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Crime Laboratory Bureau

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Bureau Technical Bulletin

Second Quarter 2015

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The mission of the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory Bureau is to provide quality forensic analyses in the interest of criminal justice, performed in a timely manner, communicated in a clear and unbiased fashion, and to complement that with nonbiased, effective, and competent expert testimony for the trier of fact.

Forensic Science Contribution of the Year

Awesome Accomplishment!

Just Quality!

Casey Collins is this year's recipient of the Forensic Scientist of the Year Award! The award was presented by Attorney General Brad Schimel on June 24th at an Awards Luncheon Ceremony held during the 2015 Attorney General's Summit on Public Safety in the Wisconsin Dells.

Casey was selected from a pool of great nominees with consideration of his contributions in the past year, his contributions to the field during his career and his exemplary service for the Crime Laboratory Bureau. He has been in the field of Forensic Science for 28 years, working 22 of those years at the Wisconsin Crime Laboratory Bureau. In that time he has held several different positions for the Crime Laboratory Bureau: Toxicologist, Chemistry Supervisor, Laboratory Quality Manager, and currently, Quality Assurance Coordinator. His contributions for each position were and are varied. As the Quality Assurance Coordinator he has led the Crime Laboratory Bureau to a successful accreditation and worked tirelessly to improve unity and standardization in the Bureau. He is a proponent of the current Quality Document Management System and was integral in its implementation. All of his efforts in the past 22 years have worked to improve the field of Forensic Science by projecting a positive image of Forensic Scientists to the public and our clients, demonstrating the value of our work, and providing necessary confidence for its validity.

Please join Attorney General Brad Schimel in congratulating Casey on this achievement!

New Employees

Please join in welcoming the returning and new staff to the CLB!

Charles McCartney DNA-Madison	Katrina Tschoke DNA-Madison	James Armstrong Imaging-Milwaukee
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

"I am not the smartest fellow in the world, but I can sure pick smart colleagues." Franklin Roosevelt

Promotion

Please congratulate **Roland Torres** on his promotion to Forensic Imaging Specialist.

[redacted]

"Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any one thing." Abraham Lincoln

Current Recruitments

We are working through a lot of recruitments within the CLB. Here is a status update:

Toxicologists: One position in Milwaukee – Offer pending

Controlled Substance Analyst: Two positions in Milwaukee – Offers pending

DNA Analyst: Two positions in Milwaukee – Offers pending

Office Associate: One position in Wausau – Rating panel

Forensic Program Technician: One position in Madison- Rating Panel

Forensic Supervisor-Criminalistics: One position in Madison-Posting closed July 16th

Future Recruitments

We are working to post for permanent Laboratory Quality Managers – one in the Madison Laboratory and one in the Milwaukee Laboratory. Look for the positions to post soon.

2015 EVIDENCE TECHNICIAN SHOOLS

July 20-24: Northcentral Technical College-Merrill
Aug 31-Sep 4: Waukesha County Technical College-Pewaukee
Sep 28-Oct 2: Chippewa Valley technical College-Chippewa Falls

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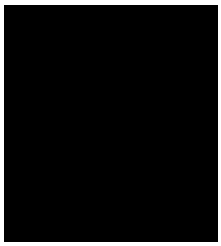
2nd Quarter Crime Scene Response Call Outs

This quarter was another busy one for the individuals who volunteer for the Crime Scene Response Unit. Here are the 2nd quarter response call-outs:

4/01/2015 Portage County SO-Homicide
4/06/2015 Jackson County SO-Homicide/Suicide
4/15/2015 DCI-Milwaukee-Officer Involved Shooting (OIS)-Non-fatal
4/16/2015 Dane County SO-Homicide-stabbing
4/17/2015 DCI Milwaukee-OIS-Non Fatal
4/25/2015 Milwaukee PD-Homicide-shooting
5/02/2015 Jefferson County SO-Skeletal remains
5/05/2015 Baraboo PD-Clandestine Grave Site
5/17/2015 Jackson County SO-Homicide
5/18/2015 Oconomowoc PD-Homicide-shooting
5/19/2015 DCI-Wisconsin Dells-technical assist (phenolthelein for blood)
6/03/2015 Milwaukee PD-technical assist (bit marks photos on infant)
6/03/2015 Wauwatosa PD-Suspicious death
6/03/2015 Portage County SO-Homicide-shooting
6/07/2015 DCI-Lincoln County-Clandestine Grave Site

QUALITY CORNER WITH CASEY COLLINS



Casey Collins

"If everyone is moving forward together, then success will take care of itself." Henry Ford

Hello Quality Staff,

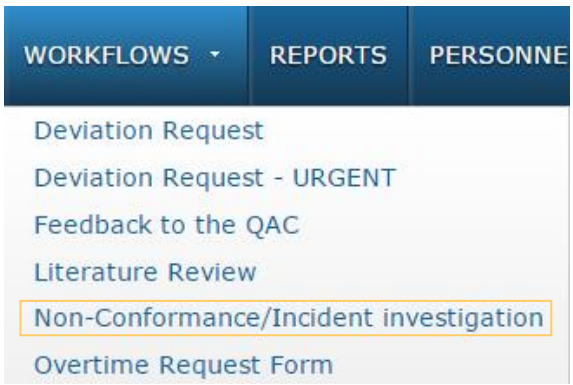
Beginning in August, we will be changing some workflows in Qualtrax. Workflows are designed to be electronic versions of paper-based processes and we currently use them for a number of processes including corrective actions, preventative actions and deviations.

The first change will replace the Corrective Action Report with a redesigned process called Non-Conformance/Incident investigation. In terms of acronyms, we are going from CARs to NCIs. This NCI workflow will be simpler and will also accommodate other types of investigations such as safety and vendor problems (e.g. purchased reagents, software or equipment). All staff member can use this NCI workflow to report an incident of any type and send it to their Lab Quality Manager for action. The LQM will then review the information and route it appropriately. This process will allow us to collect information about multiple types of operational hiccups and deal with them accordingly.

In addition to the CAR to NCI change, we will be adding a Feedback to the QAC workflow. This workflow is modeled loosely after QPM Appendix U and can be viewed as a suggestion box. Please use this workflow to send me your good ideas or complaints and I will work on them or route them appropriately. We will notify you how this feedback was handled.

If you have smaller comments or suggestions about the APM, QPM or SPM procedures please feel free to record them in the appropriate document found here \\X:\private\dles\CrimeLabs\3-APM,QPM and SPM Suggested Changes.

Thanks and keep up the quality work!



CHANGE MANAGEMENT SERIES

Technical Change

We continuously make technical changes in the Crime Laboratory Bureau. We get new software, upgrade software, institute new protocols, update existing protocols, and work through change associated with organizational techniques, e.g., process for conducting internal audits.

Technical change generally mimics techniques previously used. They operate on the premise of no relationship change-to-minimal relationship change, and no power redistribution. Because every small technical change carries with it some modicum of profound change and is generally characterized by quality in the Crime Laboratory Bureau, these type changes are often associated with a sudden change in relationships where associated authorities (in power, access, control, and accountability) may actually shift. For example, recent changes in computer security shifted some technical authorities to a different Division within the Department of Justice where a simple temperature probe connection to a piece of equipment provided useful information that some authorities for such a technical act shifted to the Bureau of Computing Services (BCS). In the future, there is a need to plan months ahead for such a temperature probe change in order to allow BCS time to review any associated software network connections of the temperature probe. Similarly, use of electronic notes while working at the bench requires action with the bench PC or laptop within at least 15 minutes to avoid password re-entry. While this change can appear minor, focus and attention to detail interrupted, may have a significant effect on capturing important information. These are just two of many examples that could be provided to simply state – technical change goes beyond the technical only. Processes, authorities, control, accountability and/or power are often associated with technical changes that occur. These sometimes cause resistance and other organizational detrimental effects.

When you change the way you look at things…The things you look at change.
Dr. Wayne Dyer

It is important to consider all related changes or relationship changes associated with technical change. These too must be managed well along with the necessary or desired technical change. Be mindful that something that appears technical only by nature has associations that go beyond the technical. With established and defined roles and duties within the Crime Laboratory Bureau, as employees, we must respect the associated changes that come along with the technical changes, confront them, and address those associated changes immediately. Remember, confrontation is not a negative action; according to corporate coach Esther Jeles, confrontation is a mental health tool, a community builder, and a force for kindness. She states the word has a bad reputation as it is often associated with fighting, even as it emerged from the mildest of roots, the Latin for "together" and "forehead" and initially simply meaning "to come face-to-face." Jeles urges a return to the collaborative image conjured by the word's origins—putting our heads together to reach a common goal. Jeles uses the term is carefrontation for this kind of encounter in an effort to reframe the definition of confrontation.

Considering technical change here is intended to help illuminate the very important relationship of the management staff and the technical staff. Their distinct roles assist to provide more complete plans when instituting technical changes. There must be considerations of any profound changes hidden in the technical changes to help minimize resistance to change. Even as resistance emerges during change, we can confront it, carefully.

DNA Case Analysis Unit Update

Technical Bureau Lead – Gretchen DeGroot

There are a number of changes that will be occurring in the DNA Analysis Unit in the near future. One of the changes which we will begin to validate is PowerQuant. Patricia Dobrowski, Nicholas Kleine, Vince Purpero and Kelli Thomas will be working on the internal validation of PowerQuant. We decided to get PowerQuant online early because of the plate to plate acceptable range variability in the quant values that have been seen in Madison for the last 6 months. All investigations have resulted in no solution so we are moving to a new quantitation method. We plan to start validation on the PowerPlex Fusion 6C validation early this fall.

We are also looking to replace the CPI calculation with mRMP and RMP calculations. This should consistently get us into the genotype frame of mind and away from an allele frame of mind regarding statistics. Even as our laboratory has always taken a look at profiles in a genotypic frame of mind, the RMP/mRPM statistic should more accurately reflect conclusions and the weight should reflect this.

As everyone is aware the FBI announced that the population database that we have been using for the last 15+ years has some errors. We have been directed to prepare corrected report for all cases that we are aware will be going to court. I encourage everyone to address your corrected reports as soon as you can.

The associated CAR should be completed soon. When it is done everyone should read it and be aware of what was done to investigate the impact. We are keeping an excel spreadsheet with all our re-calculated statistics. Do not forget to enter your original statistic and the recalculated statistic in the spreadsheet.

After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb."

~Nelson Mandela

Controlled Substances Unit Update

Technical Bureau Lead – Sandy Koresch

Audits

During the month of May, the CS units at each lab completed their annual audit. Thank you to Ken Olson, Katie Hoffmeyer, Madison Kniskern, Laura Hedden, and Birjees Kauser for being part of the audit team. Although the audit summary is in process, there were no major findings. The unit will work towards incorporating recommendations from the audit.

New Positions

In May, interviews for two entry level positions in the CS unit in Milwaukee were held. Fortunately, there was a good pool of qualified candidates and recommendations for hiring were sent forward. We hope to offer these positions to the selected individuals by the end of July after completion of the background checks.

Internship

Heather Madell, a junior from Marian University with a Forensic Science Major and Chemistry Minor, accepted an internship position with the CS unit. She will be interning at the Milwaukee laboratory from mid-June through July. Her projects include extraction procedures for isolating THC from complex samples, evaluation of GC-MS sensitivity, and reorganization of non-controlled standards in the CS unit.

Training

Michelle Freund completed the DEA Forensic Chemist Seminar in June in Virginia. There are additionally some good training opportunities for the CS unit coming this fall including the Clandestine Laboratory Investigating Chemist (CLIC) Seminar in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and the Midwestern Association of Forensic Scientists (MAFS) Fall Meeting in Mackinac Island, Michigan.

Drug Field Testing Kits

Recently, some concerns have been brought forward in regards to the field test kits which were purchased under state contract by law enforcement agencies. In January, the contract previously given to Sirchie was awarded to the Scott Company. Due to recent issues with test results, the CS unit will be evaluating the kits currently provided to law enforcement. Future evaluation by the CS unit and updated specifications for this purchasing contract will be considered.

Imaging Unit Update

Technical Bureau Lead – Bob Sanders

Welcome to James Armstrong in the Milwaukee Forensic Imaging Unit. We would like to introduce James Armstrong as the new Forensic Imaging Specialist. He is training with Lexie Belles and reports to Kyle Anderson.

James has over 13 years of experience in the professional photography industry. He has done work for local companies such as Kohl's, Boston Store, and Harley Owner's Group, a division of Harley Davidson. In his previous position, James worked for a promotional materials company as a Creative Services Managing Director. His responsibilities included photographing products for catalogs and on the web, project management, and managing a creative department.

James looks forward to applying his knowledge and experience to the challenges that are presented to the Forensic Imaging Unit.

Congratulations to Roland M. Torres in the Madison Forensic Imaging Unit. We would like to congratulate Roland M. Torres as the new Forensic Imaging Specialist. He is training with Aaron T. Matson and reports to Catherine A. Kohl.

Roland has been working for the State Crime Lab for 29 years. He has held different positions at the lab from Laboratory Technician, Forensic Program Assistant Senior, Office Associate, Evidence Specialist Senior, to the current Forensic Imaging Specialist. His educational background includes two Associate Degrees from Madison Area Technical College. One degree is in Medical Laboratory Technician and the other one is Fine Arts in Photography. [redacted]

SWGIT Disbanded

The Scientific Working Group on Imaging Technology (SWGIT) was disbanded in May. The SWGIT guidelines will still be available on the SWGIT website for the near future. It will probably be at least 1 more year before any imaging related guidelines are published by NIST.

Databank Unit Update

Technical Bureau Lead – Jen Honkanen

Three months have passed since the implementation of Wisconsin Act 20. The Databank Unit has moved into their new building and training has been completed for the seven FPTs and the seven new analysts. The Arrestee Records Management System (ARMS) was deployed in March, and the Databank Unit is still working with BCS to refine its functionality. The Databank BEAST Module (CoDNA) was deployed on June 1. The CoDNA BEAST module allows the Databank Unit to track offender samples more efficiently, and offers the unit the ability to store more documents electronically. And most importantly, the Databank Unit has already received over 6,100 offender samples which includes some violent felony arrest and misdemeanor conviction samples.

The Databank Unit is excited to welcome back Katie Tschoeke and Charles McCartney!! They are nearing completion of their casework training and have started training in Databank.

The Databank Unit has successfully implemented a new amplification kit (PowerPlex® Fusion) and new genetic analyzer (3500 series). These new technologies allow us to process offender samples more efficiently and means all new offender samples will contain the expanded CODIS core loci well ahead of the January 2017 deadline set by the FBI.

As of July 1, the Databank Unit has been utilizing a new vendor laboratory to outsource the DNA typing of our offender samples. Bode Cellmark Forensics will be processing the offender samples with the PowerPlex® Fusion kit on the 3500xL.

The familial search pilot program is progressing well. We have now completed seven cases. We have been able to decrease our turnaround time on a familial search case from three months to less than 45 days. Two of these cases have already led to convictions. A member of the Databank Unit will be giving a presentation titled “Defining and Refining a Familial DNA Search Program – The Wisconsin Experience” at the International Symposium on Human Identification (ISHI) conference in October.

The Databank Unit is currently working on a number of projects: validation of Promega’s PowerPlex® Y23 kit on the 3500 series genetic analyzer, validation of PowerPlex® Fusion direct amplification on the 3500 series genetic analyzer, evaluation of the Tecan Evo® 150 air displacement liquid handling instrument, validation of the epMotion® 5073 , and validation of DNAstable®storage stabilizer.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

The Employee Recognition Program has been approved. It will allow us to internally recognize the great work and efforts of the team and individual achievements that occur within the CLB.

The program will be supported by a committee, ERC (Employee Recognition Committee), consisting of seven members: two from the Madison Lab, two from the Milwaukee Lab, one from the Wausau Lab and two representatives of laboratory management and/or Bureau level. Two members (to be selected by election or volunteerism from amongst the committee members) will serve a two year term. All other members will serve a minimum of a year. A chairperson will be appointed by the committee and that person will serve one year.

The Committee will serve several functions including but not limited to, promoting employee enthusiasm for the program, announcing nomination opportunities, assessing and recommending quarterly and annual nominations to Division for approval. To accomplish these tasks the committee will meet on a quarterly basis and/or as necessary.

The committee members will maintain strict confidentiality of committee discussions as well as the integrity of the nominations/selection process. Specifically they may not: make changes to the nomination forms, be lobbyists for nominees of their particular area, or accommodate conversations from nominators or nominees unless in response to a specific question from the selection committee. They will work together with other committee members to select qualifying nominees.

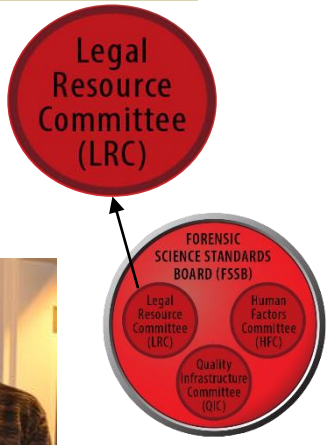
The full program will be posted on the X: drive under private/dles/CLB Newsletter

"The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary"

~Vince Lombardi

Odds & Ends

Legal Resource Committee



The Legal Resource Committee provides guidance throughout the OSAC about the legal ramifications of forensic standards under development and provides input on the presentation of forensic science results to the legal system.

OSAC Legal Resources Subcommittee members in Norman, Okla., January 2015. Credit: NIST

Members

- Christopher J. Plourd, Superior Court Judge, State of California, Committee Chair
- Jennifer Friedman, Deputy Public Defender, Los Angeles County
- Christine Funk, General Counsel, Department of Forensic Sciences, Washington, D.C. (local government)
- Lynn Robitaille Garcia, General Counsel, Texas Forensic Science Commission (state government)
- Ted R. Hunt, Chief Trial Attorney and DNA Cold Case Project Director, Jackson County Prosecutor's Office, Kansas City, MO
- David H. Kaye, Professor, Graduate Faculty, Forensic Science Program, Pennsylvania State University
- David A. Moran, Professor of Law, University of Michigan Law School
- Henry R. Reeve, Denver District Attorney's Office
- Ronald S. Reinstein, Judge and Judicial Consultant, Arizona Supreme Court
- Barry Scheck, Professor, Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University; Co-Director, Innocence Project; Commissioner, NY Commission on Forensic Science; Neufeld, Scheck, & Brustin, LLC

CLB Newsletter

To find previous versions of the CLB newsletter they are located on the X: drive under private/dles/CLB Newsletter

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Midwest Lab Directors - July 22-23, 2015 Minneapolis, MN
IAI - August 2-8, 2015 Sacramento, CA
Joint WI DNA - September 17, 2015 Franklin, WI
MAFS - September 20-25, 2015 Mackinac Island, MI
AFQAM - October 6-9, 2015 Pensacola, FL
ISHI 26 – October 12-15, 2015 Grapevine, TX
SOFT- October 18-23, 2015 Atlanta, GA

Final Thought

"The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing"

~ Walt Disney