



ABFDE News

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THE GAVEL

KIRSTEN SINGER, PRESIDENT



Happy New Year, Diplomates!

Before we proceed to a fresh start in 2014, let's share a brief recap of the highlights of last year's Board business. In 2013, the Board of Directors completed the following:

- Added two new Directors, and replaced an outgoing Director, with Gary Licht, Jan Masson, and Sean Espley.
- Re-elected President Singer, Vice President Hanson, and Treasurer Green, and elected Secretary Beal.
- Completed an updated written test for certification and is in the process of pilot testing the questions.
- Sponsored the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) 2 day symposium on Measurement Science and Standards in Forensic Handwriting Analysis in June.
- Updated the ABFDE brochure, "Profile of a Forensic Document Examiner."
- Added two new Diplomates -- Carolyn Bayer-Broring and Hillary Hoover
- Provided letters of support for the following people recommending their appointment to positions on the newly formed National Commission on Forensic Science: Dr. Mara Merlino, Dr. Linton Mohammed, ABFDE-D, Jane Lewis, ABFDE-D, and Patricia Manzolillo, ABFDE-D.
- Continued to update and provide the Speakers' Bureau PowerPoint presentation to Diplomates for presentations to attorneys.
- Composed a primer on the subject of FDE for the Forensic Science Simplified Project for NFSTC which is compiling a series of concise forensic guides for the Bureau of Justice Assistance for non-scientists (such as policy-makers, law enforcement officers, potential jurors, attorneys, students, and the public). NFSTC decided to use the QD Section primer as the "model primer" for the other forensic science disciplines. To see this and other primers, go to <http://forensicsciencesimplified.org/docs/how.html>.
- Filed the Declaration of Use of Mark for the ABFDE logo with the US

Re-Accredited by
FSAB in 2012



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Metamorphosis of the MFRC

By Gary Licht



In the year 2000, the Midwest Forensic Resource Center, MFRC, was created within the Department of Energy's Ames Laboratory. The foundation meetings involved representatives from eight state crime laboratories, and grew into a partnership involving 60 state, regional and municipal labs from 16 states. There were two principal goals of this partnership. The first goal was to make the resources at regional universities and laboratories, and other places, available to crime labs and law enforcement. The second goal was to develop new resources to serve partners and the nation's crime laboratories.

In keeping with the principal goals, the Midwest saw casework assistance, workshops, symposia, research and development seed money, R & D with cooperative input from forensic scientists, as well as "technical innovations in management and infrastructure". The most notable event funded by the MFRC that forensic document examiners would be familiar with was the Symposium on Special Topics in Questioned Document Analysis, held September 29 through October 1, 2008. Some forensic document examiner may also have seen Process Mapping taking place in their own labs, or talked to other forensic scientists who had attended workshops in their fields.

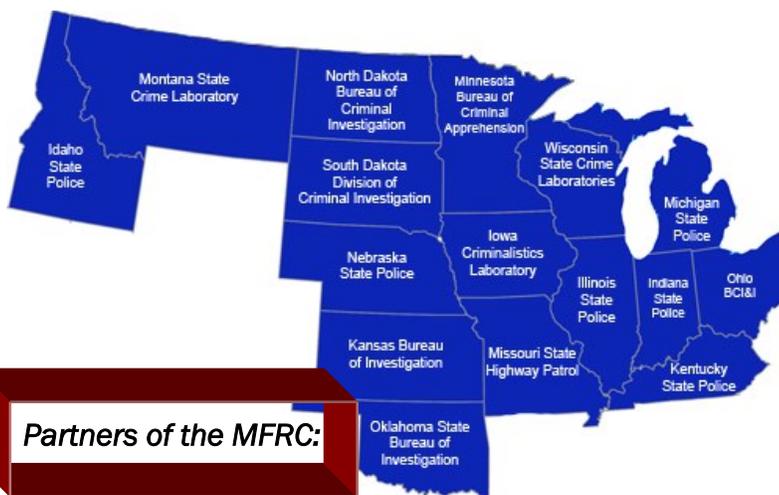
For those of us working in government labs, there were benefits reaped from the early years of the MFRC, particularly in the form of approximately 100 classes and 75 other projects. These classes and projects were funded primarily from congressionally directed funding, AKA earmarks. That funding ended in the year

MFRC Midwest Forensics Resource Center

2009, with residual money being carefully spent over a few more years. That led to a metamorphosis of the MFRC, into a contract fulfillment organization. That means the organization no longer has funds to support classes, workshops and symposia. There also is no funding support of partial FTEs, but those individuals and others tasked with making MFRC work are still gainfully employed, and work to make NIJ grant funded research happen.

As best can be determined, there are no other organizations like this in the US. The MFRC has regional partners, a regionally determined partner oriented program of work, regional evaluations of work achievements, and a service oriented approach to working with forensic science practitioners. It continues to exist, without direct funding, because the D of E, particularly the Ames Lab, has decided to continue with a good thing. The early representatives from crime labs, universities, and the Ames Lab were volunteers, and intellectual buy-in was optional. It worked. The MFRC is still in existence, just with different funding opportunities. Crime labs in 16 states are still looking forward to the long term benefits of this partnership.

Many thanks are owed to Todd Zdorkowski for his work to make the Midwest Forensic Resource Center grow from small and unsure beginnings, and for his work as its Associate Director. His information provided the basis for this article. We wish him well in his continued role within the Office of Sponsored Research Administration, US DoE, Ames Lab.



Partners of the MFRC:

THE GAVEL

Continued from page 1

- Patent and Trademark office.
- Held three workshops for “ABFDE Demystifying Certification 101” at ASQDE, AAFS, and ASFDE (Australia).

ABFDE Accounting News

As President, I authorized the Treasurer to request an Independent Accountant’s Report from the accounting firm of The Hobbs Group, utilized by the ABFDE. The financial review was undertaken during the summer and fall of 2013. An evaluation of the accounting information included the fiscal years of 2010 and 2011, which included the terms of current Treasurer Jim Green and former Treasurer Jeff Taylor.

The accounting firm requested numerous randomly chosen deposits, checks written, related receipts, account transfers and reconciliation statements for their review. The firm also reviewed whether the activities were in accordance with the ABFDE Standard Operating Procedures.

There were minor comments noted, i.e., discrepancies related to the dates of invoices received vs. the dates payments were made. For example, on occasion there are delays when invoices are submitted to our corporate office address in Texas prior to the invoices being forwarded to the Treasurer for payment.

However, I am very pleased to report there were no significant issues identified during the review. A copy of the report is available upon request.

Daubert Hearing Disappointment

Despite the herculean efforts of two well-qualified FDEs, the 7th Circuit continues to be a thorn in FDEs side. In October, a 7th District Court judge ruled that the testimony of the forensic document examiner was excluded following a Daubert hearing. In *US v Johnsted*, Judge Conley found that handwriting analysis falls well short of the reliability threshold when applied to hand printing analysis, and that the government failed to meet all of the *Daubert* factors as they related to hand printing analysis. The court found there is a difference in the methodology between hand printing and cursive writing and the government failed to produce sufficient studies that tested the reliability of hand printing analysis and the principles supporting this analysis.

Mark Denbeaux testified that he is not a forensic document examiner, but considers himself an expert on the methodology used in the field of forensic document examination, which allows him to critique the reliability of the government expert’s handwriting identification opinion. Denbeaux testified that handwriting analysis is unreliable because the methodology has not been adequately tested. Denbeaux further asserted that the testing that has been done suggests that FDEs possess an accuracy rate of only 57% compared to laypersons. Finally, Denbeaux testified there is a dearth of testing for hand printing, and this lack of testing makes hand printing analysis unreliable under the *Daubert* five-factor inquiry.

Despite the existence of a published study by Dr. Kam (JFS, 2003) which provides error rate data specifically for the forensic examination of hand printing, the judge wanted more studies. There is currently another potential Daubert hearing in process in the 6th Circuit in which forensic hand printing examination has again been called into question. It is difficult to continue to put out new fires, much less old ones, but if there is anyone out there willing to conduct additional research on FDE proficiency on hand printing, or has access to funding for such research, please let me know. I’ll assist in any way I can.

The next annual meeting of the ABFDE Board of Directors will be held in Houston, TX over the weekend of April 25-27, 2014. Please contact anyone on the Board if you have a question or an issue that you wish to be discussed at the meeting.



Continuing Education

February 2014

17-22 American Academy of Forensic Sciences Meeting (AAFS) 64th Annual Meeting Washington State Convention Center Seattle, WA

- 17th: Bias in Forensics — Examining the Sources and Impacts of Bias on Perceptual and Cognitive Judgments Made by Forensic Experts, Strategies for Excluding or Impeaching Expert Testimony Tainted by Bias, and Proposed Solutions for Minimizing or Inhibiting Biasing Influences, Andrew Sulner and Barry Scheck;
- 17th: Root Cause Analysis — When Blaming the Analyst Completely Misses the Point, Laurel Ferrell and Marc LeBeau;
- 18th: Questioned Document Examination and Enhancement of Evidence and Interpretation of Evidence Using Various Light and Filter Techniques, Andrew Szymanski and F. L. Jim Lee;
- 19th: Poster Session;
- 20-21st: Questioned Document Section, including a Psychiatry and Behavioral Science Multidisciplinary Session

www.aafs.org/aafs-66th-annual-scientific-meeting

April 2014

23-26 Southeastern Association of Forensic Document Examiners (SAFDE)

Duluth, GA

- 23rd: Demystifying ABFDE Certification; Lisa Hanson; 24th: Typewriter Classification and Identification, Peter Tytell and Karen Nobles
- 25-26: Annual meeting

www.safde.org

25-27 Southwestern Association of Forensic Document Examiners (SWAFDE)

Staybridge Suites

Las Vegas, NV

www.swafde.org



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May 2014

5-9 Canadian Society of Forensic Science Conference (CSFS)

Sheraton Four Points Hotel

Gatineau, Quebec

www.csfs.ca

19-23 Mid-Atlantic Association of Forensic Scientists (MAAFS)

The Penn Stater

State College, PA

www.maafs.org

10-16 International Association for Identification (IAI) Minneapolis, MN

www.theiai.org/conference

August 2014

11-15 American Society of Questioned Document Examiners (ASQDE) *combined meeting with* Australasian Society of Forensic Document Examiners (ASFDE)

Waikiki Beach Resort & Spa

Honolulu, HI

www.asqde.org/AGM/agm2014

October 2014

4-10 Midwestern Association of Forensic Scientists (MAFS)

St. Paul, MN

<http://www.mafs.net>

13-18 International Association of Forensic Sciences (IAFS)

20th World Meeting

Seoul, Korea

<http://www.wff2014korea.org/>

May 2015

18-22 Mid-Atlantic Association of Forensic Scientists (MAAFS)

Hyatt Regency

Chesapeake Bay, MD

www.maafs.org

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James R. Daniels, Diplomat, 1944-2013

(Compiled from various sources by the Editor.)

James Russell Daniels, Jr., 69, passed away in Houston, Texas on Wednesday, October 15, 2013. Jim was a Diplomat of the ABFDE. He had recently been awarded Life Member status with the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners (ASQDE).

Jim was born on April 20, 1944 in Houston, Texas to James Russell Daniels and Barbara Woodruff Daniels.

Jim worked at the Houston (Texas) Police Department as an FDE from 1980-1985. He was in private practice since then.

Jim earned a Bachelor of Science degree, majoring in Chemistry, from New Mexico State University in 1970. His post-graduate and other training courses included the FBI Questioned Document Course, Quantico, VA, 1984, the USSS Questioned Documents Course, FLETC, Brunswick, GA, 1983, a Questioned Documents course at San Jose State University, California, 1981,

Forensic Microscopy at McCrone Research Institute –Forensic Sciences Foundation, Dept. of Public Safety, Austin, TX, 1979.

His professional affiliations, in addition to his AB-FDE certification and ASQDE Life Member status, included:

American Chemical Society, Member
 American Academy of Forensic Sciences, Fellow
 American Society of Testing and Materials, Member
 Southwestern Association of Forensic Scientists, Distinguished Member

The following publications helped the QD community benefit from Jim's research:

Journal of Forensic Sciences
 International Journal of Forensic Document Examiners
 Journal of the Midwestern Association of Forensic Scientists
 Journal of the Southwestern Association of Forensic Scientists
 Journal of the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners.

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*Continuing
 Education*

August 2015

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2-8 International Association for Identification (IAI)
Sacramento, CA
100th Anniversary
www.theiai.org/conference/index.php

Future meeting announcements may be submitted to the editor at TolliverD@aol.com.

James R. Daniels

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According to Diplomate Janet Fenner Masson, Jim also worked with Ms. Lucille Lacey but she was uncertain of the dates and length of time. Janet also stated that “He never married or had children. He was quite interested in and knowledgeable about classical music and stereo equipment. He was also a keen tennis player and was known to play an intense game of chess against my spouse, Ralph.”

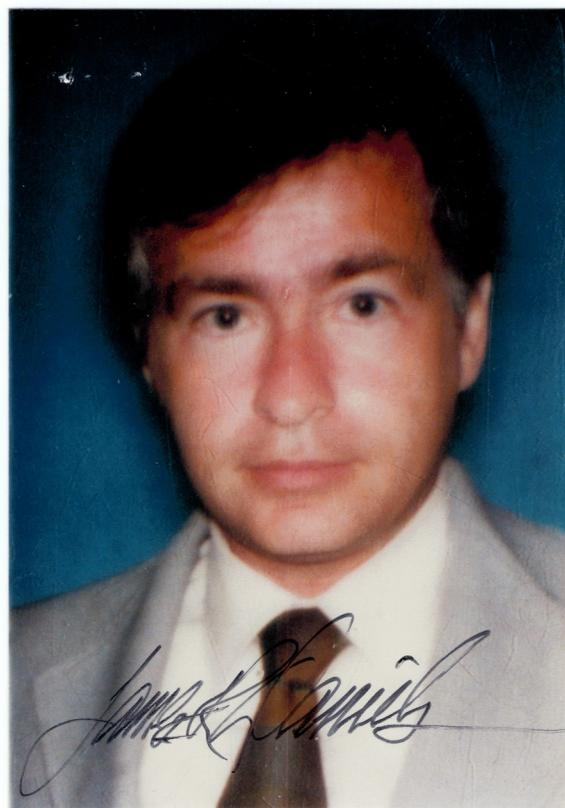
The Lone Star Pen Club, Houston, TX, published an announcement that Jim would be speaking to them at a November 2009 meeting. From Paul Scott, Communications Chairman:

“This is going to be a meeting that will be remembered for many years to come! Mr. Daniels is a Certified Forensic Document Examiner. He has been legally recognized as an expert by Judges in both state and federal courts and in Arbitration matters...His publications can be found in both American and Canadian forensic and law journals...some representative titles include, “Influence of the Chisel Edged Pen on Historical Hands”, “Image Summing”, “Archive Microfilm Records: Obtaining the Best Possible Print for Examination”, “The Backyard Terrorist”, “Unusual Formation of the Cur-sive Lower Case Letter “P””, “Photoelastic Stress Analysis of Typewriter Film Ribbons”, “Compensating for Linear Distortion Using Computer Graphics”, “The Polarizing Pellicle”, “Counter-intuitive Aspects of Forensic Document Examination”, “Tonal Artifacts of the JPEG Codec”, “Reconstituting Gradation Using Multiple Photocopier Splits”, and “Thermal Gradient Mechanism of Line Crossing Anomaly”.

Mr. Scott concluded with ***“The evening of November 18th promises to be one that you will remember and refer back to for years to come. Mr. Daniels is a true expert in his field.”***

Jim was predeceased by his mother Barbara and his step-father Sam Minter. He is survived by his longtime companion Carolyn Allgood and good friend David Gray.

When e-mails circulated among FDEs about Jim Daniel’s death, three words were repeated among many of these e-mails: ***a gentleman, a scholar, and a scientist.***



James R. Daniels, 1944–2013

Resources for the FDE Toolbox

FROM: *Neurology, The Official Journal of the American Academy of Neurology:*

Neurology
THE MOST WIDELY READ AND HIGHLY
CITED PEER-REVIEWED NEUROLOGY JOURNAL

Alexia without agraphia, also commonly referred to as “word blindness,” is a rare neurologic syndrome in which patients lose the ability to read but can still write and comprehend the spoken word. These deficits are also frequently accompanied by a right homonymous hemianopsia, as well as color anomia and various apraxias. Thank you **TIM CAMPBELL** for this posting on the DocExam_L List. An interesting scenario for an FDE to ponder...

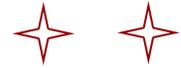
<http://www.neurology.org/content/82/1/e5.full>



Related to the link above, from *Popular Science:*

“Reading to children was a source of fulfillment in the life of M.P., a 40-year-old aunt, kindergarten teacher, and reading specialist. Whether in the classroom, the reading room, or the living room, M.P. found joy in the dual role of teacher and storyteller. For her, it was an important means of relating to those under her care. But all of that changed when, on a Thursday morning, M.P. found herself standing at the front of her class and holding in her hands an indecipherable mystery”

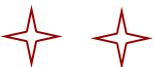
<http://www.popsoci.com/article/science/woman-who-could-write-couldnt-read>



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Need to know what font it is? Post your image here and Typophile's crack team of community experts will identify the font for you, usually within minutes. Before you post, take a moment to read the FAQ. <http://typophile.com/>

SHIVER
SECURITY SYSTEMS, INC.



PaperAge distributes an electronic weekly paper industry newsletter on Thursdays throughout the year. The e-newsletter is a round-up of the major news stories from the prior seven days, along with a pulp and paper pricing table. Subscription is free to the weekly e-Newsletter. <http://www.paperage.com/>

Resources for the FDE Toolbox

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MERGER ANNOUNCEMENT

Tuesday, November 5, 2013 4:19 pm EST

BOCA RATON, Fla. & NAPERVILLE, Ill.--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--

Office Depot, Inc. and OfficeMax Incorporated today announced the completion of their merger of equals, creating a stronger, more competitive and more efficient global provider of office products, services and solutions. The combined company will use the name Office Depot, Inc. and will trade on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol ODP.



The company's portfolio of leading brands includes Office Depot, OfficeMax, OfficeMax Grand & Toy, Viking, Ativa, TUL, Foray, and DiVOGA. Each company will maintain its respective loyalty programs and expects to announce a combined loyalty program sometime in 2014.

<http://news.officedepot.com/press-release/corporatefinancial-news/office-depot-and-officemax-complete-merger>



Tissue Paper

(PRWEB) January 13, 2014

Tissue paper has become one of the most essential commodities used in day to day life. The first use of tissue paper was noted in 1920's and since then the consumption of tissue paper has been consistently increasing. A lot of technological advancements have enabled various manufactures to produce tissue paper using either virgin wood pulp or recycled wood pulp or combination of the two.

Majorly there are five types of tissue papers namely: Bathroom Tissue, Facial Tissue, Paper Towel, Paper Napkin, and Specialty and Wrapping Tissue.



The tissue paper industry is broadly classified into two categories: At Home; also know as Consumer tissue; and Away from Home (AfH). The At Home segment comprises of tissues that are used for domestic purposes whereas tissue under the category of Away from Home segment are used for commercial and industrial purposes such as hotels, restaurants, hospitals and institutions. A number of properties, such as absorption, porosity, coarseness, tensile strength, and tactility, determine the quality of the tissue paper. Each of the tissue paper products has its own quality requirement according to the usage.

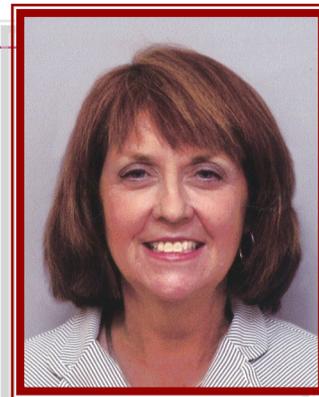
[Read more: http://www.digitaljournal.com/pr/1677434#ixzz2qQXZGNYy](http://www.digitaljournal.com/pr/1677434#ixzz2qQXZGNYy)

If you have a web tool you would like to share, please submit it to the editor at TolliverD@aol.com.

Launch of New Website "*Forensics Basics – Examining the Evidence*"

Submitted by Marie Durina

A new website called "Forensics Basics – Examining the Evidence" recently went live and is worth taking a few minutes to peruse! The website is a result of a project funded by an NIJ grant and was created to provide a set of online learning modules that will give attorneys and judges the tools to weigh the application of scientific methodologies and human interpretation within the forensic science disciplines.



The website combines video, animations, re-enactments, a full glossary, and online reading with downloads and links to other sites, all of which address the conceptual framework and knowledge needed to assess reliable, scientific methodology. Although not specific to Forensic Document Examination, the website is chock full of useful information that FDEs will find helpful in educating their clients and the courts. For example, the glossary alone contains simple definitions for terms all FDEs need to know, such as: "Daubert Standard", "bias", "Bayesian theorem", "error rate", just to name a few. Go to www.ForensicBasics.org to check it out!



FORENSICS

Examining the evidence

The AAFS QD Workshop Has Received ABFDE approval

A full-day workshop entitled, "**Questioned Document Examination and Enhancement of Evidence and Interpretation of Evidence Using Various Light and Filter Techniques**," (W22) will take place on Tuesday, February 18th at the AAFS conference in Seattle, Washington. This full-day hands-on workshop will feature a faculty of experts that will instruct participants on the background and the fundamentals of the examination of questioned document evidence using various light sources and filter enhancement techniques. Attendees will learn about various instrumental analyses, methods, and the interpretation of examination results. This workshop will include a hands-on session following the introductory lecture to re-enforce attendee participation in practical subject areas. This worthwhile workshop is limited to 50 attendees, so get your registration in as soon as possible for an invaluable workshop experience. The ABFDE has approved the workshop (two Half Days) for **6** ABFDE Recertification Points.

Note: Registration is limited to AAFS members until January 15, 2014. Pre-Registration deadline is January 22, 2014. For additional meeting information, visit the Academy website at www.aafs.org.

The Good Old Days of Photography

By Gary Licht



No stereomicroscope, no digital camera, no electrical components in the camera, just electricity for the lights that could singe the photographer's hair. Photography of fracture comparison, showing individual paper fibers. Camera, Polaroid MP4, 665 P/N film, ISO 80, 35mm lens at full bellow extension. The MP4 was also capable of capturing an image of an 8.5"X11" sheet of paper with ball point pen writing, and capture the burr striations, inkless starts, and blobs.

Gary Licht



“Certification of Forensic Examiners in Texas: Our Path Forward”



A White Paper Authored By:
Texas Forensic Science Commission and
Texas Criminal Justice Integrity Unit

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Excerpts:

“EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 11, 2013, the Texas Forensic Science Commission (“TFSC”) and the Texas Criminal Justice Integrity Unit (“TCJIU”) hosted a stakeholder roundtable meeting focused on certification of forensic examiners in Texas. Participants included forensic science practitioners and managers, prosecutors, defense attorneys, members of the judiciary, advocacy groups and representatives from various national certification and accreditation bodies.

“The goal of the roundtables was to assess whether and how the State of Texas may increase the number of certified examiners in publicly funded crime laboratories, with the ultimate goal of achieving 100% certification of forensic examiners statewide. The overwhelming consensus was

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“Certification of Forensic Examiners in Texas: Our Path Forward”

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that Texas is in a good position to assume a leadership role on certification. However, stakeholders recognize a number of challenges must be addressed before laboratories will be able to require certification for all examiners. Many of these challenges are outside the control of laboratories and individual forensic scientists.

“The Texas Advantage

“There are a number of reasons why Texas is well positioned to be a leader on certification issues. Texas has four universities with forensic science programs that are accredited by the Forensic Science Education Programs Accreditation Commission (“FEPAC”) of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences. The programs are housed at Sam Houston State University (“SHSU”) (Master’s program and a PhD pending approval), the University of North Texas Health Science Center (“UNTHSC”) (two Master’s programs), and Texas A&M University (undergraduate program). All of these top-tier programs could effectively partner with the forensic science community to meet education and training goals using state-of-the-art distance learning technology.

“The main challenges to certification of Texas examiners statewide include: (1) need for ISO-17024 accreditation of existing national certification bodies; (2) significant need for mobilization of financial resources to support certification incentives and continuing education; (3) establishment of high quality training and continuing education programs through collaboration with Texas universities; (4) need for recommendations regarding which existing certification bodies provide high-quality, meaningful certification programs; (5) shift in some certification programs to include rigorous practical component with testing levels for various tiers of forensic expertise; and (5) establishment of alternative certification process for disciplines with no existing certification body.

“The group consensus is that *it will take 7-10 years* for most examiners to be certified. Texas stakeholders should begin this process by encouraging a major push toward increased numbers of certified examiners during the next five years, on a voluntary basis. After the voluntary push, the Texas Legislature may consider a deliberate and measured timeframe under which to implement a mandatory certification program. In support of this process, the following action steps should be taken in the near term:”

The entire white paper has been posted on the ABFDE website. To view it, go to:

<http://abfde.org/downloads/TEXASWhitePaperCertification112713.pdf>

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RULES & PROCEDURES.....A. Frank Hicks
TEST PREP & VALIDATION.....Rosalind Spencer
TESTING.....Lisa M. Hanson
WORKSHOP COORDINATOR.....L. Jim Josey



ABFDE Testing Schedule

The written and oral boards are tentatively scheduled to be offered at the following national and regional forensic document conferences:

AAFS February 2014 Seattle, Washington
ASQDE August 2014 Honolulu, Hawaii

Testing may also be available at other regional conferences during the year. If interested, contact Testing Chair Lisa Hanson at Lisa.Hanson@state.mn.us.

Send contributions to:

Diane K. Tolliver, Editor
ABFDE News

TolliverD@aol.com

Deadline for the next issue:

MAY 15, 2014



Diane Tolliver



Lisa Hanson