CLM May 30, 2016 - Happy Memorial Day

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American Society of Crime Lab Directors
"THE CRIME LAB MINUTE" NEWSLETTER

Forensic Training

John Collins with the Forensic Foundations Group is announcing the last of 3 online Professional Orientation Schools for New Crime Lab Scientists. Maximum 20 students per school. Each school is comprised of 8, 2-hour online sessions over 4 weeks with a final examination. Please visit www.forensicfoundations.com/scheduled-workshops to view the schedule and/or register. Students should first register for free as a "Friend of the Group" to qualify for the discounted $245 registration fee.

Please call John at (517) 803-4063 if you have any questions.

Professional Orientation School for New Crime Laboratory Scientists

Instructor: John M. Collins Jr. MA, SHRM-SCP
July 20 - August 12, 2016
The Professional Orientation School for Crime Laboratory Scientists is an intensive 4-Week orientation for new crime laboratory scientists. It is designed to supplement a laboratory’s initial onboarding and professional orientation of forensic science employees. The primary objective of our school is to prepare crime laboratory scientists for the rigors, challenges, and rewards of forensic science. Laboratory administrators should give serious consideration to placing new employees, when possible, in our school within the first days or weeks of employment.

Houston Forensic Science Center

HFSC is a local government corporation created to provide independent forensic services to law enforcement agencies, primarily the Houston Police Department, and other judicial entities. We welcome you to explore our forensic services, learn more about the Center, invite employment opportunities or contact us.

The Houston Forensic Science Center has rescheduled the following two courses to take place later on this year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palm Print Comparison Course</td>
<td>Nov 02 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Firearm Examination for the NonExaminer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crime Scene Investigation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer Series Educational Seminars for Science Teachers</td>
<td>Aug 03 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Series Educational Seminars for Science Teachers - Part 2</td>
<td>Nov 02 2016</td>
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does it necessarily endorse the findings of this research.

White House Announces National Microbiome Initiative

The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, in collaboration with federal agencies and stakeholders, today announced the National Microbiome Initiative (NMI). The NMI aims to advance understanding of microbiomes in order to aid in the development of useful applications in areas such as health care, food production, and environmental restoration. The National Institute of Justice invested $3.2 million in FY 2015 in funding 12 grants that sought to apply research, including work on the dead body indicator of time-since-death in the investigation of human remains, the soil microbiome for analysis of trace soil evidence, and the trace microbiome as an orthogonal method to human DNA analysis for associating people with evidence and environments.

The Reliability of Pattern Classification in Bloodstain Pattern Analysis, Part 1: Bloodstain Patterns on Rigid Non-absorbent Surfaces

NIU-supported researchers from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety recently published an article in the Journal of Forensic Sciences. Abstract retrieved 5/16/16:

The study was designed to produce the first baseline measure of reliability in bloodstain pattern classification. A panel of experienced bloodstain pattern analysts examined over 400 spatter patterns on three rigid, non-absorbent surfaces. The patterns varied in spatial type and extent. A case summary accompanied each pattern that either contained neutral information, information to suggest the correct pattern (i.e., was positively biasing), or information to suggest an incorrect pattern (i.e., was negatively biasing). Across the variables under examination, 13 percent of classifications were erroneous. Generally speaking, where the pattern was more difficult to recognize (e.g., limited staining extent or a patterned substrate), analysts became more conservative in their judgment, opting to be inconclusive. Incorrect classifications increased as a function of the negatively biasing contextual information.

Decomposition Rates Between Humans, Pigs May Vary Wildly

The work of NIJ-supported researchers from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville was recently featured in Science Magazine and Forensic Magazine. Abstract retrieved 5/16/16:

The past three decades of human decomposition have demonstrated that certain factors promote decomposition, such as high temperatures and insect access, yet the rate of decomposition varies considerably in macro- and microenvironments. Not all researchers have access to human cadavers, however, and therefore have employed nonhuman animals as surrogates for humans in decomposition studies. The results from some of these animal model studies have been used in the courts to support or refute the other interval estimations of human decedents. Nonetheless, the scientific validity of substituting data from nonhuman carcasses for human cadavers has enjoyed limited evaluation. This project directly compares the decomposition dynamics of human, pig and rabbit subjects placed under the same ecological niche to determine whether, in the same settings, pig and rabbits are appropriate analogs for humans in terms of decomposition research and estimates of postmortem intervals.

The Role of Interface Shape on the Impact Characteristics and Cranial Fracture Patterns Using the Immature Porcine Head Model

NIU-supported researchers from Michigan State University recently published an article in the Journal of Forensic Sciences. Abstract retrieved 5/16/16:

The forensic literature suggests that when adolescents fall onto edged and pointed surfaces, depressed fractures can occur at low energy levels. This study documents impact biomechanics and fracture characteristics of infant porcine skulls dropped onto flat, curved, and focial surfaces. Results showed that the energy needed for fracture initiation on these surfaces was higher across a flat surface than curved or focial surfaces. While characteristic measures of fracture such as number and length of fractures did not vary with impact surface shape, the fracture patterns did depend on impact surface shape. For example, impacts against the flat surface produced linear fractures initiating at sutureal boundaries, curved fractures against the curved surface, and linear fractures initiating at sutureal boundaries peripheral to the point of impact (POI), more focal impacts produced depressed fractures initiating at the POI. The study supported case-based forensic literature suggesting cranial fracture patterns depend on impact surface shape and that fracture initiation energy is lower for more focal impacts.

Applying Lean Design to Crime Laboratories

Over the past decade, several tools have been developed to increase organizational efficiency in the workplace, including process mapping and Lean Sigma Six. More recently, a variation of Lean Sigma Six — Lean Design — has been applied successfully to the planning and construction of health care research and development and quality management laboratories. A report from NIJ’s Forensic Science and Technology Office, Development of a Lean Facility Design Roadmap for Design-Bid-Build Forensic Facilities, presents a crime laboratory design model that incorporates Lean Design thinking into the planning and construction of forensic facilities. The report includes a comprehensive set of checklists and guidelines to integrate Lean concepts and model into the traditional approaches described in the National Institute of Standards and Technology’s updated Forensic Science Laboratories: Handbook for Facility Planning, Design, Construction and Relocation.

Sexual Assault Kits in Houston, TX: Case Characteristics, Forensic Testing Results, and the Investigation of CODIS Hits

This NIJ-supported report describes findings from the Houston Sexual Assault Kit Action-Research Project focused on the characteristics of a sample of 493 previously unsampled sexual assault kits. This study assessed key factors in assessing evidence, testing results and investigative outcomes of cases with CODIS hits. A DNA profile was developed from 55 percent of the kits and a profile was uploaded to CODIS in 43 percent of the kits. A CODIS hit was returned for 21 percent (n=104) of the sample. Of the kits where a CODIS hit was not returned, 43 percent had expired statutes of limitations and 26 percent found the victim that were unable to be contacted or unwilling to participate in the follow-up investigation.
Characterization of Designer Drugs: Chemical Stability, Exposure, and Metabolite Identification

New NIJ-supported research conducted by RTI International examined the stability of popular designer drugs and identify major degradation products, and identify the major metabolites. The research identified metabolites suitable as potential markers of use, degradation products, and pyrolysis products that may be left in an ash residue to use for confirmation of the parent compound. Although new designer drugs are coming to market faster than targeted testing can keep up, by performing a thorough and systematic study looking at families of structurally related compounds, the researchers are able to predict markers for broad classes of compounds.

Development of a Modern Compendium of Microcrystal Tests for Illicit Drugs and Diverted Pharmaceuticals

NIU-supported researchers from the McCrone Research Institute have developed a comprehensive compendium of microcrystal tests that had previously been developed for illicit drugs and diverted pharmaceuticals. The researchers included 19 drugs and developed techniques for drugs that have non-traditional delivery mechanisms. The resulting electronic compendium will include recommended protocols and morphologies of crystals (including photomicrographs), infrared spectra of microcrystals, and potential interferences. Most importantly, the compendium will include optical and crystallographic properties of the resultant microcrystals. The Compendium of Microcrystal Tests for Illicit Drugs and Diverted Pharmaceuticals will be available with free access to all forensic scientists.

Development of a Science Base and Open Source Software for Bloodstain Pattern Analysis

NIU supported the Iowa State University of Science and Technology to develop a better method to determine the region of the origin of blood spatters based on sound fluid mechanics principles. The method, which is about four times more accurate than current methods based on straight trajectories, reconstructs the curved trajectories of blood drops from 3D inspection of blood spatters. The researchers modified a 3D microscope used in the project to make it portable and available for use at a crime scene. Although the method was extremely accurate, the researchers conclude that "it is unlikely that the method would be used widely in a crime scene in a near future." The microscope cost is prohibitive ($50,000), “and any surface rougher than 1 micrometer will likely create too much noise in the measurement of stain volumes (to be useful).”

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

NIU-supported researchers from RTI International examined the effects of environmental contamination of human hair leading to external deposition of methamphetamine and heroin on drug tests designed to identify drug use. The researchers investigated how well normal hair washing and extended decontamination removed the drugs from hair. The researchers noted that prior studies have raised significant concerns about contamination confounding hair test results, and noted the results of this RTI study, “continue to raise such concerns.” They also noted that many hair testing laboratories institute decontamination procedures prior to testing hair samples for drugs, but said, “our studies show that a decontamination step alone is likely not sufficient to remove contributions from external contamination.”

Improving Detection of Crime Scenes

NIU’s Forensic Science Technology Center of Excellence recently published a new forensic science success story about developing new methods to detect blood evidence at crime scenes. The most common method for detecting blood stains is to spray a crime scene with luminol, but this has its disadvantages. It can produce false positives when reacting with many common household items, dilute blood samples to a level at which DNA cannot be recovered, and smear blood spatter patterns that are often critical in determining how a victim was attacked. With the support from NIU, researchers from the University of South Carolina in Columbus, South Carolina, developed a prototype thermal infrared (IR) camera that can rapidly and selectively identify blood stains in ambient lighting without the use of reagents.
News Around the Globe

Colorado Bureau Of Investigation Crime Lab Has New Location

RVADA, Colo. (AP) – The Colorado Bureau of Investigation has moved its lab for fingerprint, ballistic, DNA and other testing from Lakewood to bigger quarters in Arvada. The Denver Post reports CBI held a grand opening last month after a $7 million renovation. Lab manager Aaron Koning says the new 26,000-square-foot facility is nearly three times the size of the Lakewood facility. Koning says he expects the move to improve efficiency and speed. http://denverpost.com/2016/05/28/colorado-bureau-of-investigation-crime-lab-has-new-location/

Pathologist testifies at Nunez’s murder trial by Jesse J. Smith on May 27, 2016 • 2:44 pm

The discovery of Thomas Kolman's body in his car in a gym parking lot was the beginning of an exhaustive effort to find out what killed him. Nine months later, after two exhumations and multiple rounds of toxicology screening, pathologist Dr. Michael Sikirica determined that the 44-year-old Saugerties resident likely died after ingesting coffee spiked with a medical sedative, and may have been smothered to death as he lay unreponsive in his vehicle.

This week, Sikirica led jurors in the murder trial of Gilberto Nunez through his efforts effort to solve the medical mystery. Nunez, a Poughkeepsie resident with a dental practice on Washington Avenue, is accused of killing Kolman back on Nov. 29, 2011. Nunez and Kolman were close friends; prosecutors believe Nunez killed Kolman because of an “obsession” with his wife, Linda Kolman, with whom he was having an affair. http://www.kingstonx.com/2016/05/27/pathologist-testifies-at-nunezes-murder-trial/

New DNA evidence in Dana Bradley case 'hugely significant': cold case specialist

By Carolyn Stokes, CBC News

DNA evidence in the unsolved 1981 murder of Dana Bradley is a major break in the case.

"It's hugely significant," said Michael Arntfield, a former police officer turned professor. "It's gone from guesswork and an idle case. Now you have a genetic snapshot of whoever was responsible for this. It's just a matter of matching that profile to the right person." http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/dana-bradley-cold-case-specialist-mike-arnfield-new-dna-evidence-1.3601923

Tyrone Noling's death penalty appeal highlights need for access to DNA testing:

Jim Petro (Opinion) as a former attorney general and state legislator, I am acutely aware that we can and must do more to protect our citizens from wrongful convictions.

In Ohio alone, we have already exonerated more than 56 people from our prisons, including some from death row. Wrongful convictions are a public safety issue: When the wrong person is convicted and jailed, the true perpetrator remains out on the streets. http://www.cleveland.com/opinion/index.ssf/2016/05/tyrone_nolings_death_penalty_a.html

DNA studied to solve brain disease

By Michael Mui, 24 Hours Vancouver

A University of B.C. research study is the first in the world to sample DNA from chronically sick children — combing through all their genes — in order to diagnose and treat rare genetic diseases that cause intellectual disability.

The work was conducted among nearly 40 patients referred by Vancouver doctors for diagnosis using a type of technology called “exome sequencing,” which has proven to have more than twice the effectiveness of traditional diagnosis. Genetic causes of intellectual disability can include Down syndrome, fragile X syndrome, and PKU (Phenylketonuria), to name a few examples.

"The conventional testing was looking at the chromosomes and also doing some functional testing, looking at chemicals in the blood, are there signs of an energy problem? And then going back to the genes to see if we can find a mutation," said Dr. Clara van Kamebeek, a biochemical geneticist and pediatrician out of B.C. Children’s Hospital, and also principal investigator for UBC.

http://vancouver.24hrs.ca/2016/05/26/dna-studied-to-solve-brain-disease

Curtin University find forensic use for ancient Egyptian pigment which can reveal fingerprints

Curtin Times

FORENSIC researchers from Curtin University, in conjunction with conservation scientists from the Indianapolis Museum of Art have found a novel use for an ancient Egyptian pigment, revealing that it doubles as a dusting powder able to reveal traditionally tricky fingerprints in modern forensics.

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Curtin University find forensic use for ancient Egyptian pigment which can reveal fingerprints

May 25th, 2016, 01:00AM Written by Pia van Straalen

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Accreditation Training

NSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB)

ANAB is a member of the ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board family of brands. 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

June 8-9, 2016, Greenville, SC

September 15-16, 2016, Alexandria, VA

Cost: ASQ member $600, non-ASQ member $650

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.
The team demonstrated that micronised Egyptian blue pigment, a vivid and long-lasting pigment used in painted artefacts dating back millennia, also acts as a near-infrared (NIR) luminescent fingerprint dusting powder, providing a safe and simple way to reveal latent fingerprints on highly patterned and reflective surfaces.

Professor of Forensic and Analytical Chemistry and member of the Nanochemistry Research Institute at Curtin’s Department of Chemistry Simon Lewis said the detection of latent fingerprints was still a critically important task for forensic investigators, helping to establish evidence of contact between the criminal, the victim and/or the crime scene. “The most common approach to detecting latent fingerprints has been the use of dusting powders made from white, black or fluorescent powders that provide contrast against the surface,” he said.


PUBLISHED: May 24, 2016 1:00 pm
Thai murders DNA evidence ‘wholly unreliable’ – defenceDNA recovered from where Islander David Miller was murdered on a Thai island is ‘wholly unreliable’, defence lawyers claimed on Monday as they officially launched an appeal against their clients’ guilty verdicts.

On Christmas Eve last year Burmese migrants Zaw Lin and Wai Phyo were found guilty and sentenced to death for the murder of former Victoria College student Mr Miller (24) and the murder and rape of Norfolk-born Hannah Witheridge (23) on the island of Koh Tao in September 2014.

On Monday, five months on from the Koh Samui court’s verdict, a team of defence lawyers lodged an appeal on behalf of their clients calling for their guilty verdicts to be quashed.

The team of nine lawyers, who have been working closely with Burmese, British and Australian assistants, translators and advisers, say almost half of them is focused on the reliability of DNA evidence and they claim the evidence is ‘inadmissible and should not have been considered by the court’, as it was not ‘collected, tested, analysed or reported in accordance with internationally accepted forensic standards’.

Read more at http://jerseyeveningpost.com/news/2016/05/24/thai-murders-dna-evidence-wholly-unreliable-defence/#2md2l89vLsIdJprY.99

By Jim Axelrod, Ashley Veile CBS News May 25, 2016, 7:06 PM
DEA targets drug wholesalers to stem opioid epidemic
This is what the opioid crisis looks like in West Virginia: people addicted to pain pills lining up on foot and in cars at a small-town drug store to get their prescriptions filled. "In 2014 almost 19,000 people died from opioid overdose -- and we're not talking about heroin," said Joe Rannazzisi, who was with the DEA for 29 years. He said wholesale distributors play a huge part in the epidemic.

- Former FDA head: Opioid epidemic one of "great mistakes of modern medicine"

"If a pharmacy was ordering 5,000 tablets per month, over a series of months, that's not a big deal. But one month he orders 30,000 tablets. And then the following month, he orders 60,000 tablets, and now he's up to 100,000 tablets. Well, the wholesalers were seeing this and no one was filing suspicious orders."

Do they have a legal obligation to report the suspicious patterns to the DEA? "Yes," Rannazzisi said, "and they weren't doing that."


IntegenX, headquartered in Pleasanton, California, is the market leader of Rapid human DNA identification technology. IntegenX technology platforms integrate advanced fluids, optics, and biochemistry capabilities to produce sample-to-answer products for DNA-based human identity testing for forensics and law enforcement applications.

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ISO/IEC 17025 and Audit Preparation for Forensic Test Agencies
May 17-19, 2016, Milwaukee, WI
September 12-14, 2016, Alexandria, VA
Cost: ASQ member $750, non-ASQ member $800

Uncertainty of Measurement for Forensic Agencies
May 20, 2016, Milwaukee, WI
Cost: $500
For more information about these workshops, contact ANAB at 703-836-0025, ext 208. To register, please click on any of the dates above.

ASCLD-LAB Training
Training classes to help forensic laboratory personnel understand the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025 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

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IntegenX

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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.

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Shimadzu’s triple quad GCMS-TQ8040, providing exceptional sensitivity, selectivity, and specificity for detection and quantitation of targeted drugs in the presence of background interferences, is the most powerful choice for your toxicological applications. It enables the analysis of more than 400 compounds in one run, and features automatic method creation, scan/SIM acquisition mode, and an MRM optimization tool.

The Smart Forensic Database includes hundreds of compounds with optimized transitions and collision energies, CAS registry numbers and retention indices (RI). The database supports simultaneous high-sensitivity analysis of samples using GC-MS/MS, eliminating the need to configure complicated analysis conditions.

**Employment Opportunities**

New this week, Forensics Account Manager, Sorenson Forensics, Salt Lake City, Expires: July 19, 2016

New this week, Forensic Scientist 2, Chemistry Analyst, New Mexico Department of Public Safety, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Expires: June 16, 2016

New this week, CRIMINALIST, Los Angeles County Medical Examiner – Coroner, Los Angeles, CA, Expires: June 30, 2016

New this week, DNA Laboratory Supervisor, Austin Texas Police Department, Austin, Texas, Expires: July 30, 2016

Forensics Account Manager, Sorenson Forensics, Salt Lake City, Expires: July 19, 2016

CHIEF FORENSIC LABORATORIES, Los Angeles County Medical Examiner – Coroner, Los Angeles, CA, Expires: June 30, 2016

Forensics DNA Analyst, Sorenson Forensics, Salt Lake City, Expires: August 13, 2016

DNA Technical Lead, Alameda County, Oakland, Expires: June 7, 2016

Sheriff’s Supervising Forensic Scientist – Fingerprints and Crime Scene Investigation, Ventura County Sheriff’s Office, Ventura, CA, Expires: August 11, 2016

Criminalist II, NYC CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER, New York, NY, Expires: August 11, 2016


Forensic Program Chief, State of Wisconsin Department of Justice, Wausau, WI, Expires: May 31, 2016

Forensic Scientist – Controlled Substances, Virginia Dept. of Forensic Science, Roanoke, VA, Expires: June 2, 2016


Forensic Scientist III, Center for Forensic Science Research & Education, Willow Grove, Expires: June 10, 2016

Quality Specialist, Houston Forensic Science Center, Houston, TX, Expires: May 31, 2016

Computer Forensic Analyst, Houston Forensic Science Center, Houston, TX, Expires: July 28, 2016

DNA Technical Leader, NMS Labs, Willow Grove, Expires: June 10, 2016


Latent Print Examiner, Durham Police Department, Durham, NC, Expires: July 18, 2016

ICITAP Forensics Experts, Engility Corporation, Mexico City, Expires: July 1, 2016


SEROLOGIST III / ASSISTANT TECHNICAL LEADER, Serological Research Institute, RICHMOND, CA, Expires: July 8, 2016

Forensic Analyst – Audio/Video, Houston Forensic Science Center, Houston, TX, Expires: June 30, 2016

Crime Scene Investigator, Houston Forensic Science Center, Houston, TX, Expires: June 30, 2016

Manager of Biology, Houston Forensic Science Center, Houston, TX, Expires: June 30, 2016

Technical Lead – Biology, Houston Forensic Science Center, Houston, TX, Expires: July 5, 2016

Forensic Chemist, ORAU, Ft. Gillem, GA (& OCONUS), Expires: July 31, 2016

Forensic Specialist III/Forensic Specialist IV, Kansas City Mo Police Dept. Crime Laboratory, Kansas City, Missouri, Expires: May 31, 2016

Supervising Forensic Identification Specialist, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, Los Angeles, California, Expires: June 22, 2016


Forensic Science Lecturer, University at Albany, Albany, NY, Expires: May 31, 2016

Assistant/Associate Professor of Forensic Science, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX, Expires: May 31, 2016

Assistant/Associate Professor of Forensic Science, Department of Forensic Science, College of Criminal Justice, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas, Expires: December 31, 2016

Forensic Conferences

WVU Forensic Management Academy
August 28 – September 2, 2016
Six days on-site in Pittsburgh, PA
$1995 before March 31; $2250 after March 31
Click here for course description and registration.

Aug 7-13, 2016: International Association for Identification – Cincinnati, OH
Sep 18-23, 2016: International Symposium on the Forensic Sciences – Auckland, New Zealand
Oct 3-7, 2016: Midwestern Association of Forensic Scientist (MAFS) – Branson, Missouri
Oct 16-21, 2016: Society of Forensic Toxicologists – Dallas, TX
Oct. 2016: Southwestern Association of Forensic Scientists – Galveston, TX