

This week we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the 2009 National Academy of Sciences Report. Since its publication, we have advanced as a profession with more accredited labs, certified scientists, standards developed, black box studies in support of the science, and technical working groups for technology implementation. We have more support from Congress, the Federal government, and other interested stakeholders than ever before. While many good things have happened, ASCLD must continue to advance! A few years ago, I testified before the United States President's Counsel of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST). The focus on the hearing was on ground truth research, and the publication of that research. I committed that day to be more proactive in getting our message out to the world. I committed to be more engaged in publishing the great research and validation that we do as a forensic science community. I also committed to find more ways to make research and scholarly journal information available to the forensic scientists and the stakeholder community. ASCLD has always been very involved in robust research and publication of that research to the forensic community. The ASCLD Board has made it part of the strategic plan to "advance the science in forensic science." This means to actively encourage and participate in the research, find ways to implement best practices in the laboratory, and to publish good research, policy, and methods to the forensic science community. Today I wanted to let you know of several opportunities to get your lab involved with black box and other research to advance forensic science. This research is critical to advancing forensic science. I also wanted to highlight a very important relationship ASCLD has established with a new forensic science journal. It is a very high priority to ASCLD to further forensic science by publishing research in open access formats. The efforts of the Board on this front are increasing, and the Board is excited about many other emerging opportunities that will be announced in coming months.

FORESIGHT USERS GROUP MEETING

We have received many questions and inquiries about this meeting. The deadline for the hotel block at per diem rate is the 26th of February. Dr. Paul Speaker (West Virginia University) and Max Houck (FORESIGHT Co-Founder) have confirmed they plan to attend, and we have invited professors from several other top tier business schools. All lab directors and managers are welcome to attend. There will be sessions about getting into the project for the first time, and other sessions targeted for experienced users. It will also be a strategic session regarding the future of the development of the system. We will be talking about how to make the best use of the data coming out of the system, and how the data can drive business processes. The FORESIGHT Strategy Session will be hosted at the Utah Department of Public Safety Crime Laboratory in Salt Lake City, Utah on March 14-15, 2019 hosted by ASCLD President Matthew Gamette and ASCLD Past-President Jay Henry. Attendees will be responsible for their own travel funding and arrangements. Tuition is very reasonable: FREE! Send an email to jhenry@utah.gov to register or obtain more information.

NEW ASCLD PREFERRED JOURNAL

Have you been wondering what happened to the journal Forensic Science Policy and Management? It has been reborn and retooled as a new Elsevier publication called Forensic Science International-Synergy. <https://www.journals.elsevier.com/forensic-science-international-synergy> The Journal is an open access journal. This means that there is a fee to publish an article, but never a fee to access and download the articles in the journal. The format is new to the forensic science community with all the publishing done online. Articles upload regularly and volumes compile in real-time. ASCLD is extremely excited about the opportunities this new publication brings to the forensic science community. Very shortly, the proceedings from the 2018 ASCLD Symposium will post to Synergy. The symposium proceedings will continue to be posted to Synergy per our agreement with the publisher. Having our symposium proceedings in an indexed and open access journal is a huge success for our organization! ASCLD has negotiated with Elsevier for FSI-Synergy to be a preferred journal

of ASCLD, with members getting a significant to extreme discount on the publishing of their work. The ASCLD Board is excited for the opportunities this journal brings for our membership. The journal is looking for leadership and management content from ASCLD members. We encourage our membership to engage in the publication of thought provoking work, especially in leadership and management. From the Synergy website, *“Forensic Science International: Synergy is an open access journal which welcomes significant, insightful, and innovative original research with the aim of advancing and supporting forensic science while exceeding its expectations for excellence. By being freely available to anyone, we seek to promote and support open discourse across diverse areas of interest, avocation, and geography. Papers are invited from all forensic sciences and influencing disciplines, including but not limited to the humanities, life sciences, social sciences, and the law. Cross-disciplinary collaboration promotes innovative approaches, encourages systems-level perspectives, and seeds the literature with insightful opportunities. Because the good management of science can be as important as the science itself, the journal welcomes articles on issues related to forensic science policy and management. Management, human resources, economic studies, policy implications of new methods or technology, and any other work intended to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, quality, and operations of forensic science laboratories as well as to the education and training of forensic scientists. In addition, the journal welcomes manuscripts on the governmental and institutional policies that affect the practice and management of forensic science.”*

ANZPAA “Best of the Best Latent Print Examiners” Research

Our friends in Australia and New Zealand (ANZPAA) have asked us to distribute the following information. The University of Queensland, Australia is looking for the best of the best latent print examiners for a new study they are working on related to learning from high performers. They want ASCLD's help to identify the leading practitioners in the field so they can gain a clear picture of what makes them exceptional. If you know of an outstanding performer with respect to comparing and identifying latent fingerprints, and they are willing to participate in the study, please submit their information here

https://uqpsych.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ey5wf1FsRgIVrPD

FBI Black Box Handwriting Study

The FBI Laboratory, with Ideal Innovations and Noblis, is conducting a black box study evaluating the accuracy and reproducibility of forensic document examiners. The study will also assess what impact, if any, such factors as experience and training have on examiner decisions. Participation in the study is open to examiners who have performed handwriting evidence comparisons in operational casework within the last two years. Non-U.S. examiners are welcome to participate if they use the SWGDOC Standard Terminology in Expressing Conclusions

of Forensic Document Examiners (9 point scale) or a similar conclusion scale of at least 5 levels. Participation in the study will be anonymous. To encourage participation, four participants who completed all assigned comparisons will be randomly selected and given awards: one \$1000 and three \$500 awards will be given. These will only be awarded after all results are collected: rapid completion will not improve the chances of winning. Those interested in participating should contact handwriting@noblis.org

[FBI Black Box Footwear Study](#)

The purpose of this study is to measure the accuracy and reliability of decisions made by forensic footwear examiners. This study is a collaborative effort by the FBI Laboratory, Ideal Innovations, and Noblis. Participants will be asked to make conclusions based on comparisons of footwear evidence similar to actual casework. The footwear evidence samples will be provided as both physical photographs and digital images, the latter provided via a custom software application. The custom software will also be used to record comparison determinations (i.e., conclusions) and will provide tools for marking wear, randomly acquired characteristics, and or other design elements or anomalies that were used to make those determinations. Participation in this study is open to all practicing, qualified United States examiners who have performed forensic footwear evidence comparisons in operational casework within the last five years. Non-U.S. examiners may participate if they use the SWGTREAD conclusion scale (either 2006 or 2013 scale). Participants will be asked to perform a total of 100 footwear evidence comparisons over a period of approximately one year. We estimate that the study will take about $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to 1 hour per week over the course of the year. Each comparison involves one questioned impression, and one item of footwear (test impressions and outsole images). The 100 comparisons will be distributed in five packets of 20 comparisons each over the one-year period. Results will be aggregated across multiple examiners. Results will be further analyzed and classified by the education, training, and experience categories established in the background questionnaire. All results will be anonymous and care will be taken so that results are not aggregated in a way that compromises anonymity. Those interested in participating should contact footwear@noblis.org
