

Kerri T. Heward

Washoe County Sheriff's Office Forensic Science Division



Education

- Bachelor of Science, Biology, University of California Riverside
- West Virginia University Forensic Management Academy in 2010
- University of California Davis Forensic Management Academy in 2012

Employment Experience

- 2015–present: Laboratory Director of the Washoe County Sheriff's Office Forensic Science Division (FSD); Providing service to 13 of 17 counties in Nevada and 1 county in California.
- 2015–present: Contract Lead Assessor for ANAB (previously ASCLD/LAB).
- 2005–present: Technical Assessor for ASCLD/LAB-ANAB.
- 2007–2015: Supervising Criminalist, Washoe County FSD for Firearms/Toolmarks; Drug Analysis; Trace Unit; Breath Alcohol.
- 1994–2008: San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Scientific Investigations Division.
 - Positions held: Forensic Laboratory Technician; Criminalist 1, Criminalist 2, Lead Criminalist, Acting Supervising Criminalist; Quality Manager
 - Disciplines: Serology; Drug Analysis; Clandestine Laboratory Investigation and Analysis; Toxicology Screening; Impression Evidence; Firearm/Toolmark Examination
 - During my time at the San Bernardino County Lab, I was the Quality Manager for 2½ years and the Acting Supervisor of the Alcohol and Firearms Unit for 6 months. These opportunities allowed me to gain a breadth and depth of knowledge that have benefitted me throughout my forensics career.
- Before forensics
 - Staff Research Associate in the Entomology Department conducting biological control research. This gave me the opportunity to learn laboratory techniques related to protein and DNA analysis.

Prior ASCLD Experience

- ASCLD Symposium Attendance: 2008–2011 and 2014–2018
- Committees Served: Membership; Symposium Planning; Abstract Review Subcommittee (Chair); Save the Date Subcommittee.
 - I enjoy working with Kinsley at the registration booth as it allows me to meet new forensic friends.
- Current ASCLD point of contact for the Western Region
- Current CACLD and AFTE member
- Previously CAC and CLIC member

If elected, I am interested in working on the following ASCLD issues/committees:

- Standards and Accreditation initiatives
- International
- Membership
- Member resources
- Training and education
- Symposium planning

Because I have a strong background in accreditation, I would like to work toward the goal of achieving accreditation for all laboratories. I believe in embracing change and being a leader of change. Opportunities to help and encourage others to move toward constant improvement is of interest to me.

As a member of the Board, you may be asked to represent ASCLD at speaking engagements or develop written statements on behalf of the Board. How would you describe your ability to communicate ideas verbally and in writing?

As a Laboratory Director and an ANAB Contract Lead Assessor, I have opportunities to communicate in many venues and capacities with different groups and people as a presenter and as a collaborator. The responsibilities of my roles as a Laboratory Director and Lead Assessor have provided opportunities to connect with others and share information. I speak and collaborate with groups of all sizes. I write policy and procedures and provide input at the state and county level. I write and manage federal grants.

Public speaking is never easy but embracing opportunities to be well practiced becomes easier with time. I welcome the opportunity to share and learn toward the goal of inclusion of all forensic scientists in the community, ongoing collaboration, innovation, and improvement in our profession.

How committed are you to serving on the ASCLD Board? What skills will you bring to the table?

I am fully committed to serving on the ASCLD Board. My career history demonstrates my commitment to my profession, my organization, and my community. My professional strengths that would enhance the ASCLD Board are

- A broad knowledge of forensic science as demonstrated by the number of forensic disciplines I have worked in over the years, the number of different disciplines I have supervised and managed, and the experience leading assessment teams.
- I have worked for the majority of my career in the pattern matching disciplines of Firearms and Impression evidence. This expertise is not often found among board members; therefore, I will provide that needed perspective and expertise.
- My skill set as the Director of a laboratory that provides service to a large region in a state with no state forensic laboratory brings a unique perspective to the ASCLD Board.
- Working as a Lead Assessor for the largest accrediting body in the Western Hemisphere has given me an inside edge to develop and maintain an excellent management and quality system at my own lab and will be an asset to ASCLD and those whom I am able to assist as an ASCLD Board Member.

What role should ASCLD play in developing a strong future for forensic science laboratories?

I strongly encourage the Leadership Team at my laboratory to join forensic groups, make connections with others in our forensic community, and always look for opportunities to improve individually, within their discipline, organization, and profession.

I believe ASCLD provides this same encouragement on a more global level. I believe strongly in the "community" of forensic science. That community of forensic scientists, all of us—we are ASCLD. We have the opportunity and the responsibility to join together to encourage and support each other, to improve ourselves as forensic scientists, to improve our organizations, profession, and make significant strides forward with new technologies and innovative ideas.

Forensic laboratories are underfunded and understaffed to provide the needed services. ASCLD continues to play a major role in advocating for the forensic resources our communities need and deserve.

ASCLD should continue to be the global leader in providing encouragement, support, training opportunities, and advocacy so we can continue to strive toward excellence as a forensic science community.