WI Department of Justice

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Crime Laboratory Bureau

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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.

Welcome by Jana Champion

To the first quarterly issue of the Crime Laboratory Bureau (CLB) Newsletter. I need to thank Eva Marie Lewis for providing me with the template and her expertise in this area.

Since this is the first newsletter, we are starting out small but I hope to expand and build as we progress. I am open to all ideas so please feel free to email me your comments, suggestions, articles etc. I know there are people that are way more creative than I am, so even if it is formatting or color scheme, feel free to comment.

2014 presents many new opportunities to the CLB, such as, Bureau Technical Unit Leaders, DNA at Arrest, the hiring of new DNA analysts and Forensic Program Technicians and moving towards additional advanced positions.

New Employees

Please join in welcoming the new staff to the CLB!

Michelle R. Freund
Controlled Substances-Wausau
[redacted]

Margaret E. Keith
Forensic Program Technician-Madison
[redacted]

Kara L. Raymond
DNA Senior-Madison
[redacted]

Jennifer L. Setlak
DNA Senior-Madison
[redacted]

Ze Xiong
Forensic Program Technician-Wausau
[redacted]

Training Events-Past and Future

We are always trying to invest in our employees with additional training opportunities. This quarter has been no different. We have sent 50 staff members to participate in the following training events this quarter: AFIS Meeting, WAI Meeting, AAFS – 66th Annual Scientific Meeting, Complex Latent Print Class, Best Practices in Forensic Science Symposium, Bloodstain Pattern Webinar, Tecan Freedom EVOware & Liquid Handling Basic Training, OSER Training for our newer supervisors, Leadership In Police Organizations (LPO), Essential Ridgeology, Palm Print Comparisons, and Evidence Technician School in Green Bay.

Upcoming training events: AFTE Meeting, Tecan Training, DNA Mixture Interpretation Workshop, Bode East Conference, ASCLD Symposium, Digital Video Recovery, Agilent GC Training, and Drug Awareness Training for Toxicology (DRE).

As you see training events posted please be sure to work with your supervisor to discuss your training needs.

Effective immediately, all Travel Training Requests (TTR's) must be submitted 30 days ahead of the training event. If there is a last minute event or some unforeseen situation that requires a shorter timeframe for approval, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to move the request along with an explanation.

You are accountable for the influence you have on the organization's culture - no matter what position you hold on the organizational chart.

Quality Corner with Casey Collins

Hello Quality Staff and yes, I am addressing all of you. The point here is everyone is part of our quality process. While the Lab Quality Managers and QAC focus on meeting the requirements of the well tested ISO 17025 program, your *pride of work* and commitment to the citizens of Wisconsin is absolutely essential to the quality of our results and expert opinions. Thank you for your efforts, energy and expertise in this regard.

Now as you know we had a 'surveillance visit' in late February. This visit was performed by our accrediting body, the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/Laboratory Accreditation Board, aka ASCLD/LAB www.ascld-lab.org. Our accreditation schedule has full assessments every 5 years with surveillance visits every year in between and these interim visits focus on specific areas. So how did this first surveillance visit go?

While we have not received an official report as of April 9, we do know the results in general terms. There were numerous focus areas including training/competency test records, equipment maintenance/calibration and effectiveness of corrective actions. The only 'finding' was for a calibration weight set in the Madison Toxicology unit which had not been calibrated within our required timeframe. This was easily corrected. Please note, we remain accredited throughout the surveillance process.

My corner is full but here's a parting reminder: For purchased reagents we are required to mark the: (1) date of receipt; and (2) the date of opening on the container. Thanks again and keep up the quality work! - Casey

Budget Breakout

As we are moving closer to the close of our fiscal year end (June 30, 2014) keep in mind that purchase orders can only be cut until May 30, 2014 and P-card expenses should end June 20, 2014.

We have submitted our application for the 2014 Coverdell Grant. The award amount is $129,762.00. We share this grant with the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office, the State Lab of Hygiene and the Kenosha County Lab. If we are awarded this grant, the funds will be available October 1, 2014.

The solicitation for the 2014 DNA Backlog Reduction Grant has not been released.

We closed out the 2011 & 2012 DNA Backlog Grants as well as the 2012 Coverdell. We currently have the 2013 Coverdell for $119,182 open which closes 9/30/14 and the 2013 DNA Backlog Grant for $842,422 which closes 3/31/15.

Accomplishments/Recognitions

I would like to recognize the members of the Familial Search Committee for the excellent work they did: Olga Spichenok, Angela Schroeder, Amanda Hahn, Dan Haase & Barb Sylvester.

We are working on formalizing an employee recognition program. It is still in the committee stage but we hope to have something out soon.

I would encourage you to think about the great work we do in the labs on a daily basis and send me names of individuals who you feel exemplify the forensic mission and why they should be recognized.

Bureau Technical Leaders

I want to thank everyone for their patience as we have worked through this selection process. It was really nice to see people step up and participate in the interviews and challenge the panels to select the technical leads. This was not easy. We tried to make every effort to take the good of each unit into consideration in view of the direction we anticipate each unit moving to in the future. Please congratulate the following individuals on their selection as Technical Unit Leader:

Controlled Substance – Sandy Koresch

DNA – Gretchen Degroot

Firearms & Toolmarks – Mark Simonson

Identification – Karley Hujet

Imaging – Bob Sanders

Toxicology – Jennifer Evans

Trace Evidence – Ruth Henk

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit."
~Aristotle

Odds & Ends

Evaluations

Evaluations are coming up.

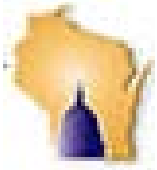
Your supervisor will be scheduling times to discuss your evaluation with you.

This is a great time to bring forward your goals and how you would like to accomplish them for the next evaluation period.

Let your supervisor know if you are interested in taking any leadership classes, additional training in your area of expertise or possibly cross training into another discipline. This is also a time for you and your supervisor to review expectations and how we can assist you as you move through your career.

The Attorney General will be hosting his annual summit this year in Wisconsin Dells, June 17-19, 2014. The title of the summit is “Protecting Our Families”. The focus will be on domestic abuse and the rise of heroin usage in our state.

The push for a new Milwaukee Crime Lab continues. Deputy Attorney General Kevin St. John has met with DOA to discuss assignment of an architect/engineer to the project. We are hopeful to get on the State Building Commission agenda in June 2014.



We will be assessing the need for additional advanced positions within each unit. We anticipate this process to start early in the next fiscal year. Stay tuned…

Final Thought

“If there is any one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person’s point of view and see things from their angle as well as your own.” -Henry Ford