

Virtual Training for Identifying the Unidentified

Course Brochure

Course Link: <https://academy.forensicstta.org/course/view.php?id=8>

Course Overview

The Virtual Training for Identifying the Unidentified is a no-cost, self-paced training series available through the Forensics TTA Virtual Academy. This collection of on-demand videos explore best practices, forensic technologies, and collaborative strategies used to identify missing persons and unidentified human remains. Through expert-led presentations and real-world case studies, learners examine topics such as DNA analysis, fingerprints, Forensic Genetic Genealogy, interagency partnerships, family engagement, and public outreach. The course highlights practical resources and investigative approaches that help advance identification efforts, resolve long-term cases, and support families seeking answers.



This on-demand video resource package is approved for 15 American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators (ABMDI) Continuing Education Hours.



This online training has been approved by the American Board of Criminalistics (ABC) for recertification credits through RTI International.

This project was supported by Award No. 15PBJA-22-GK-01556-JAGT awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the SMART Office. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Learning Objectives

After completing this on-demand video resource package, learners should be able to:

1. **Analyze how timely scene response, thorough documentation, and careful evidence preservation** support accurate identification, interagency case continuity, and effective communications with families in missing persons and unidentified human remains cases.
2. **Assess whether systems are in place to support unidentified and long-term cases**, including early database entry, proper evidence retention, and case file completeness, to prevent investigative delays and missed identification opportunities.
3. **Assess the role of interagency and cross-jurisdictional coordination** among Medical Examiner Coroner (MEC) offices, law enforcement, forensic laboratories, federal agencies, and other nonprofit partners and organizations (e.g., National Missing and Unidentified Persons System [NamUs], University of North Texas Center for Human Identification [UNTCHI], Operation Identification [OpID], National Center for Missing & Exploited Children [NCMEC], National Archives and Records Administration [NARA]) in advancing identification and repatriation efforts.
4. **Apply multidisciplinary identification methods and strategies** including anthropology, fingerprints, DNA analysis (e.g., Combined DNA Index System [CODIS]-eligible techniques, kinship analysis, Forensic Genetic Genealogy [FGG]), and odontology to advance unidentified human remains and missing persons cases in ways consistent with accepted investigative standards and documentation practices.
5. **Implement effective community, family, and media engagement strategies** including public outreach initiatives, DNA collection drives, and missing persons days to support families, generate leads, increase accountability, and sustain momentum in long-term and stalled investigations.

On-Demand Video Resources

Overview of Migrant Casework and Challenges at the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner

This webinar featured a brief background on the history of the United States – Mexico border, the creation of migrant policies and enforcement, the increase of migrants deaths and the challenges associated with identification, the importance of partnerships and available resources, and actual case studies from one of America's busiest medical examiner offices involved in the forefront of migrant deaths.

Speaker:

Jen Vollner



Dr. Jen Vollner is one of three Forensic Anthropologists with the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner (PCOME) and an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Anthropology in the School of Anthropology at the University of Arizona. Dr. Vollner earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from the College of Mount St. Joseph (now Mount St. Joseph University) in Delhi, Ohio. She earned a Master of Science in Anthropology from Mercyhurst College (now Mercyhurst University), as well as a Master of Arts in Anthropology and her doctorate in Anthropology from Michigan State University. Dr. Vollner has been employed by the PCOME since 2016 and became a Diplomate of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology in 2020. As one of the anthropologists at the PCOME, her job duties and research interests revolve around the identification of migrants who have died in southern Arizona.

Texas State University's Operation Identification: Numbers to Names

This webinar offers an in-depth look at Texas State University's (TSU's) Operation Identification (OpID) project and its mission to investigate, identify, and repatriate unidentified human remains (UHRs) discovered near the South Texas border. During this webinar, the presenter explores how OpID addresses gaps in medicolegal death investigations, manages UHRs, and fosters collaboration across jurisdictions and internationally. This session also highlights OpID's ongoing efforts to connect families with their missing loved ones, shedding light on the critical work being done to support these investigations.

Speaker:

Kate Spradley



Dr. Kate Spradley is the Director of OpID and a Professor in the Department of Anthropology at TSU. She earned her master's degree from the University of Arkansas in 2000 and completed her PhD at the University of Tennessee in 2006. As a biological anthropologist, Dr. Spradley's research focuses on human biological variation, forensic anthropology, bioarchaeology, and quantitative methods.

Unidentified Human Remains Investigations 101

This webinar features guest speakers Lara Newell from the Virginia Office of the Chief Medical Examiner and Senior Special Agent Douglas R. Hubert from the Virginia State Police – Bureau of Criminal Investigation. They provide an overview of how to navigate unidentified human remains investigations from both the medical examiner and law enforcement perspectives. Specifically, the presenters discuss the intricacies of the investigative process, considerations for available evidence, and how to utilize national organizations for assistance. Attendees also examine a case that originated in 1987 and explore how advancements in forensic technology and investigative methods would significantly change the way the case is approached today.

Speakers:

Lara Newell



Lara Newell is a board-certified medicolegal death investigator who is currently employed at the Virginia Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (VA OCME) as the Long-Term Unidentified Coordinator. Currently, her caseload exceeds 300 cases, and she works closely with local, state and federal law enforcement, private and state funded laboratories, genealogists, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs), and other partners on Virginia's long term unidentified cases. With over a decade of experience in death investigation and a focus on unidentified cases, Lara leads statewide efforts in identification, outreach and training. Lara is also adjunct faculty at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and manages two internships, one with VCU and one with Randolph Macon College. Lara currently serves as the secretary for the American Academy of Forensic Sciences' (AAFS') Academy Standards Board (ASB) Medicolegal Death Investigation Consensus Body. Lara is a FY23 Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Missing and Unidentified Human Remains (MUHR) Program grant recipient and has been using funds for exhumations and forensic genetic genealogy (FGG).

Douglas R. Hubert



Senior Special Agent Douglas R. Hubert began his law enforcement career with the Virginia State Police in 1998, following honorable service in the US Navy as a 3rd Class Petty Officer assigned to the US Navy Ceremonial Honor Guard in Washington, DC. After graduating from the Virginia State Police Academy, he was assigned to Fairfax County, where he served on the Crash Reconstruction Team and responded to several high-profile incidents, including the September 11th Pentagon attack and the DC sniper investigation. In 2003, Hubert transferred to Roanoke County and went on to serve in a variety of specialized roles, including the Sex Offender Unit, Firearms Transactions Section, US Marshals Fugitive Task Force, and as a

certified Crash Reconstruction Expert and Field Training Officer. He was promoted to Special Agent in the Bureau of Criminal Investigation in 2017 and now focuses on major violent crimes, including homicides, sexual assaults, and cold cases. As one of the primary crime scene agents for the Salem Field Office, Hubert leads in crime scene documentation and evidence collection, including officer-involved shooting investigations. He is a trained Bloodstain Pattern Analyst, Leica Scanner Operator, Rapid DNA Program Lead, and Crime Scene Reconstructionist. A graduate of the Virginia Department of Forensic Science Academy, he has received extensive training in forensic evidence and crime scene analysis. Hubert holds a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Bluefield College.

The Bear Brook Murders

In 1985, the bodies of an adult female and a young child were found inside 55-gallon drums in Bear Brook State Park in Allenstown, New Hampshire. The bodies of two additional children were recovered in the same vicinity in 2000. A decades-long investigation into their deaths began to unravel with the identification of a living Jane Doe from California through the first application of forensic genetic genealogy (FGG) to a criminal case. Attendees will hear how multiple agencies collaborated to connect cases across the country to identify a transient serial offender known as the "Chameleon Killer" and how kinship analysis was used to connect him to the crime scene in New Hampshire. Attendees will also hear about the various forensic disciplines used during the course of this investigation including DNA and anthropology.

Speakers:

Christopher N. Elphick



Chris N. Elphick is a Detective with the New Hampshire State Police Cold Case Unit. He was hired by the New Hampshire State Police in 2013 after serving as a local police officer in New Hampshire for several years. He moved into the Major Crime Unit as a Detective in 2018, investigating homicides and officer-involved shootings prior to being assigned to the Cold Case Unit.

Kim Fallon



Kim Fallon began her career as a death investigator at the New Hampshire Office of Chief Medical Examiner (NH OCME) in 1993 and has been the Chief Forensic Investigator for the NH OCME since 2005. She was certified by the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators in 2009. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Southern Connecticut State College and obtained a Master's degree in Investigations from the University of New Haven on May 10, 2024! She was the Bioterrorism Surveillance Coordinator at the NH Department of Health and Human Services from 2001 until 2005.

Peter Headley



Peter Headley first joined San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department in 1982 and worked in Search and Rescue and the Mounted Posse. In 1994, he earned Peace Officer's Standards and Training certification and began working Uniformed Patrol. He was assigned to Specialized Investigations Division in the Crimes Against Children Detail in 2007. While working in Crimes Against Children, he assumed the case of a living Doe "Lisa". Lisa was abandoned and recovered at approximately 5 years old in 1986 from "Gordon Jensen" who claimed he was her

father. It was later determined that he was not related to "Lisa" in 2002 when he was arrested for a murder in Contra Costa County. Peter identified "Lisa" as Dawn Beaudin by the first use of Investigative Genetic Genealogy (IGG) in a criminal case working in collaboration with Genetic Genealogist Barbara Rae Venter. The suspect had died in prison under an alias in 2010 and was subsequently identified as Terry Rasmussen by the same means. Peter shared the methods and resources used in the "Lisa" case with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which they then used in collaboration with Barbara Rae Venter to successfully identify the Golden State Killer. In 2020, Peter was assigned to Specialized Investigations Division in the Cold Case Homicide Detail where he was responsible for reviewing cold cases for the use of IGG, identifying DNA available in evidence, initiating the processing of DNA for upload to FamilyTreeDNA and GEDmatch, and identifying victims and suspects using IGG. Peter Headley retired from San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department in 2022.

Barbara Rae-Venter



Barbara Rae-Venter, JD, PhD, is the President and a Co-Founder of Firebird Forensics Group, Inc. a 501(3)(c) corporation that focuses on assisting law enforcement with identifying suspects in violent crimes and identifying unidentified human remains. Barbara is a retired intellectual property attorney who specialized in the patenting of biotechnology inventions. She earned a JD from the University of Texas at Austin Law School and a BA double major in Psychology and Biochemistry (Special Projects) and a PhD in Biology (Biochemistry) at the University of California at San Diego. Barbara identified the mother of Lisa Jensen, abducted in infancy and then abandoned by her abductor as a 5-year-old. This was the first use of what is now known as Investigative Genetic Genealogy (IGG) in a criminal case.

Identification of who Lisa's mother was led to the New Hampshire (NH) State Police solving the murder of the Allentown Four in Allentown,

NH. Barbara and Junel Davidsen, a participant in the Firebird Forensics Group, subsequently determined the true identity of Lisa's abductor and suspected murderer of the Allentown Four as Terry Peder Rasmussen. Using the same technique as she used to identify Lisa and Rasmussen, Barbara assisted the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Paul Holes (now retired), and the Sacramento District Attorney's office in identifying Joseph James DeAngelo as the notorious Golden State Killer (GSK). Barbara requested to remain anonymous in the original press release. IGG is now being used to solve hundreds of previously "unsolvable" cold cases; Barbara and her team have solved about 70 cases.

Engaging the Community: Innovative Strategies for Solving Long-Term Missing and Unidentified Person Cases

Resolution of long-term missing and unidentified person cases requires cultivating engagement and accountability from the broader community, including law enforcement, the medicolegal death investigation community, and the general public. When traditional investigative efforts stall, it becomes crucial to explore new strategies to engage the public and generate support for advancing the investigation. Strategies discussed in this panel presentation will include the use of multiple forms of media, hosting a missing person awareness event, targeted DNA drives, and tribal law enforcement outreach.

Speakers:

Francia Thompson



Francia Thompson is a Special Agent in the Investigative Division of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI). She has been an agent since 2005 and has focused her career on crime scene and cold case investigations. She spent 13 years assigned to crime scene investigations, where she worked hundreds of violent crimes with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. Special Agent Thompson is currently assigned to the Cold Case Investigation Unit. Special Agent Thompson holds a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and Criminology from the University of Oklahoma. She is an International Association for Identification (IAI) Certified Crime Scene Investigator. Special Agent Thompson also assists other law enforcement agencies

throughout the state with Spanish interviews and document translations. She has taught Crime Scene Investigation Techniques, Beginning Spanish for Law Enforcement, and Cold Case Investigation courses to law enforcement agencies throughout the state. She is currently a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Violent Criminal Apprehension Program (ViCAP) National Advisory Board Member. She has received numerous awards from the OSBI including red feathers, team awards, 2010 Agent of the Year, and the 2017 Medal of Service. Special Agent Thompson is passionate about serving victims and being their voice.

Mark Pooley



Mark Pooley is the Director of Investigative Support for the Center for Human Identification (CHI) at the University of North Texas, Health Science Center. In this position, he assists law enforcement and medical examiners in identifying unidentified human remains and missing person's cases through DNA technologies. He joined CHI in March 2023. In August of 2020, Mark Pooley retired as a Sergeant from the Tempe Police Department in Arizona. During his tenure in law enforcement, he held several detective positions in Robbery, Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF/FBI), Homicide/Missing Persons and was a supervisor in the Professional Standard's Bureau. Mr. Pooley who is

Navajo and Hopi, was also a tribal prosecutor for the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community where he dealt with criminal and civil issues within the tribal court. In 2021, Mr. Pooley started a 501c3 nonprofit called "Native Search Solutions." The organization's mission was to finding Missing & Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) on and off the reservation(s) by using technology and other resources.

Shannon Hodder



Shannon Hodder serves as a Senior Assistant District Attorney at the Office of the DeKalb County District Attorney located in Decatur, Georgia. She is responsible for the investigation and prosecution of cold case homicides. In 2022, she was a founding member of the DeKalb County Cold Case Task Force created to address the over 600 case backlog of unsolved homicide cases in the county. In 2022, she applied for and secured federal funding, on behalf of her office, to identify the remains of 27 unidentified victims at the DeKalb County Medical Examiner's Office utilizing Investigative Genetic Genealogy. In

2023, Ms. Hodder secured additional federal funding to work cold case homicides with unknown offender DNA. In April of 2023, she moved into a role prosecuting SB440 cases – juveniles who are charged as adults in the most serious offenses. In addition to her role handling SB440s, Ms. Hodder oversees the office's Unidentified Remains and Cold Case genealogy projects.

Uncovering the Truth: The Lori Long Chase Case and Advances in Forensic Technology

In 1983, seventeen-year-old Lori Long Chase vanished from Phoenix, Arizona. Her body was discovered near an irrigation ditch in the Ahwatukee Foothills, but her identity remained a mystery for decades. It wasn't until September 2024 that Lori's remains were finally identified through a DNA comparison with her deceased infant son, who had tragically passed away just days after birth in 1983. This presentation will explore the details of Lori's case, the investigative efforts made over the years, and how advancements in forensic DNA technology ultimately led to her identification. Additionally, this session will highlight key lessons learned from the case, emphasizing the role of emerging forensic techniques in solving long-unsolved mysteries.

Speaker:

Stuart Somershoe



Stuart Somershoe joined the Phoenix Police Department (PPD) in 1996. He became a detective with the PPD Missing and Unidentified Persons Unit in 2008 and spent his career investigating thousands of missing person cases, ranging from runaways, Amber and Silver Alerts, cold cases, and no-body homicide prosecutions. Some of the cases he worked on received widespread media attention and were spotlighted on such programs as 20/20, Dateline, Snapped, and Disappeared. Stuart has also been featured in books and media about missing and unidentified persons such as *Skeleton Crew* by Deborah Halber, *The Long -Term Missing* by Silvia Pettem, and the podcasts *Missing Alissa*, *True Crime*

Arizona, and *The Deck*. In December 2022, after 26 years in law enforcement, Stuart retired from the Phoenix Police Department. He continues to work in the area of missing persons as a volunteer and consultant.

Forensic Services for Medical Examiner and Coroner Offices Webinar Series – Webinar #1: Identification Resources

This webinar features guest speakers Melanie Rouse and Dr. Laura C. Fulginiti of the Clark County Office of the Coroner/Medical Examiner and Rob Glassmire of the Garfield County Coroner's Office. The presenters highlight the various ways medical examiner/coroner (ME/C) offices of various sizes access identification services and specialists – including benefits and limitations of each. The presenters discuss the use of fingerprints, anthropology, odontology, and DNA, providing tips on how to best work with these different specialists across their capabilities and how to get the full benefits of their services. This is the first session in a three-part series that provides a high-level overview of ancillary services that ME/C offices may interact with to investigate cases, focusing especially on more unusual cases.

Speakers:

Melanie Rouse



Melanie Rouse, F-ABMDI, serves as the Coroner/Director for the Clark County Office of the Coroner/Medical Examiner. With more than 20 years of experience in medicolegal death investigations, Ms. Rouse is board-certified as a Medicolegal Death Investigator. She is trained as a HAZMAT operational-level responder and has extensive expertise in continuity planning, emergency management, and the development and implementation of training and exercises. Before joining Clark County, Ms. Rouse served as the Chief Medicolegal Death Investigator/Manager for the Maricopa County Medical Examiner's Office, where she also previously supervised the Investigations Division. She has served as a Mass Fatality Coordinator/Emergency

Management Specialist, and has contributed to multiple committees, including past roles as Chair of the Mass Fatality/Continuity Planning Committee and Co-Chair of the Safety Committee. Ms. Rouse is a member of the Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team (DMORT) and currently serves as Chair of the Ethics Committee and a member of the Board of Directors for the International Association of Coroners & Medical Examiners (IACME).

Laura Fulginiti



Laura Fulginiti, PhD, D-ABFA, is a Forensic Anthropologist with the Clark County Office of the Coroner/Medical Examiner. A board-certified practitioner, Dr. Fulginiti brings 35 years of experience working in a medical examiner's office. She also serves on the Mass Fatality Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team (DMORT) VIII. Dr. Fulginiti is a past President of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) and a former member of the Board of Directors for the American Board of Forensic Anthropology (ABFA).

Rob Glassmire

Rob Glassmire, D-ABMDI, currently serves as the Coroner for the Garfield County Coroner's Office. He has dedicated 23 years to Garfield County—spending his first thirteen years as a Sheriff's Deputy and Investigator, followed by the last ten years as the elected Coroner. Mr. Glassmire is a Marine Corps reservist and previously deployed to Iraq in 2003 as part of a mortuary affairs unit.

CODIS in Action: Capabilities, Challenges, and Casework Strategies Webinar

This webinar features guest speaker Amanda Overman from the North Carolina State Crime Laboratory. The presenter provides an overview of how the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) database functions, including its capabilities, limitations, and how recent advancements are shaping forensic investigations. The presenter shares practical strategies, legal considerations, and ways to maximize the utility of CODIS hits to support investigations. Whether you're new to CODIS or looking to refine your expertise, this webinar provides actionable insights that can be applied to further support case resolutions and highlights how CODIS is both a powerful forensic science and investigation tool.

Speaker:

Amanda Overman



Amanda Overman has been with the North Carolina State Crime Laboratory (NCSCL) for over 20 years. Her first experience in forensics was as an intern in the Molecular Genetics Section of the crime laboratory. After graduating from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill with a BS in Clinical Laboratory Science, she was hired by the laboratory as a DNA Database Analyst. Amanda processed Convicted Offender samples for entry into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) in this role. She then pursued a position in the casework section. She completed Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) and the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) Academy and was a sworn SBI Agent for over 10 years. As a Casework DNA Analyst, Amanda served search warrants, processed crime scenes, performed DNA analysis in a wide variety of cases, and testified to the results in court when needed. Amanda has served as a Supervisor and the CODIS State Administrator for North Carolina during her tenure with the laboratory. Amanda feels fortunate to have been a part of the evolution of DNA analysis over her career and is grateful to serve her community in this role.

University of North Texas Center for Human Identification (UNTCHI) Resources Webinar

This webinar focuses on the resources offered for missing and unidentified persons cases through the University of North Texas Center for Human Identification (UNTCHI). Presented by UNTCHI team members Mark Pooley, Dixie Peters, and Robert Moore, this webinar includes guidance on submitting samples for DNA analysis, utilizing Forensic Genetic Genealogy in your casework, and accessing UNTCHI resources for sexually motivated Jane and John Doe homicide cases and indigenous missing and unidentified persons cases.

Speakers:

Mark Pooley



Mark Pooley is the Director of Investigative Support for the Center for Human Identification (CHI) at the University of North Texas, Health Science Center. In this position, he assists law enforcement and medical examiners in identifying unidentified human remains and missing person's cases through DNA technologies. He joined CHI in March 2023. In August of 2020, Mark Pooley retired as a Sergeant from the Tempe Police Department in Arizona. During his tenure in law enforcement, he held several detective positions in Robbery, Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF/FBI), Homicide/Missing Persons and was a supervisor in the Professional Standard's Bureau. Mr. Pooley who is Navajo and Hopi, was also a tribal prosecutor for the Salt River Pima - Maricopa Indian Community where he dealt with criminal and civil issues within the tribal court. In 2021, Mr. Pooley started a 501c3

nonprofit called "Native Search Solutions." The organization's mission was to finding Missing & Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) on and off the reservation(s) by using technology and other resources.

Dixie Peters



Dixie Peters serves as the Technical Leader for the Forensic Genetic Genealogy (FGG) Unit at the Center for Human Identification at the University of North Texas (UNT) Health Science Center. She earned her BS in Biology from Texas Christian University and later completed her MS in Forensic Genetics at the UNT Health Science Center in Fort Worth. Before joining UNT Health Science Center, Ms. Peters worked as a Research Assistant at the University of Texas Southwestern.

Robert C. Moore III

Robert C. Moore III, MS, was appointed director of investigative support at the Center for Human Identification at the University of North Texas (UNT) Health Science Center. The center assists law enforcement and medicolegal agencies in solving cold homicide cases. He supervises the first full-time genetic genealogists employed by a public forensic laboratory as they perform in-house forensic investigative genetic genealogy. At UNT, he earned a master's degree in interdisciplinary studies with a focus on criminal justice administration. He went on to spend nearly 30 years in law enforcement in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and is a reserve peace officer for the River Oaks Police Department.

DNA Basics: Understanding the Science and Tools Behind DNA Kinship Analysis

This presentation features Michelle Halsing, Assistant Laboratory Director of the Missing Persons DNA Program at the California Department of Justice. It is tailored for non-laboratory criminal justice professionals—including investigators, prosecutors, victim advocates, and program administrators—seeking to strengthen their foundational understanding of forensic DNA testing, with a particular focus on kinship analysis. The presentation offers an overview of the forensic DNA testing process, explains how DNA profiles are searched and compared within the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), and outlines the capabilities and limitations of these tools in both investigative and judicial settings. Viewers are also introduced to the fundamental principles of forensic DNA kinship analysis, supported by discussions of real-world case applications, common testing strategies, and key considerations for interpreting laboratory reports. This resource highlights the critical role of kinship analysis in supporting missing persons investigations, unidentified human remains cases, and other complex forensic scenarios.

Speaker:

Michelle Halsing



Michelle Halsing earned her degree in Biological Sciences from California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, California. She joined the California Department of Justice in 2001 as a Criminalist with the California State Offender DNA Database. In 2007, she was qualified as a casework analyst for the Missing Persons DNA Program (MPDP), where she has since advanced to a supervisory role while maintaining active qualifications in both short tandem repeat (STR) and mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) casework. In her current capacity, Michelle oversees complex case management and conducts in-depth research to identify cases suitable for forensic genetic genealogy (FGG) analysis. She has also served as a qualified ANSI National Accreditation Board/Quality Assurance Standards (ANAB/QAS) assessor since 2012, contributing her expertise to quality assurance and accreditation efforts within forensic laboratories.

Leveraging the Media to Solicit Leads for Unidentified Human Remains Cases

This session will delve into advanced facial reconstruction resources used in forensic anthropology, emphasizing the significance of sharing images via media channels to aid in victim identification. It will also discuss forensic media outreach strategies, focusing on networking with local and national media outlets to amplify the reach of investigations. Additionally, the importance of visual aids in unidentified human remains cases will be highlighted, along with effective strategies for utilizing social and traditional media platforms to gather crucial information.

Speakers:

Carol Schweitzer



Carol Schweitzer is a seasoned professional in the field of forensic psychology with extensive experience in child exploitation and missing persons cases. Currently serving as a Board Member for the Mid-Atlantic Cold Case Homicide Investigators Association since February 2023, Ms. Schweitzer has been with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children since January 2006, holding various roles including Program Manager and Supervisor within the Forensic Services Unit. Ms. Schweitzer maintains an active caseload of unidentified children in the eastern United States and collaborates with medical examiners, coroners, and law enforcement on death investigations. With a master's degree in forensic psychology from Marymount University

and a BA in Psychology from the University at Buffalo, Ms. Schweitzer combines academic expertise with practical experience to provide invaluable technical assistance and investigative recommendations in critical cases.

Angela Soler



Dr. Angela Soler is a Board-Certified Forensic Anthropologist and Assistant Director of the Forensic Anthropology Unit at the New York City Office of Chief Medical Examiner (NYC OCME). Prior to joining NYC OCME in 2015, Dr. Soler obtained her Ph.D. from Michigan State University and completed postdoctoral appointments at the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner in Tucson, Arizona, and the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. As a forensic anthropologist at the NYC OCME, Dr. Soler assists with scene recoveries, determination of human vs. non-human and medicolegal significance, the identification of unknown decedents, and the interpretation of bone trauma and pathology. In addition, she manages over 1,000 NYC unidentified persons in the National Missing and Unidentified Persons

System and leads the OCME Cold Case Unit focusing on the identification of long-term unknowns going as far back as the 1960s. Dr. Soler also works with the families of victims of the World Trade Center and assists with ongoing identification efforts. Dr. Soler currently serves on the Board of

Directors of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences and has served as a peer reviewer for multiple scientific journals. Dr. Soler's research interests include the identification of human remains and specifically the resolution of cases of long-term unidentified individuals, and she has published several articles and book chapters, and presented at national conferences on the topic of identification.

Julie Bolcer

Julie Bolcer is the Executive Director of Public Affairs and Senior Advisor for the Office of Chief



Medical Examiner, where she leads strategic communications, media relations, and external affairs. She brings more than a decade of experience in managing public affairs at all levels of government. Most recently, Ms. Bolcer served as Senior Director of Communications for the Test & Trace Corps at NYC Health + Hospitals, where she led the team responsible for marketing and communications initiatives for the nation's largest COVID-19 testing, contact tracing and safe isolation program. Previously, as Communications Advisor to the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services, she oversaw communications for the portfolio of agencies protecting the health of all New Yorkers and serving the City's most vulnerable populations. Ms. Bolcer has also represented the City's equity agenda to the global

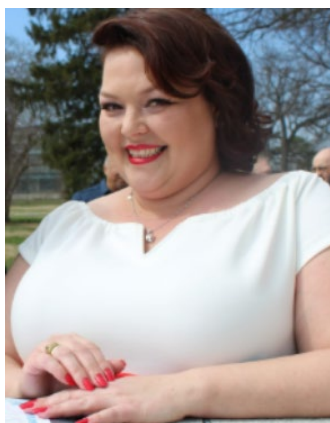
diplomatic community based at the United Nations as Deputy Commissioner for Policy and Communications at the Mayor's Office for International Affairs, served as a spokesperson for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, and worked in the New York State Senate.

Military Resources for Cold Case Investigations

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is an independent agency of the United States government within the executive branch charged with the preservation and documentation of government and historical records. In this session, the presenters will discuss NARA's comprehensive search process, detailing how investigators can request records pertinent to missing persons with a military background. The presenters will also highlight additional military resources including internal assets within the Army and Navy. From fingerprint cards to medical records, this session will explore the breadth of information available and guide attendees through the process of accessing these crucial records.

Speakers:

Leah Harmon



Leah Harmon is a technician with the National Personnel Records Center's (NPRC's) Customer Emergency Response Team. She is tasked with handling urgent cases including Congressional requests, burials, and homeless veterans. Her specialty is reconstructing files lost in the 1973 NPRC fire that destroyed approximately 16-18 million military service records. NPRC is her "second act." She spent 20 years in the restaurant business before finally completing her Bachelor's degree at the age of 40. Mrs. Harmon joined the National Archives in 2015. She and her partner Joseph have two dogs, and a little house with a huge garden.

Mark A. Platt



**NO PERSONAL
HEADSHOT AVAILABLE**

Mark A. Platt is originally from Bucks County, Pennsylvania and has a Master's Degree in Forensic Sciences from George Washington University (GWU). After graduating from GWU, Special Agent Platt accepted a position as a Death Investigator with the Maricopa County Medical Examiner's Office in Phoenix, AZ. Special Agent Platt began his career with the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) in February 2001 at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, CA, where he worked death, violent crime, and proactive narcotics operations. Special Agent Platt transferred to the NCIS Middle East Field Office in April 2003 where he was assigned as the country referent for Afghanistan and Pakistan. In June 2005, Special Agent Platt transferred to the NCIS Office of Special Projects in Washington, DC where he was responsible for investigating Espionage allegations. Special Agent Platt moved on

to Singapore in September 2008 where he was the country referent for Borneo Malaysia and Thailand. In September 2012, Special Agent Platt was reassigned to NCIS Headquarters in Quantico, VA and was responsible for policy, training, and the administration of the NCIS death investigations program. Special Agent Platt transferred to Spain in July 2018 where he was on a reactive criminal investigations squad and also served as the country referent for Portugal, the Azores, and Cape

Verde. In July 2020, Special Agent Platt returned to NCISHQ where he serves in his current assignment as the Program Manager of the NCIS Cold Case Homicide Unit. Throughout his career, Special Agent Platt deployed four times to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba to interrogate detainees in wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and also deployed to Fallujah, Iraq with SEAL Team 3, where he served as their lead interrogator.

Jessica A. Veltri



Jessica A. Veltri is a law enforcement professional with over 23 years of military law enforcement experience. She retired from active duty with the US Army in 2022 during which she spent most of her career as a military special agent with the Department of the Army's Criminal Investigation Division (DACID). She is currently serving as a civilian special agent with DACID, specializing in cold case and missing persons investigations. Special Agent Veltri has a master's degree in Crime Scene Investigation from George Washington University and is a graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy and the National Forensic Academy. She also holds a graduate certificate in Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy from the University of New Haven.

Hitting the Jackpot One (Fingerprint) Card at a Time: Unlocking Success in Human Identification

Human identification through friction ridge skin remains a critical tool in our technology-driven world. This session will explore low-cost, low-tech methods for obtaining high-quality prints and provide an inside look at the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Latent Print Unit, highlighting how their integration of training, technology, and persistence leads to successful outcomes. A grantee from the Missing and Unidentified Human Remains (MUHR) Program will also share their approach to incorporating fingerprint analysis into unidentified human remains workflows, emphasizing the importance of revisiting this key element in the identification process.

Speakers:

Bryan T. Johnson



Bryan T. Johnson is the Major Incident Management Program Manager for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Laboratory's Latent Print Unit in Quantico, VA. He has been with the FBI for 15 years as an FBI Qualified Latent Print Examiner and has focused on mass fatality and unknown deceased issues for the last 8 years. He has a BS and an MS in forensic science from Chaminade University of Honolulu, where he started his career with the City and County of Honolulu Medical Examiner's Office as a Medicolegal Death Investigator. He is the commander of the FBI's Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) Response Team, which conducts all fingerprint identifications for the Armed Forces Medical Examiner in Dover, Delaware, as well as at mass fatality incidents around the globe. His role focuses on unknown deceased

identification, and international collaboration for humanitarian assistance in identifying foreign nationals. In addition to his direct duties with the FBI, he is current a member of the Organization of Scientific Area Committees DVI Subcommittee, Chair of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences Standards Board DVI Working Group, as well as one of two United States Representatives at and the Chair of Friction Ridge/Facial Comparison for the INTERPOL DVI Working Group.

Kate Spradley



Kate Spradley is a Professor of Forensic Anthropology at Texas State University and Director of Operation Identification (OpID), founded in 2013. OpID is a community engaged initiative that facilitates identifications of unidentified human remains in Texas counties without medical examiners through collaboration with local and federal law enforcement. Dr. Spradley and the OpID team conduct exhumations of unidentified persons and provide education and outreach to assist Justices of the Peace with management of the dead. More recently, working with the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Latent Print Unit, the OpID team is utilizing fingerprints and training law enforcement to collect prints for expedited identifications.

Course Completion Requirements

This course is asynchronous; therefore, all activities are set to automatic grading when requirements are met. Those requirements include:

- Learners must watch 95% of the Video Presentations to be marked complete and proceed to the next resource.

Once learners complete all required Video Presentations, they will receive a Certificate of Completion. Total duration of hours for course completion is 15 hours, which is noted on the course's Certificate of Completion.