

The next few weeks are spring break in many areas of the country. We are finally able to dust off the cobwebs of winter and the earth enjoys a fresh start. As an avid fruit farmer, I enjoy pruning back the trees and seeing the blossoms pop out all over the yard. A month ago, I was able to hear a fantastic talk during the plenary session of the AAFS meeting. This talk encouraged me to rethink, reframe, and refocus in my career. It caused me to think about where I need to prune, and what growth and blossoms might come from a new spring. I believe it is a talk that will be quoted for many years. I think it may even make some fabulous forensic science bumper stickers! Mr. Ted Hunt, Special Forensic Science Advisor to the United States Deputy Attorney General, delivered the talk. This talk is worth a few minutes of your time today. I have posted it in the President's Corner today with permission from Mr. Hunt and the AAFS. I wanted to highlight a few things from this talk that stood out to me:

- Diligence to the effort, dedication to the details, and devotion to the field mean that all of us, whatever our role in the system, must work together and rededicate ourselves to a common cause.
- Don't let criticism make you stop listening to the critiques. Criticism can be many things. It can be painful, it can be annoying, it can be flat wrong, and completely unfair. But open and honest criticism can also be the catalyst for conversation, constructive change, and continual advancement.
- Don't ever let the fact that a method is *legally admissible* be the sole reason to say that it's *scientifically acceptable*. Legal decisions must not lead to scientific satisfaction and professional stagnation. Instead, always try to improve upon what you do and how you do it — to make it more rigorous, more robust, and more reliable. The self-correcting nature of science is one of its greatest strengths; but great science doesn't happen without great scientists. Always strive to be a great scientist first. Great practice follows great practitioners.
- Always remember that being a forensic scientist is a tremendous privilege, but it's also a tremendous responsibility.

[GAO Report](#)

The Government Accountability Office has released the report *DNA Evidence: DOJ Should Improve Performance Measurement and Properly Design Controls for Nationwide Grant Program* (GAO-19-216). GAO reached out to ASCLD and thanked the organization for all our help in providing information and fact checking data. ASCLD provided extensive education, expertise, and comment to GAO in the drafting of this report. I specifically invited ASCLD Directors Jay Henry and Ray Wickenheiser to attend with me at an all-day in-person listening session at the GAO offices in Washington last April. GAO asked very good questions, and were eager to have the input of our members. We followed up with data and information for the next several months. We appreciate the diligence of our colleagues at the GAO in ensuring that the data and facts were correct for this report.

https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-19-216?utm_source=onepager&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=email_hsj.

[FORESIGHT WORKFORCE CALCULATOR](#)

I have had many requests for the FORESIGHT/NIJ/FTCoE workforce calculator. Dr. Paul Speaker has given us permission to share that with you. The only thing he asks is for your feedback on the tool for improvement. Based on FORESIGHT metrics, if you put in your lab demographics and caseload in a discipline, it will estimate how many personnel you should have working in that discipline. Dr. Speaker also provided the attendees with a presentation on the impact of the opioid crisis on forensic science laboratories. We will post this in the CLM this week.

We also have developed a way to share the Idaho personnel time accounting system. This is a web-based system that will allow your employees to enter their time each day into different categories that will allow you to estimate your FTPs in each discipline. This tool also allows you to develop summary metrics for various reports such as “how many hours do analysts spend traveling to or waiting for court,” or “how many hours do we dedicate to quality control activities in the lab.” Send me an email, and I would be happy to share any tools with you.

RAPID DNA DVI WORKSHOP AT 2019 SYMPOSIUM



The ASCLD Board is pleased to announce a fantastic workshop on Disaster Victim Identification. The flyer in the CLM last week had more information. We have been planning this for two years. We are collaborating with RTI FTCoE, SNA, and federal, state, and local emergency response agencies to conduct this timely workshop. Crime lab directors and emergency response leaders are the target audience. It is going to fill very fast because there are limited spots. The workshop is on Monday of the symposium week. Rapid DNA is becoming an important tool in DVI operations and the workshop is designed to give laboratory directors and supervisors the opportunity to experience how Rapid DNA instruments are used in identification efforts during a mass fatality response.

The workshop will include short lectures, a tabletop exercise and the opportunity for participants to proceed through seven interactive workstations focused on Rapid DNA’s role in the Family Assistance Center (FAC), Incident Morgue and Identification operations. After completing the workshop participants will understand:

- How Rapid DNA can be used in DVI operations
- Who the mass fatality response stakeholders are (i.e., DMORT, NTSB, FEMORS, OMORT, MOMORT)
- FAC, Incident Morgue, and Identification operations, specifically focused on the use of DNA, with hands-on experience
- ASCLD’s Rapid DNA Mass Fatality Task Force deliverables including: the Rapid DNA Needs Assessment Checklist, Emergency Management Assistance Compacts (mutual aid agreements among states to share resources during times of need), the Rapid DNA Deployment Checklist, and DNA Operations Process Maps
- How a Rapid DNA mass fatality response can be a cooperative endeavor to support the local jurisdiction impacted by the mass fatality

ON DEMAND TRAINING ON ASCLD WEBSITE:

Many links have been added to the ASCLD website “On-Demand Training Page” <https://www.ascld.org/meetings-and-training/on-demand-training/> All of the recent and older archived “train the director” series, a number of NIJ and FTCoE forensic training courses, and other ASCLD webinars are archived on this site.

ASCLD/RTI DNA Standards and Guidelines Webinar Series

- SWGDAM Interpretational Guidelines
- Proposed Quality Assurance Standards (QAS) changes

ASCLD/RTI Rapid DNA Series

Archival versions of the ASCLD/RTI Rapid DNA Series can be found at the following links:

- Rapid DNA: The QAS and NDIS
- Rapid DNA: Arizona DPS and Mohave County, SC
- Rapid DNA: Booking Stations and CCHSD

ASCLD/RTI Rapid Train the Director Series

Archival versions of the original ASCLD/RTI Train the Director Series can be found at the following links:

- ASCLD Train the Director's Controlled Substances Webinar – Archival
- ASCLD Train the Director's Digital Multimedia Evidence Webinar – Archival
- ASCLD Train the Director's Toxicology Webinar – Archival
- ASCLD Train the Director's Forensics Webinar – Archival
- ASCLD Train the Director's Latent Prints Webinar – Archival
- ASCLD Train the Director's DNA Webinar – Archival

Archival versions of the 2019 Series can be found at the following links:

- NIBIN Challenges and Opportunities
- Digital Forensics: An Overview for the Laboratory Manager
- Fire Debris Is NOT Stock Market!
- Trace Evidence for the Crime Laboratory
- Quality Assurance in the Forensic Laboratory

provides practical solutions to address weaknesses as well as best practices to enhance forensic practices.

Learning Objectives: *Decision Making (10 hours)*
Date: On demand, self-paced
Cost: \$395

NIJ Online Courses

Law Enforcement Officers

- Collecting DNA Evidence at Property Crime Scenes
- Essential for Law Enforcement
- Forensic Examination Training
- Forensic DNA Education for Law Enforcement Decisionmakers
- What Every Law Enforcement Officer Should Know About DNA Evidence—First Responding Officers
- What Every Law Enforcement Officer Should Know About DNA Evidence—Investigators and Evidence Technicians

Officers of the Court

- Principles of Forensic DNA for Officers of the Court
- DNA in Prosecutor's Practice Notebook

Forensic Analysts

- Law 101: Legal Guide for the Forensic Expert
- Crime Scene and DNA Basics for Forensic Analysts
- Forensic Examination Training
- Laboratory Orientation and Testing of Body Fluids and Tissues for Forensic Analysts
- Laboratory Safety Programs
- DNA Extraction and Quantitation for Forensic Analysts
- DNA Amplification for Forensic Analysts
- Amplified DNA Product Separation for Forensic Analysts
- STR Data Analysis and Interpretation for Forensic Analysts
- Population Genetics and Statistics for Forensic Analysts
- Communication Skills, Report Writing, and Courtroom Testimony for Forensic Analysts
- Non-STR DNA Markers: SNPs, Y-STRs, LCN and mtDNA
- Advanced and Emerging DNA Techniques and Technologies