

This week I want to thank all of you for the opportunity to serve you as ASCLD President over the last year. It has been one of the most rewarding professional experiences of my career. I want to express my gratitude to the ASCLD Board, Executive Director Stover, Administrative Assistant Robertson, all the committee and task group chairs, and all the volunteers. ASCLD would not function without these talented and dedicated individuals. The thousands of service hours they dedicate to the organization is humbling and inspiring. I opened last year by talking about one of the greatest stories of service and sacrifice I have ever heard. The story was about handcart pioneer James Kirkwood, (age 11) who carried his little brother Joseph (age 4) over a mountain pass called Rocky Ridge in Wyoming during an unexpected early blizzard. After the 15 mile journey that took over 27 hours, James arrived in camp, put his little brother down, and died from exhaustion and exposure to the brutal blizzard. In closing my term as President, I want to relay another pioneer story that has had a big impact on me. The story is about Harvey Cluff. Harvey was sent from Salt Lake City to rescue handcart pioneers stranded in the Wyoming blizzard. In a raging blizzard, as the rescuers pushed toward the starving and freezing handcart companies, Harvey took shelter with the rescue supplies off the trail in the willows by the river. Harvey recognized that he needed to put up a sign on the main trail for any advancing riders from the handcart companies. At great personal risk, Harvey returned to the main trail and put up a sign for any advance riders. He had no sooner returned to his camp when the advanced riders, having seen his sign on the main trail, came into camp. They were able to return with desperately needed supplies. Had they not been alerted to his camp location, many more of the handcart pioneers would have perished in the ensuing few days. I love this story because it reminds me of the critical importance of directing people in the right way. Historically, and increasingly recently, ASCLD has put a signpost in the ground on many issues. The organization has chosen to advance forensic science in many ways. These include standards development, accreditation, advocacy, collaboration with federal partners, engagement with stakeholder groups, and leadership training. It is critical that those individuals advancing agendas on many fronts look to ASCLD for the direction that we as leaders in forensic science labs and medical examiner offices can provide. It is critically important that we put up the signposts for people to find us, and engage with us in solving the issues that face. It has been an amazing year to watch experts seek out our newly established task groups and committees. The ASCLD committees are all addressing timely and important issues for the forensic science community. I encourage you to consider volunteering next year. There are many very active committees and task groups needing your help. This will be an abbreviated year due to the earlier symposium date next year. We hope you will get involved right away so we can accomplish a great deal next year. Again, thank you for trusting and supporting us as a Board. Thank you for your investment in ASCLD. I am proud to be a member of this great organization. I wish you all safe travels to the symposium, and I look forward to an amazing meeting again this year! See you in St. Louis.

[ABA Meeting Assistance](#)

ASCLD is coordinating a panel at the ABA meeting at the end of the month. We will be discussing new and innovative things that labs are doing related to discovery, public records, and record transparency. We know that many of you are doing some great things in this area and I would love to hear from you regarding your efforts. We are also eager to hear examples of things that are going well regarding interactions with your stakeholder groups as you have worked together on discovery and records availability. Please email me directly at matthew.gamette@isp.idaho.gov

[Symposium Event Mobi App is LIVE](#)

The 2019 Symposium Mobile App is now available. To view the app, Download EventMobi from App Store or Google Play, search for ASCLD 2019. The most current information is on the app including agenda, information on speakers, ASCLD Board annual reports, and the Scavenger Hunt to name a few things. It is important for all ASCLD members to review the ASCLD board Officer and Committee Reports that are on the app and the ASCLD Symposium website as they are a summary of the activities of the board since the last symposium.

[Emerging Drug Task Force Update](#)

The ASCLD Emerging Drug Task Force has recently published an update for all ASCLD members. This update has information about resources such as conference calls, grants, instrumentation, and other topics that will help the membership. We urge you to look through it and share it widely with lab staff. We also encourage you to visit the opioid page on the ASCLD website for helpful resources.

[Drug Chemistry White Box Study](#)

The Kentucky State Police Forensic Laboratories and NIJ's Forensic Technology Center of Excellence are conducting a white box study for drug chemistry. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the reliability and validity of common analytical schemes used for the identification of seized drugs in forensic laboratories, based on needs identified by the Organization of Scientific Area Committees Seized Drug Subcommittee ([LINK](#)) and the National Institute of Justice Technical Working Group for Controlled Substances ([LINK](#), p.4). The results of the study will assist in establishing error rates for seized drugs analysis and, further, could provide empirical data from which laboratories can make informed policy decisions about the techniques they implement in casework.

We are currently seeking volunteer laboratories to participate in this important study. Volunteer labs will be asked to analyze 2 sets of unknown samples. In the first set, the laboratory will be asked to perform a single, particular analytical technique on each sample. In the second set, the laboratory will be asked to perform a prescribed analytical scheme on different samples. The results will be statistically analyzed to compare the efficacy of individual analytical techniques and various analytical schemes.

Results for the study will be anonymized and reported in aggregate form. Neither the participant laboratories nor their individual responses will be identified in the final report.

Please see the Frequently Asked Questions document available at <https://www.asclcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf> for additional information about the study.

If your laboratory is interested in participating in this unique opportunity, if you have questions, or if you would like additional information, please contact Jeremy Triplett, Drug Chemistry Supervisor at the Kentucky State Police Central Forensic Laboratory, at jeremy.triplett@ky.gov.

[Inside Your World Investigates](#)

Inside Your World Investigates will broadcast three investigative news stories on three successive nights (May 28, 29, 30) in the newscasts of approximately 85 TV [stations](#). Several ASCLD members were interviewed for this series. Mark Hyman traveled to Idaho to visit with me and we talked about the importance of the ASCLD Sexual Assault Kit Task Force and also resources for crime labs to be able to process kits in a timely manner. The three-part *Justice Denied* series will address the following aspects of sexual assault: (1) Lack of investigations; (2) DNA & rape kit testing; (3) Victim-focused reforms.