's national forensic lab. It's a one-stop-shop for specialized cases.

Alleged DNA miscalculations by Broward crime lab could reopen slew of cases
Sun Sentinel
Alleged DNA miscalculations by Broward crime lab could reopen slew of .. Tiffany Roy, a DNA forensic analyst from Boynton Beach, made a formal .

Local scientists invent novel DNA testing technology to raise test accuracy
Shanghai Daily (subscription)
LOCAL scientists invented a novel DNA testing technology, which can raise the accuracy of normal DNA testing and reduce the rate of false positive ..

Local scientists invent novel DNA testing technology to raise test accuracy
Shanghai Daily (subscription)
LOCAL scientists invented a novel DNA testing technology, which can raise the accuracy of normal DNA testing and reduce the rate of false positive ..

Marshall University Forensic Science Center receives National Institute of Justice research grant
HNN Huntingtongnews.net
Jason Chute, M.S., technical leader of Marshall's forensic DNA laboratories, is the project's principal investigator. Co-principal investigators are Dr. ..

Ron Smith & Associates Training
National Latent Print Examiner Training Academy
APPLY NOW!
2nd Session - OCTOBER 3, 2016 thru MARCH 3, 2017
BUDGET PLANNING REQUIRED?
3rd Session - October 2, 2017 thru MARCH 2, 2018
RS&A now offers an intense 20 week training program designed to provide agencies with a Latent Print Examiner who is trained to competency. This academy, with 800 hours of formal training, will produce graduates that are capable of performing "supervised case work" and once time requirements are met, be ready to apply for IAI Latent Print Certification.

2nd Session is scheduled to begin October 3, 2016 Hattiesburg, MS at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center. Only 25 academy applicants will be selected to attend so apply today!

The total cost for this program including academy tuition, 20 weeks room and board, and 3 meals per day is $27,500.00.

Click here for complete details, photos, and the admission applications. (Link to: Ron Smith And Associates LPAcademy)
Detectives say DNA from the smokes and fingerprints from a flashlight linked the criminal crew to a massive copper wire theft at a cell tower near .

Public Defender Seeks Grand Jury on BSO DNA Lab NBC & South Florida
Broward County’s public defender on Thursday called for a grand jury to investigate what he calls “junk science” and “incompetent forensic analyses” ...

Alleged DNA miscalculations by Broward crime lab could reopen slew of cases - Sun Sentinel
Alan Alda Lends Support to Forensic Science Research Center
Lab Manager Magazine
Alan Aldalmage courtesy of the University of Dundee
Alan Alda, the famed actor and passionate advocate of communicating the benefits of science, ...

Corruption Case: CFSL Confirms Conversation Between Rajendra Kumar And Other Accused News World India
The Central Bureau of Investigation's (CBI) forensic lab (CFSL) on Friday confirmed the conversation between Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal's ...

Wyoming limits crime lab analysis Northern Wyoming Daily News Worland Wyoming
JACKSON (AP) — Wyoming has cut back on what kind of evidence can be tested in its crime lab, leading to mixed responses from the law ...

This box could analyze crime scene evidence in two minutes Chicago Tribune
North suburban Skokie's police department decided to hire a private crime lab in May because the Illinois State Police's crime lab took hundreds of .

FDLE Ready for Sexual Assault Kit Law in Florida WXL ABC 27
... went into effect on July 1 requiring law enforcement to submit sexual assault kits within 30 days of the start of their investigations to a state crime lab...

Microsoft researchers break record for DNA data storage UW Today
University of Washington and Microsoft researchers have broken what they believe is the world record for the amount of digital data successfully ...

Concerns over APD DNA lab raised over 5 years ago KEYE TV
Serious questions about the Austin Police Department's DNA lab means ... 'neither scientifically valid nor supported by the forensic DNA community.'.

Accused 1980s killer in court over DNA NEWS.com
The court heard a DNA sample had been taken from Davies during the course of the investigation but the elderly man no longer consented to ..

Public Defender seeks Grand Jury on BSO DNA Lab NBC & South Florida
Public Defender Seeks Grand Jury on BSO DNA Lab ... forensic analyses" being produced by the Broward Sheriff's DNA laboratory. ... Defense attorneys in all case involving Broward DNA crime lab personnel are being notified...

Applied DNA, Melville startup in document deal Innovate Long Island
Applied DNA Sciences has its eyes on sensitive government documents and ... a Melville-based provider of forensic evidence-gathering and protection tools. ... Financial terms of the two-year Applied DNA Sciences deal were not ..

in the industry. Organizations like the Association of Forensic Quality Assurance Managers have been huge in taking up the mantle of providing various workshops and classes, but it was never intended to take the place of a complete training program. With forensics being under such intense scrutiny these days, agencies who perform forensic analysis must ensure that their work is performed under the guiding principles and standards which are now becoming more clearly defined each day. We, in the forensic should.

Ron Smith & Associates, Inc. is known as one of the premier forensic training companies in the world. Our teams of subject matter experts and support staff have successfully designed and offered hundreds upon hundreds of highly sought after training opportunities all across the United States and abroad. RS&A is now ready to take on the challenge of building a National Forensic Quality Manager Training Academy which will soon become the cornerstone of forensic training in this very critical area.

Academy tuition is $2,500.00 with only 25 seats available.

Click here for complete academy details and to complete an academy application today! (Link to: Ron Smith And Associates QM Academy)

National Footwear & Tire Track Training Academy SEPTEMBER 5-16, 2016 (2 weeks Footwear) OFF (September 19-30, 2016) OCTOBER 3-14, 2016 (2 weeks Footwear) OFF (October 17-28, 2016) OCTOBER 31 - NOVEMBER 11, 2016 (2 weeks Tire Track)
RS&A now offers a Footwear and Tire Track Training Academy which includes 4 weeks of footwear examination training followed by 2 weeks of tire track examination training. Applicants can elect to complete the entire 6 week footwear and tire track academy or break it up and choose only the 4 weeks of footwear training or the 2 weeks of tire track training. The academy graduates of this 6 week program will learn the skills necessary to complete supervised footwear and tire track casework and will be ready to apply for a IAIFootwear Certification once time requirements have been met.

It is scheduled to begin September 5, 2016 in Hattiesburg, MS at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center. Only 20 academy applicants will be selected to attend.

The entire 6 week footwear and tire track academy the cost is set at $11,250.00.

The 4 week footwear only academy is set at $7,500.00.

The 2 week tire track only academy is $3,750.00.

Cost includes academy instruction, room and board, and 3 meals per day according to training selection.

Click here for complete details and to apply for admission today. (Link to: http://www.RonSmithandAssociates.com/Footwear)

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 Version
ASCLD Rapid DNA Webinar 2 – Archival Version
ASCLD Rapid DNA Webinar 3 – Archival Version
ASCLD Webinar Series.