President's Message

Colleagues,

Last week, Past-President Jody Wolf and I had the distinct honor of attending the International Forensic Manager's Symposium at Interpol in Lyon, France. We attended the event on behalf of ASCLD and participated in the symposium by presenting posters on ASCLD, the International Forensic Strategic Alliance (IFSA), and the IFSA Minimum Requirements Documents (MRDs). As President of IFSA, Past-President Wolf also presided over the annual IFSA Board Meeting, composed of colleagues from the 6 IFSA Member Organizations, and our strategic partners from Interpol and the United Nations.

IFSA Member Organizations are:

- The American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD)
- The European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI)
- The Senior Managers of Australian and New Zealand Forensic Laboratories (SMANZFL)
- The Academia Iboamericana de Criminalistica y Estudios Forenses (AICEF)
- The Asian Forensic Sciences Network (ASFN)
- The Southern Africa Regional Forensic Science Network (SARFS)

IFSA is just another example of how ASCLD is engaging the forensic space, internationally in this instance, to provide excellence in forensic science through leadership and innovation. Through our interactions with our international partners, ASCLD is able to foster the development of quality management principles, maintain the highest standards in the global forensic field, and network with critical stakeholders.

Past-President Wolf and I were honored to represent ASCLD at this auspicious meeting and look forward to continued networking among the global forensic organizations to include the addition of international members into the membership ranks of ASCLD.

As always, it is an honor to serve as your President. Have a GREAT week.

-Jeremy Triplett

Quote of the week: "It always seems impossible until it’s done." - Nelson Mandela
CALL FOR ABSTRACTS
44th Annual ASCLD Symposium, April 30 – May 4, 2017, Dallas, Texas

The symposium planning committee of the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD) welcomes your abstracts for plenary talks, full and half-day workshops, and poster presentations for the 44th annual ASCLD Symposium in 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 should be to provide crime lab leadership with actionable tools and transportable information that can be directly applied to improve their operation.

Presentations should fit into one or more of the following categories:

- Lab Performance
- Quality Operations
- Lab Efficiency
- Personnel Performance
- Technology
- Training / Mentoring
- Case Studies / Reviews

To submit your abstract, please visit: https://www.regonline.com/ascldsymposiumabstractsubmission2017

Abstract submission deadline is October 31, 2016. 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

Greetings from the Project FORESIGHT team.

We invite you to join us and submit data for the past fiscal year.

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. FORESIGHT is open to any forensic laboratory that completes and submits a LabRAT form. There is no charge for participation. This link will provide an example of an individualized report prepared for a participating laboratory.

To participate, simply complete the LabRAT workbook and submit to Paul 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
An overview of Project Foresight and an Overview of LabRAT can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzgeKYqldPQ&feature=youtu.be

Mary M. Gibbons, Crime Laboratory Manager, is retiring in October.

After 35 years of public service, Mary M. Gibbons, Crime Laboratory Manager, is retiring in October.

A reception is being held on October 28, 2016, beginning at 5:30 pm at Bocanova Restaurant, Jack London Square, 55 Webster Street, Oakland.

The cost is $75 per person which include hors d'oeuvres, champagne toast and gift. Please RSVP by October 24th to Jennifer Mihalovich 510-238-3386 or JMihalovich@oaklandnet.com

Hello Everyone,

Marshall University Forensic Science is offering the DNA Technical Assistance Program (DNA TAP) again this year. Attached is the DNA TAP Information flyer and the associated DNA TAP Request Form should you have validation or evaluation needs. Beginning this week, a limited number of DNA TAP students are in training at the MU Forensic Science Center from now until May for their summer 2017 DNA TAP assignments. No assignments have been made at this time so please apply early this fall to have the best chance to be assigned a DNA TAP student.

Please feel free to call (304-634-5263) or email (staton1@marshall.edu) should you have questions or wish to apply but need more information. If you are new to this program, I would be happy to set up a conference call with your group to discuss this further.

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
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.

2016 National Sexual Assault Policy Symposium
The archival version of the "Looking Ahead: The National Sexual Assault Policy Symposium" that was hosted by The National Institute of Justice on September 8-9, 2016 is now available! The symposium focused on how the nation is moving forward and finding solutions to the complex issues that arise in sexual assault cases and in testing sexual assault evidence. Be sure to check out panels on the role of evidence in sexual assault cases, testing sexual assault evidence, and building an efficient laboratory using technology and innovative processes.

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. NIJ awarded an additional $3.3 million to state and local governments through its new Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence – Inventory, Tracking, and Reporting program (SAFE-ITR).

Fiscal Year 2015 NIJ Funding for DNA Analysis, Capacity Enhancement and Other Forensic Activities
In FY15, NIJ received $117 million in appropriations to assist state and local crime laboratories with DNA analysis, lab capacity enhancement, DNA and other forensic R&D, and training and technical assistance. This report documents how the funding was awarded.

Video: Progress Testing Sexual Assault Kits
In this video, members from the Nevada Sexual Assault Kit Backlog Working Group describe the importance of using a multidisciplinary, victim-centered approach in addressing complex issues that arise while responding to sexual assault. The team also describes the importance of utilizing available resources, including research and federal support from the National Institute of Justice, in making progress towards processing untested sexual assault kits.

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]. That’s where NIJ and their resources come in. The NIJ has given more than $23 million to 32 law enforcement agencies since 2008, according to Heurich. The funding is awarded every other year and officials say it is integral to their efforts.

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

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.

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
There is a great deal of evidence that genes influence facial appearance. This is perhaps most apparent when we look at our own families, since we are more likely to share facial features in common with our close relatives than with unrelated individuals. Nevertheless, little is known about how variation in specific regions of the genome relates to the kinds of distinguishing facial characteristics that give us our unique identities, e.g., the size and shape of our nose or how far apart our eyes are spaced. In this paper, we investigate this question by examining the association between genetic variants across the whole genome and a set of measurements designed to capture key aspects of facial form. We found evidence of genetic associations involving measures of eye, nose, and facial breadth. In several cases, implicated regions contained genes known to play roles in embryonic face formation or in syndromes in which the face is affected. Our ability to connect specific genetic variants to ubiquitous facial traits can inform our understanding of normal and abnormal craniofacial development, provide potential predictive models of evolutionary changes in human facial features, and improve our ability to create forensic facial reconstructions from DNA.

**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:

Microspectrophotometry followed by chemometric data analysis was conducted on pairs of visually similar blue acrylic fibers, simulating the “questioned versus known” scenarios often encountered in forensic casework. The relative similarity or dissimilarity of each pair was determined by employing principal component analysis, discriminant analysis and Fisher’s exact test. Comparison of fibers from within each set resulted in a correct inclusion result in 10 out of 11 scenarios, with the one false exclusion attributed to a lack of reproducibility in the spectra. Comparison of fibers from different sets resulted in a correct exclusion result in 108 of 110 scenarios, with two sets that shared identical dye combinations being indistinguishable. Although the presented methods are not infallible, they may nonetheless provide a path forward for forensic fiber examiners that has a more scientifically rigorous basis on which to support their findings in a court of law.

**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:

Sensors employing split aptamers that reassemble in the presence of a target can achieve excellent specificity, but the accompanying reduction of target affinity mitigates any overall gains in sensitivity. We for the first time have developed a split aptamer that achieves enhanced target-binding affinity through cooperative binding. We have generated a split cocaine-binding aptamer that incorporates two binding domains, such that target binding at one domain greatly increases the affinity of the second domain. We experimentally demonstrate that the resulting cooperative-binding split aptamer (CBSA) exhibits higher target binding affinity and is far more responsive in terms of target-induced aptamer assembly compared to the single-domain parent split aptamer (PSA) from which it was derived. We further confirm that the target-binding affinity of our CBSA can be affected by the cooperativity of its binding domains and the intrinsic affinity of its PSA. To the best of our knowledge, CBSA-5335 has the highest cocaine affinity of any split aptamer described to date. The CBSA-based assay also demonstrates excellent performance in target detection in complex samples. Using this CBSA, we achieved specific, ultra-sensitive, one-step fluorescence detection of cocaine within fifteen minutes at concentrations as low as 50 ng/mL.
theory with solid statistics that are scientifically said. “The study has made it possible to replace handwriting comparisons are possible,” the authors that may be used to scientifically prove why forensic in two Minnesota school districts. The study progressed through second, third, and fourth grades analyzing writing from 1,800 children as they how individual handwriting characteristics develop by researchers in this NIJ-supported study focused on the assumption that no two people write the same way and no one person writes exactly the same way twice. Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension researchers in this NIJ-supported study focused on how individual handwriting characteristics develop by analyzing writing from 1,800 children as they progressed through second, third, and fourth grades in two Minnesota school districts. The study developed “the beginning of a true statistical model that may be used to scientifically prove why forensic handwriting comparisons are possible,” the authors said. “The study has made it possible to replace theory with solid statistics that are scientifically accurate and reliable.”

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.

Developing DNA Friendly Fluorogenic Methods for Detecting, Enhancing, and Preserving Bloody and Proteinaceous Impression Evidence

Impressions are commonly found as evidence associated with crime scenes and current fluorogenic enhancement methods for such evidence are problematic for DNA preservation. The goal of this project, by NIJ-supported researchers at Madonna University and the Oakland County Sheriff’s Office Forensic Science Laboratory, was to produce simple, effective, non-toxic methods for recovery and enhancement of impression evidence that allowed for subsequent DNA recovery. The project used Zar-Pro Fluorescent Lifters and focused on optimizing the detection, enhancement, and preservation of impressions deposited in blood, semen, saliva, sweat, and non-human oil. The researchers found that DNA capable of producing full STR profiles can be extracted from semen and blood impressions, but not from impressions in any biofluid treated with Fluorescent Enhancement Sprays. The researchers concluded that in many instances, both impression evidence and DNA can be recovered from a single evidentiary item.


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. Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension researchers in this NIJ-supported study focused on how individual handwriting characteristics develop by analyzing writing from 1,800 children as they progressed through second, third, and fourth grades in two Minnesota school districts. The study developed “the beginning of a true statistical model that may be used to scientifically prove why forensic handwriting comparisons are possible,” the authors said. “The study has made it possible to replace theory with solid statistics that are scientifically accurate and reliable.”

Forensic Conferences

WVU Forensic Management Academy
Six days on-site in Pittsburgh, PA
Click here for course description and registration.
Oct 16-21, 2016: Society of Forensic Toxicologists – Dallas, TX
Oct 2016: Southwestern Association of Forensic Scientists – Galveston, TX

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

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 QMACademy)

National Footwear & Tire Track Training Academy

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 forensic 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 IAI Footwear 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)

Looking Ahead: The National Sexual Assault Policy Symposium

NIJ, through its Forensic Technology Center of Excellence, is hosting Looking Ahead: The National Sexual Assault Policy Symposium on September 8-9, 2016. The symposium focuses on how the nation is moving forward and finding solutions to the complex issues that arise in sexual assault cases and in testing sexual assault evidence.
close a 2006 Baltimore County murder case and now

ASCLD Crime Lab Minute October 18 2016

News Around the Globe

Police await toxicology reports after family of four found dead in Sydney home

The Guardian
Police are awaiting toxicology reports for a family of four who died in Sydney’s north. The bodies of father Fernando Mannique, 44, Maria Lutz, 43, their ... In 2015, meth becomes most common substance after alcohol in DUI blood tests

Billings Gazette
Meth has also been detected more often in other cases that the crime lab’s toxicology division handles, according to a summary report from the ..

Backlog at state crime lab concerning to officials who expect it to worsen

Concord Monitor
Tim Pifer, director of New Hampshire’s forensic labs in the evidence control office this week. GEOFF FORESTER—Monitor staff » Buy this Image.

Ohio AG DeWine to speak in Springfield today

WHIO
Some rape kits would take more than 120 days to be processed at the lab, DeWine said, which was unacceptable. "DNA matching is solving crimes ...

Regional crime lab moves closer to reality

Castle Rock Newspress (registration)
Closure of APD’s DNA lab causing crisis in the court system

KXAN.com
AUSTIN (KXAN) — The closure of the Austin Police Department’s DNA lab has created a problem within the Travis Criminal Justice System. KXA

Meth has also been detected more often in other cases that the crime lab’s toxicology division handles, according to a summary report from the ..

Attorney general candidates Fox, Jent split over experience, lawsuits

KTVH
During the campaign, Jent has been critical of operations at the state crime lab. He says several drug cases have been or will be dismissed because ... Massachusetts uses DNA test to predict a cold case killer’s appearance

Albany Times Union
Since DNA phenotyping gives investigators a baseline description of a ... His office went to a private firm because a State Police forensic lab scandal ...

NA Advances Help Solve 2006 Baltimore Co. Murder

CBS Local
BALTIMORE (WJZ)—Recent DNA advances help close a 2006 Baltimore County murder case and now the victim’s husband is to blame.

NIJ expects more than 350 high-level government officials from national, state, and local levels, along with decision-makers from law enforcement agencies, the legal community, and criminal justice coalitions from all 56 states and territories. This unprecedented event will support our nation’s policymakers and practitioners as they drive future efforts to solve sexual assault cases, provide justice to victims, and ultimately improve public health and public safety.

Speakers include Pulitzer Prize winners T. Christian Miller and Ken Armstrong, co-authors of "An Unbelievable Story of Rape," Alicia O'Neill from TNT’s Cold Justice: Sex Crimes, and victims advocate Natasha Alexenko, founder of Natasha’s Justice Project.

Learn more and read the agenda.

Register now.

Seating is limited and hotel courtesy blocks expire soon.

10 Hours | $395

Self-Paced Online Professional Training
The information is at: www.fightingbias.com

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.

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 Toxics Webinar – Archival
ASCLD Train the Directors Firearms Webinar – Archival
ASCLD Train the Directors Digital Multimedia Evidence Webinar – Archival
ASCLD Train the Directors Toxics Webinar – Archival
ASCLD Train the Directors Digital Multimedia Evidence Webinar – Archival
ASCLD Rapid DNA Webinar 1 – Archival
ASCLD Rapid DNA Webinar 2 – Archival
ASCLD Rapid DNA Webinar 3 – Archival

Please find attached (or online here) the TOC for the current issue of Forensic Science Policy & Management, the journal of the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors.
expect it to worsen
Concord Monitor
One of the Mass Spectrometers the State of New Hampshire uses for analyzing drugs. The lab will be getting a fourth to keep up with the volume of ...

How Medicinal Genomics Is Using DNA Sequencing to Improve the Cannabis Industry
MERRY JANE
The company, which brothers Brian, Kevin, and Brendan McKernan founded in 2011, is using DNA technology to create “fingerprints” for

Closure of APD's DNA lab causing crisis in the court system
KXAN.com
AUS

Forensic expert accused of perjury, mixing up lab tests
FOX 4 News
One the state's top forensic experts responsible for blood testing in several DWI cases is under scrutiny for mixing up lab tests. He's also accused of ...

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