

# NEAFS Newsletter

Volume 41, Issue 1

Spring 2016

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## NEAFS Webmaster Position NOW Available



If you or someone you know is interested in becoming involved with the NEAFS organization here is a great opportunity! The position of webmaster will be available in May. The role of the NEAFS Webmaster involves the upkeep of the NEAFS website. Interested candidates with knowledge using Joomla is a plus but not required.

If you are interested please contact:

Erica Nadeau, NEAFS President at [president@neafs.org](mailto:president@neafs.org)

Keith Mancini, NEAFS Webmaster at [webmaster@neafs.org](mailto:webmaster@neafs.org)

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## **Pay it forward**

### **President's Message**

Happy Spring! When I started writing this message, I wasn't sure I was going to be able to say that. New England's last snow storm had dumped about 6 inches of snow in my town. Needless to say, it only lasted a few days, but we were able to build our first and last snowman of the season☺ For those of you ready for spring, may the snow be melted and the sunshine be plentiful!

I couldn't be more energized to be serving the NEAFS membership as President this year. There are a lot of exciting things in store for 2016 and some proposals that have already been approved! The NEAFS Board and Staff have recognized that the Organization is in a comfortable position financially. We wouldn't be where we are today without the generosity of our loyal sponsors and dedicated members. With that being said, NEAFS wants to Pay it forward! For those of you who haven't already heard, NEAFS is offering FREE REGISTRATION to any member or active applicant who presents a talk. Our Program Chair, Beth Saucier Goodspeed, is currently working hard to offer a spectacular program for the 2016 Annual Meeting in Atlantic City, NJ. I hope many of you are able to take advantage of this great opportunity.

Pay it forward! The NEAFS Board of Directors has received its first Visiting Scientist Program Application for review. If approved, a 2-Day Forensic Relationship Statistic Training will be offered at the Vermont Forensic Laboratory on August 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>, 2016. This training opportunity would immediately follow the Green Mountain DNA Conference (GMDC) August 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>. As a reminder NEAFS has secured 6 spots for those members interested in attending the GMDC. Registration will open April 5<sup>th</sup> at noon EST and is on a first come, first serve basis. There is a link to the conference information under the Meetings Tab on the neafs.org website, however, more information can also be found at the following address: <http://vfl.vermont.gov/conference>

Pay it forward! We have once again approved funding for ABC and/or IAI certification reimbursements and the NEAFS Training Scholarship Fund. If there was one thing I could ask of all of you, it would be to seize this moment and at least search for an opportunity to further your career and professional development. Don't you want to be the very best you there is? No matter if you are a seasoned analyst or new to the bench, we all have something to learn. Take advantage of what NEAFS is offering YOU!

Pay it forward! We are giving back to the students too! The George W. Neighbor, Jr. scholarship award was increased to \$1750 each and the Carol De Forest Research Fund was expanded to include two awards of \$2500 for graduate and undergraduate student categories. Be sure to submit your application before the April 30<sup>th</sup> deadline.

Have you paid it forward recently? If so, I'd like you to share your kind gesture. The theme of my President's message was inspired by an experience I had today when the car in front of me in the Starbucks drive-thru bought me my coffee. It was the start of a great day and you bet I paid it forward ☺

Our next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at the University of New Haven-Orange Campus. If you have something you would like the Board and Staff to discuss, please don't hesitate to send me your comments, questions, suggestions and/or concerns and email me at [president@neafs.org](mailto:president@neafs.org). I am here to represent each and every one of you and your needs, and I don't know what those are unless you tell me!

Erica Nadeau

NEAFS 2016 President



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# **NEAFS would like to Welcome the following New Members**

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## **Bay Path University**

Erika M. Anderson, Jorge L. Batista Jr., Daniel J. DeWees, Xochitl A. Esquivel-Gomez, Katherine E. Flewelling, Maria M. Hill, Jasmine L. Kerstetter, Maggie M. Levesque, Kristie R.A. McLaughlin, Cherie L. Reynolds, Alexaundrea J. Serwecki, Patricia DeOliveira-Squitiero, Brittany J. Walker, Katheryn Nottoli, Natalia Dyrkacz

## **Cedar Crest College**

Clare M. Fried, Chandler M. Grant, Emily E. Prisaznik, Aisha G. Eckroth, Emily A. Williamson, Elana J. Quinones-Conant

## **CT Dept of Emergency Services - Division of Forensic Services**

Ellen Conlon, Tara L. Burnette, Stephanie M. Taggart, Jennifer G. Nabozny

## **Forensic Evidence, Inc.**

Lewis H. Gordon

## **John Jay College of Criminal Justice**

Xiao Shan Law, Leonard Lim Lee, Dr. Jennifer Y. Rosati

## **Long Island University**

Marie D. Messina

## **Massachusetts State Police Crime Laboratory**

Kristen A. Elsner, Nevin J. Vigneault, Kristin L. Bourque, Michelle Levasseur, Kimberly A. Dunlap, Sharon A. Salem

## **Middlesex County Prosecutor's Office**

Andrew J. Winter

## **Monroe County OCME**

Dr. David J. Nemeth

## **New Hampshire State Police Forensic Laboratory**

Jennifer A.P. Paris, Candice C. Aiken, Anna K. Weaver

## **New Jersey State Police OFS**

Melissa A. Johns, Kimberly A. Michalik

## **New York State Police**

Dr. Lori Ana Bromberg, Samantha J. Romanyk, Tiffany M. Montero

## **New York State Police - Forensic Investigation Center**

Dr. Kari M. Midthun, Brenda L. Wieczynski, Cheryl Moorhead, Thomas F. Diego, Jr.

## **NMS Labs**

Sarah A. Keeling

## **NYC OCME**

Camille A. Stewart, Patrick D. Carney

## **NYPD Laboratory - Controlled Substances Unit**

Ashley Chapman, Kara M. Galinsky

## **Penn State University**

Dr. Reena Roy

## **RI Department of Health Laboratories**

Robert M. Almeida

## **RI Department of Health Laboratories - Forensic Drug Chemistry**

Leslie A. Nolan

## **State of CT, Division of Scientific Services**

Jennifer R. Robisheaux, Dr. Michael P. Rickenbach

## **Suffolk County Crime Laboratory**

Brynn T. Vitrano-Stocker, Vy Pak, Daniel J. Harrington

## **U.S. Customs and Border Protection, NY Laboratory**

Lisa G. McFarland

## **Union County Prosecutor's Office - Forensic Lab**

Ashley Dart

## **University of Albany – SUNY**

Dr. Rabi Ann Musah

## **VA Department of Forensic Science Northern Lab**

Jessica R. Harris

## **Westchester County Forensic Laboratory**

Joelle A. Lopez

## **Yonkers Police Department Forensic Laboratory**

Crystal Washington

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# 2016 NEAFS ANNUAL MEETING

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Please contact Beth Saucier Goodspeed, 2016 Program Chair,

at [Acexkp@aol.com](mailto:Acexkp@aol.com) if you would like to volunteer or if you have any questions!

# 2016 Annual Meeting Update



## Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientists

Do you hear the sounds of coins and bells in your head?! You should because the 2016 NEAFS Annual Meeting at the Harrah's Resort and Casino in Atlantic City, New Jersey is calling you to attend!! Program planning is underway and I am getting very excited to be in AC with all of you from October 12-15, 2016!!! The meeting is going to be held at Harrah's Resort and Casino. Harrah's just finished building a brand new conference center in 2015!! From my own eyes, I can tell you it is beautiful and I can't wait for you all to see it!! There are shops, a ton of restaurants to choose from, the Viking Cooking School, an Elizabeth Arden Red Door Spa, fitness center, an indoor pool which turns into a nightclub at night (!), live music and what am I forgetting, oh yeah, a casino!!! But most importantly, you will have several days of information and networking!!

The Call for Papers is now available so please sign up to present a lecture or a poster! This year we are pleased to offer **FREE REGISTRATION** for any member or active applicant who presents a technical talk or poster!!! This will be a great opportunity for you to share your information and be able to attend without the added cost of registration!! Our Scientific Sessions will be held on Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Board of Directors will kick off the meeting with the BOD's meeting on Tuesday night. Wednesday is Workshop Day!! So far, a Trace Evidence Awareness, Hair Identification Workshop, Fire Debris and Explosives Analysis, and an ABC Examination Preparation Workshop are scheduled and there are more in the works!! Be on the lookout for the Registration form on the website once all workshops have been finalized.

The Educator's Forum is also scheduled for Wednesday. This Forum is open to all attendees – not just educators. So, if you are not taking a workshop, take advantage of this session!! In the past, we offered this on Saturday but we are trying to boost the attendance by offering it on Wednesday this year!!

Thursday will be filled with interesting topics during our Scientific Sessions. Our vendors will be back again displaying new technologies and products to help you in your respective laboratories. Please make every effort to stop by and speak to them. Without the vendors, our meeting would not be possible. Thursday evening will be our Welcome Reception and Poster Session, as well as our Evening Session!! I am still working on the details of this session so you will have to wait on the edge of your seat to find out the topic!!

Friday will be the General/Plenary Sessions and the details are also still in the works so stay tuned.... On Friday evening, we will be honoring our President, Erica Nadeau, at our Annual President's Reception. I don't know how I am going to top the Murder Mystery Dinner from last year's meeting but I am surely going to try!!

The Student Forum and additional scientific workshops will be on Saturday. The ABC exam will also be offered on Saturday which is also a change from years past. Please plan ahead to stay this extra half-day. You will not be disappointed!!

Additional meeting details can be found in the Preliminary Program available in this newsletter and on the NEAFS website as they become available. Please keep your eye out for updates as well!!

Room reservations are now open!! Reserve your room by the deadline of **September 29th, 2016**. Harrah's call center can be reached by calling **1-888-516-2215**, and the code needed to identify our group is **SH10FS6** and the group name as listed in their system is **Forensic Scientists**. We would love to have all of you book your rooms at Harrah's where all the action is!! Believe me; you will not be disappointed with this location!!

I need to thank the Program Team, Board of Directors and Staff for all of their hard work that you are already putting in and will be putting into planning this meeting. I definitely would not be able to do this without all of you!! I sincerely appreciate all of your time and efforts!!

If you are interested in volunteering to help, please contact me at [presidentelect@neafs.org](mailto:presidentelect@neafs.org).

I look forward to seeing you all this fall in Atlantic City, New Jersey!

Beth Saucier Goodspeed

2016 Program Chair





**Northeastern Association  
of  
Forensic Scientists**

## **2016 NEAFS Annual Meeting Preliminary Program**

### **Atlantic City, NJ**

(subject to change)

**Tuesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>**

3:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting

6:30 p.m. – 8:30p.m. Board of Directors Dinner

**Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup>**

7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Registration

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast

8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Educator's Forum

8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Workshops

10:30am – 10:45 a.m. Morning Break

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Lunch

1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Workshops

2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. Afternoon Break

4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Exhibitor Setup

## Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup>

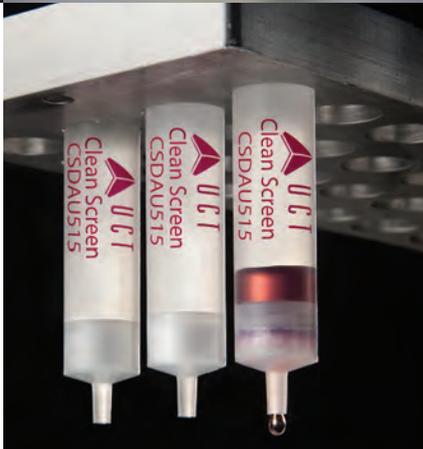
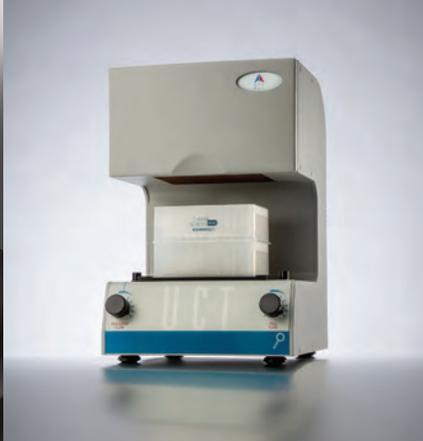
7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast
7:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.	Exhibits
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Scientific Sessions Toxicology Criminalistics/Crime Scene Drug Chemistry DNA Trace/Arson and Explosives
10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Morning Break
12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch & Business Meeting
3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Afternoon Break
1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Scientific Sessions - continued
5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Welcome Reception & Poster Session
8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.	Evening Session

## Friday, October 14<sup>th</sup>

7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
7:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Exhibits
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	General/Plenary Session
10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Morning Break
12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Annual Luncheon
2:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	General/Plenary Session
4:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.	Afternoon Break
5:30 p.m. – 11:45 p.m.	President's Reception

## Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>

7:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Registration
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	ABC Examination
9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Student Forum
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Annual NEAFS “Kirk Cup” College Bowl
9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Scientific Sessions Criminalistics/Crime Scene
10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Morning Break



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# Green Mountain DNA Conference

The 2016 Green Mountain DNA Conference will be held at the Sheraton Hotel & Conference Center in Burlington, Vermont from August 1-3. Conference registration will begin on April 5, 2016 at noon EST. The conference has limited seating and you are encouraged to register at noon as previous conferences have sold out within 10-15 minutes after registration was opened. To learn more about the conference and this year's agenda, please visit the Conference web page: <http://vfl.vermont.gov/conference>

This is also the website to register for the conference.

Registration is \$250 and includes meeting materials, breakfasts, lunches and breaks for the entire conference, a vendor reception with light fare and drinks on Monday night and a "meet the speakers" dinner cruise on Lake Champlain for Tuesday night.

The Conference has obtained a block of rooms at the Sheraton at the government rate of \$128 (plus 10% tax). The link for room registration is:

<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/events/start.action?id=1602183641&key=1E4B9D9B>

The conference ends at noon on Wednesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> and will be followed by a lunch and afternoon session sponsored by Thermo Fisher Scientific. Registration for this session is free and a link to register will be provided on the Conference website at a later date.

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## Today in Forensic Science

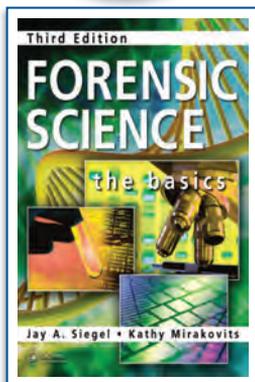
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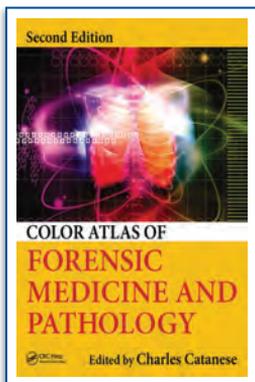
Dr. John Reffner receiving yet another award in his illustrious career in forensic analysis. He received the prestigious Edmond Locard Award from the American Society of Trace Evidence Examiners (ASTEE) during the AAFS meeting last month. We don't know anyone who has received more accolades and recognition for doing what they love to do (and he's still actively doing it!). Thank you to Peter Diaczuk for the photograph.

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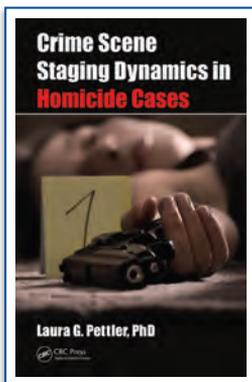
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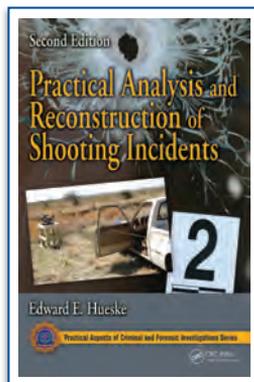
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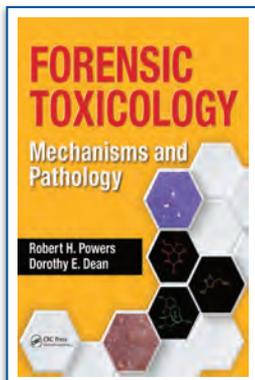
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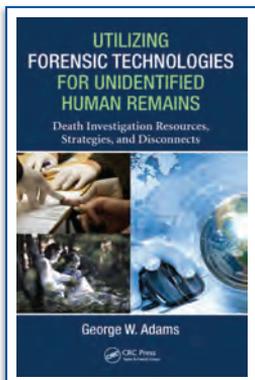
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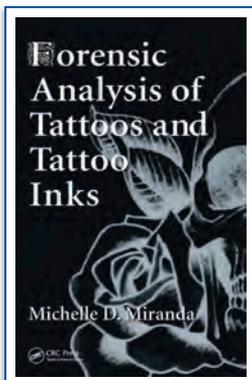
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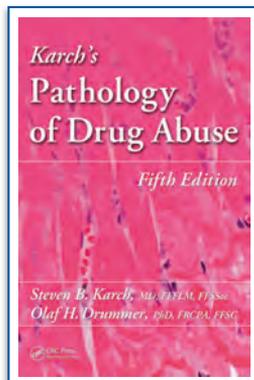
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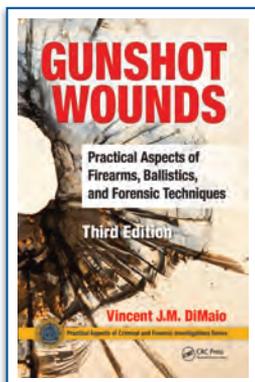
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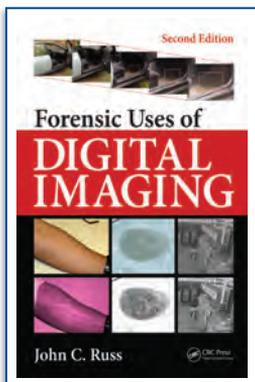
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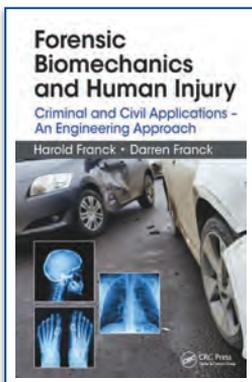
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## ATTENTION STUDENTS:

Are you a current full-time undergraduate student in your junior or senior year, or are you either a part-time or full-time graduate student completing his or her degree in a forensic program at a regionally accredited institution located in the Northeastern U.S. (Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania)?

**Then you are eligible to apply for:**

George W. Neighbor Jr. Memorial Scholarship (undergraduate) - Award is \$1750

George W. Neighbor Jr. Memorial Scholarship (graduate) - Award is \$1750

Carol De Forest Forensic Science Research Grants - Award is \$2500

\***Note** – eligibility is for both full-time undergraduate and graduate students

\*\* **Note** – Two Research Grants will be Awarded.

All submissions for either the scholarship or the research grant must be completed, submitted and received by April 30, 2016.

For more information and Scholarship/Research Grant forms please go to <http://www.neafs.org/>

Questions or comments? Please email [Awards@NEAFS.org](mailto:Awards@NEAFS.org)



## **Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientists Meritorious Service Award Nomination Form**

The Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientists is now accepting nominations for the Meritorious Service Award.

This award is given to a NEAFS member that has a history of providing commendable service to the forensic science community by serving justice through casework, performing research advancing forensic science, training and educating forensic scientists and future forensic scientists, and overall contributions to the NEAFS organization. The nominee must have held the status of Regular Member within NEAFS for at least 10 years to be considered.

In addition to this form, a letter of recommendation outlining the nominee's contributions must be emailed to [awards@Neafs.org](mailto:awards@Neafs.org). All nominations must be received by September 1st. The winner of the NEAFS Meritorious Service Award will be announced during the annual meeting in Atlantic City, NJ from October 12th - 15th, 2016.

### **Nominator**

First Name:

Last Name:

Address:

Affiliation:

NEAFS Membership Number:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

### **Nominee**

First Name:

Last Name:

Address:

Affiliation:



**2008**

George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Undergraduate – Stacie Kaufman  
George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Graduate - [REDACTED]

**2007**

George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Undergraduate – Christina Mulligan  
George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Graduate - [REDACTED]

**2006**

George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Undergraduate – Kathryn O'Brien  
George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Graduate - Joel Stepanchick

**2005**

George W. Neighbor, Jr. Undergraduate – April McNearney  
George W. Neighbor, Jr. Graduate - Evan Bernier

**2004**

George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Undergraduate – Meghan Miller  
George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Graduate - Deborah Lark

**2003**

George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Undergraduate – Annette Lopez  
George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Graduate – Kelley Corcoran

**2002**

George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Undergraduate – John Kristofic  
George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Graduate - Marc LaFrance

**2001**

George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship – Allison Curran

**2000**

George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Graduate – Linda Chiu Rourke

**1999**

George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship – Kimerbely A. Parker  
George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship – Vincent J. Desiderio

**1998**

George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship – Lisa Malachowski  
George W. Neighbor, Jr. Memorial Scholarship – Brandy Blackburn

**1997- Awards changed to be called George W. Neighbor, Jr. Scholarship**

No awards were given out as all applications received were incomplete.

1989 and 1990 No award given out.

# Fast Investigation

Real-time Analysis - High Throughput Imaging

Hair, fibers, ink, tapes

Powders, explosives, residues

Accident reconstruction

Trace evidence

Plant materials, drugs

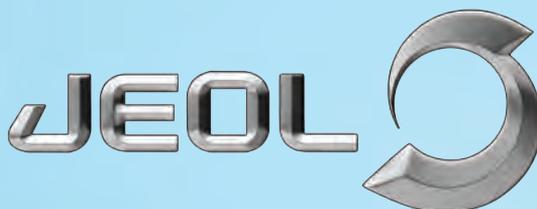
Gunshot residue

Versatile High Resolution Scanning Electron Microscopes

Direct Analysis High Resolution Mass Spectrometer

Preserve the evidence

- ▶ Large sample chamber for SEM
- ▶ Direct analysis with Mass Spec



[www.jeolusa.com/forensics](http://www.jeolusa.com/forensics)

## **We know about the American Board of Criminalistics...but what does the Examination Committee do?**

The American Board of Criminalistics (ABC) Examination Committee (EC) is a standing committee within the ABC. The Examination Committee is responsible for producing and monitoring the various certification exams that are currently offered, which include:

- Comprehensive Criminalistics
- Molecular Biology
- Drug Analysis
- Trace: Hair and Fiber
- Trace: Paint and Polymer
- Trace: Fire Debris

At least one appointed representative from each member organization of the ABC, which includes NEAFS, serves on the EC. The EC is the body responsible for monitoring the overall performance of an examination, evaluating individual test question performance, and addressing issues/concerns raised by test-taker critiques. The 200 questions of any given certification exam evaluates both general criminalistics knowledge and discipline-specific knowledge. In addition, the certification exam provides a platform to continually “pilot” test questions that are being evaluated for incorporation into future certification exams.

Thank you for allowing me to be the NEAFS representative to Examination Committee of the American Board of Criminalistics (ABC).

My specific duties with the ABC Examination Committee (EC) are:

1. Coordinator of the fire debris examination.
2. Chair of the Certification Examination Maintenance Group (CEMG) for the fire debris examination.
3. EC representative to the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), which was formed to prepare the ABC for ISO 17024 accreditation.

Current activities of the EC

1. Maintenance/upkeep of the question database.
2. Review current examinations/questions on regular basis and issue new versions of the examinations as needed.
3. Assist the QAC as needed with ISO 17024 preparations.
4. Write new questions for the database with the CEMGs and with submissions from the public (see below).
5. Research the needs of the forensic community regarding certification, including but not limited to, exploring the possibility of new certification examinations.

**Need an easy way to earn recertification points?**

Help the EC keep our certification examinations current, topical, and applicable to the current climate of the forensic field by writing new examination questions. Questions can be submitted via an easily accessible link on the newly redesigned ABC website. Follow the link <http://www.criminalistics.com/submit-an-abc-exam-question.html> to submit your questions.

You can earn one certification point for every two questions accepted to the database, up to a maximum of 5 points per year. In this current climate of tight budgets and reduced training opportunities, this can be a great opportunity to maintain your certification status. Non-certified individuals are welcome to submit questions for consideration as well.

**Visit the ABC website!**

Our website has recently received a much needed facelift. The website has been redesigned and organized. Everything you need is now just a click away! Check it out at [www.criminalistics.com](http://www.criminalistics.com).

**Interested in taking a certification exam?**

Check the ABC website for dates and locations of upcoming examination sittings. All application materials are on the website. For individuals needing financial assistance, be sure to check out the information on the Ed Rhodes Scholarship under the "Certification" tab on the ABC website.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Amy Duhaime  
[asduhaime@uri.edu](mailto:asduhaime@uri.edu)

## Probabilistic Genotyping, Mixture Interpretation Simplified

### Bullet

The eDNA **Probabilistic Genotyping** tool has been designated *Bullet* for its speed, accuracy and ability to cut through the fog of uncertainty.



Fully documented and validated, with a fast track implementation team to assist in each step. Easily evaluate uncertainty even in differentially degraded mixtures.  
**Streamlines Mixture Interpretation and Reporting**

### The eDNA Consortium...

Is comprised of numerous Forensic Biology Laboratories united in the creation of tools relevant and dedicated to the Forensic Biology and HID industries.

## Complex Kinship Calculations Made Simple

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Intuitive and Flexible Pedigree Builder  
Missing Person / Reconstruction  
Symbolic Formulae  
Silent Alleles  
Population Substructure  
Familial Database Searches  
Gender Specific Mutation Rates  
Templatized Report Generation

### Disaster Victim Identification Tools



We invite you to contact us for a free live demo

877-451-4363

[www.eDNALIMS.com](http://www.eDNALIMS.com)



## **NEAFS Visiting Scientist Program**

Any private or public forensic science laboratory in the NEAFS geographical area needing technical, scientific, or training assistance may apply to the NEAFS Visiting Scientist Program.

Upon request, NEAFS will make a good faith effort to find a qualified individual(s) to come to the laboratory and provide the assistance. The person(s) selected will be agreed upon between NEAFS and the laboratory. NEAFS will subsidize the visit which can be up to 5 working days in duration. Travel logistics will be arranged by the laboratory in conjunction with both the visiting scientist and NEAFS.

Interested laboratories can simply complete the attached application and email it to the NEAFS Education Chairperson at [education@neafs.org](mailto:education@neafs.org). The Education Chair will contact the person designated on the form within 10 business days of receiving the application.

The number of quality hours for those claiming continuing education credit as a result of the training will be determined by the instructor(s).



The following webinar summary was submitted by NEAFS member Susan Tecce, who utilized the training stipend to attend the webinar.

Webinar: Diagnosing Human Error in Corrective Action

Sponsor: Paton Professional

Instructor: Duke Okes

Corrective actions frequently list human error as the root cause of the problem with re-training as the solution. Human error is a category of causes, not a root cause, and re-training is only a solution if training is the issue. The real question is what process caused the human error. Was the error caused by the individual or the system they were working in? One way to assess this is by comparing the error rate of the individual to the error rate of the other individuals in the system. Is this person an outlier, or is their error rate within statistical limits?

The problem can be a combination of the person and the system. If a person with bad eyesight is working in a poorly lit area, errors could be a result of a combination of both factors. A person with good eyesight may not be affected by the poor lighting, and the person with bad eyesight may not make so many errors if the lighting were adequate.

Several environmental factors can contribute to human errors; User interface with equipment, equipment problems, work pace, clarity of written or oral information, noise, lighting, climate, ergonomics, interruption of routine and organizational culture are just some factors.

Human attributes can also contribute; physical attributes, senses, skills, cognitive capacity, health, motor skill, stress, training, experience and cultural background are some contributing factors. Also, at the subconscious level, the person may be making the intentional or unintentional decision to take incorrect actions.

If the issue is with an individual, there are three questions to ask:

1. Do they know how to do the task?
2. Are they capable of performing the task?
3. Are they willing to do the task?

In a "Just Culture" different causes and levels of human error are dealt with in different manners. When human error is the product of the current system and behavioral choices, it can be managed through changes in the choices, process, procedures, training, design or environment. The individual is consoled and helped to do a better job.

At-risk behavior is a choice. The individual may feel that the risk is insignificant or even justified. This is managed through a coaching approach. Remove incentives for at-risk behaviors. Create incentives for "healthy behaviors. Increase situational awareness. Make the individual aware of their bad choices and help them to make good choices.

Reckless behavior requires a disciplinary approach. In this case the individual has a conscious disregard for substantial risk in their actions. This is managed through remedial action, and punitive action if necessary.

When assessing the root cause of human errors, it is best to have a systematic approach (taxonomy) that looks at various factors that could contribute to the quality issue or problem. One example used looks at the procedure, training and equipment. Was the procedure used? If so, was it adequate? If it was adequate, was it followed correctly? Is the individual trained? If so, is the training adequate? Did they learn what they were trained on? Is the equipment proper for the job? Was it operated correctly? Is the equipment properly maintained? How old is the equipment?

In another example, factors such as human resources, information, environment and leadership are addressed. Is the individual qualified to do the job? Are they trained and competent? Is there adequate supervision and staffing levels? Is scheduling a problem? Is needed information available? Is it accurate and thorough? Is it clear and properly communicated? Is there adequate lighting? Is the temperature conducive to the work environment? Is there excess noise? Is the space adequate and properly laid out? Is it clean? Does leadership foster a culture that encourages quality work? Is important information properly and clearly communicated? Are policies in place to prevent and address quality issues?

The example from the NTSB breaks human performance factors down into six categories: Behavioral, medical, operational, task, equipment design and environmental. Each of these categories has several factors that are addressed. This taxonomy takes a much closer look at the factors directly related to the individual. They look at the persons actions in the 24 – 72 hour period before the incident, the person's behavior prior to the incident, life habit patterns, and major life events. They also address the general health and sensory acuity of the individual, drug or alcohol ingestion and fatigue.

The taxonomy of a root cause analysis will vary with the needs of the organization and the seriousness of the problem. In any case, when dealing with an issue that involves human error, a big part of the root cause investigation will involve interviewing the person involved. There are potential difficulties with these interviews. The person may have difficulty remembering the incident, or may remember it incorrectly, especially if it has been some time since the incident. The person may avoid fully answering the questions in order to avoid exposing themselves or others. There may be emotional factors preventing them from wanting to answer questions. The person may be intentionally deceptive in order to hide the truth.

A “cognitive interview” can help to overcome these difficulties. Getting the person back into the problem environment can help them remember or even change their emotional state and get a clearer memory of what happened. The return to the environment can be physical (conduct the interview where the incident occurred) or cognitive (a mental picture). Give the person cues that may help them recall something from the specific event. Facts obtained during the root cause investigation may help the person remember what happened. Watch for vocal (change of tense) or physical (change of posture) signals that indicate a shift in emotional state.

When interviewing someone about an incident, keep in mind that a memory is not an exact copy of what happened. It is a recreation of what happened that may have been replayed many times in the individual's mind. When a memory is recalled, it is integrated with a person's expectation of what they should remember and their emotions about the memory. Emotional memories are more vivid, but not necessarily more accurate.

Breaking down the process (iteration) can help the individual remember the detail of the incident, and help investigators pinpoint the root cause. Each major step of the process can be broken down into smaller steps to help identify where something went wrong. This drilling down into the process will help to uncover the true root cause of the problem.

An event flowchart can also help to identify where something went wrong, especially if there are multiple possible causes. An event flowchart can also be used to compare what actually happened to what should have been. This can help identify where to ask the "5 Whys" to get to a root cause.

Once the cause for the human error is found, there needs to be a solution. Some possible solutions:

Match the person to the job. They must be physically capable, have the cognitive ability and the psychological makeup to do the job.

Standardize the process.

Have clearer instructions. Use tools such as samples, flowcharts, checklists or diagrams.

Make sure individuals have the required education and/or training for the job.

Change the environment, system or process if that is where the problem lies.

Make the process mistake-proof ([mistakeproofing.com](http://mistakeproofing.com)). Put in place software, engineering or other controls to stop the process from moving forward if something has gone wrong.

#### Some Human Error Experts

James Reason

Jans Rasmussen

Sidney Dekker

Robert Wachter

There are also several websites with information on Human Error and Root Cause Analysis.

Susan Tecce



# NORTHEASTERN ASSOCIATION OF FORENSIC SCIENTISTS 2016 TRAINING SCHOLARSHIP FUND

OPEN APPLICATION PERIOD: JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2016 – DECEMBER 31<sup>ST</sup>, 2016

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientists (NEAFS) is proud to offer its members a Training Scholarship Fund (TSF). Regular Members, in good standing, are eligible to receive up to \$200 towards training, workshop or non-NEAFS meeting registration and travel expenses. Individuals will only be allowed reimbursement once per application period. Any NEAFS Annual Meeting expenses are ineligible to receive funding. Reimbursement will occur upon receipt of a certificate showing successful attendance and completion of the course along with an article summarizing the course for the NEAFS newsletter.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants must submit a *Pre-Approval Application* prior to attending the training for which they wish to obtain funding. All applications must be complete with a brief course description, statement as to how the applicant will benefit from attending the training and justification for receiving funding (i.e. insufficient employer funding or continuing education requirements).

Notification will be given to each applicant upon receipt of the *Pre-Approval Application*. This notification lets the applicant know that their submission has been received by NEAFS and is being reviewed by the Board. In no way shall this notification serve as approval to receive reimbursement or that the applicant will receive any Training Scholarship Funds. Please allow several weeks for the Board to thoroughly review each application. Applicants can expect to be informed of the acceptance or rejection of their application within 60 days of receiving this *Pre-Approval Application* notification.

Upon successful attendance and completion of the training, all pre-approved applicants must submit a *Reimbursement Application* along with supporting documentation. Whenever possible, a certificate should be provided as proof of attendance and completion. If a certificate is not issued or is unavailable, a letter from the organizer/instructor verifying the applicant's successful attendance and completion shall suffice. Each Training Scholarship Fund recipient is required to contribute to NEAFS and its members by publishing a written article in the Newsletter. *Reimbursement Applications* will only be considered complete when accompanied by a 1000-word (minimum) course summary.

Please submit all inquiries, applications and supporting documentation to: [awards@neafs.org](mailto:awards@neafs.org).

# 2016 Training Scholarship Fund

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The Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientists (NEAFS) is proud to offer its members a 2016 Training Scholarship Fund. Regular members, in good standing, are eligible to receive up to \$200 towards training, workshop or non-NEAFS meeting registration expenses. Detailed instructions and application forms are available on the NEAFS website. Simply click the "Training" link at the top of the screen and scroll down to the "NEAFS Training Scholarship Forms". The current application period is January 1st, 2016 to December 31st, 2016. Reimbursements will be issued on a first come, first serve basis and funding is limited. If you plan to attend a non-NEAFS meeting workshop, training or course during this application period and will not be funded by your agency or any other non-NEAFS related entity, we highly encourage your swift application for the 2016 Training Scholarship Fund. Please visit the NEAFS [training](#) website to take advantage of this great NEAFS opportunity and to view upcoming training opportunities!

## Upcoming Training

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April 2016

**Forensic Science Symposium**  
**Western New England University**  
**April 8th, 2016**

<http://wneforensicsymposium.weebly.com/>

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May 2016

**NES Advanced Clan Labs: Beyond the Basics (for drug chemists)**  
**Indiana State Police Historical Center, Indianapolis, Indiana**  
**May 9 – 11, 2016**

This three-day workshop taught by Brian Escamilla, an NES Instructor, is aimed at educating drug chemists beyond the basics of the manufacturing of over 12 clandestine drugs. Topics covered will include the history, production methods, effects, sampling, analysis, safety, and past, present, and future trends of more than 12 illicit drugs. The course provides coverage of designer drugs, cocaine conversion, DMT and tryptamines, ecstasy, fentanyl, GHB, heroin conversion, LSD, methcathinone, mushrooms, one-pot methamphetamine, PCP, and the synthetic cannabinoids. Brian Escamilla has extensive knowledge of clandestine laboratories. In addition to the analysis of a multitude of clandestine lab samples, he has researched and manufactured methamphetamine, fentanyl, euphoria, PCP, MDMA, and various other drugs in a laboratory setting. He has published over 30 papers, conducted over 70 workshops, and given numerous presentations related to narcotics and clandestine labs at conferences all over the United States.

Registration: MAFS Member - \$375, Non-MAFS Member - \$450

Registration Deadline: March 31, 2016

For complete information and to register, visit the MAFS Website at [www.MAFS.net](http://www.MAFS.net)

Questions? Contact Jennifer Watson at [watsonj@mcoho.org](mailto:watsonj@mcoho.org) or Hailey Newton at [hnewton@isp.in.gov](mailto:hnewton@isp.in.gov).

## **Forensic Paint Examinations and Comparisons Workshop taught by Scott Ryland**

**St. Paul, MN**

**May 16 – 20, 2016**

This one-week (40 hour) course will provide students with an understanding of forensic paint analysis. Topics include basic paint chemistry, types of paints used for different end-use applications commonly encountered as evidence and analytical methods. Special attention will be paid to stereomicroscopy, sample handling and preparation techniques, microsolubility and microchemical tests, FTIR spectroscopy, and pyrolysis gas chromatography. Also to be covered are energy dispersive X-ray spectrometry (SEM-EDS), micro X-ray fluorescence spectrometry ( $\mu$ -XRF) and alternative methods for elemental analysis, considerations in approaching no-suspect hit-and-run investigations, evidential significance of comparative analyses, Daubert admissibility concerns, a brief overview of published validation literature, and approaches for report writing. Detailed instruction and practical exercises in the classification of paint binders and evaluation of their end-use implications will make the course profitable for both experienced and novice forensic paint examiners. It is desirable for students to have some previous experience in the manipulation of trace evidence and be familiar with the basic principles of polarized light microscopy, Fourier Transform infrared spectroscopy, pyrolysis gas chromatography, and scanning electron microscopy in conjunction with energy dispersive X-ray spectrometry. Classroom lectures and slides, video recordings, and several practical (laboratory) sessions throughout the week dealing with (1) paint binder classifications given infrared spectra, (2) sample characterization of workshop samples using stereomicroscopy and basic microsolubility/microchemical tests (3) sample preparation, analysis and binder/extender pigment classification of workshop samples using FTIR spectroscopy, and (4) SEM-EDS analysis of workshop samples. More information on each workshop has been included below and can also be found on the [MAFS Website](#).

For location of workshop, cost and hotel information visit: <http://www.mafs.net/2016-mafs-paint-workshop>.

The class is limited to 12 students. A minimum of 9 slots need to be filled by April 1<sup>st</sup> for the class to be held. Reserve a spot at <http://www.cvent.com/d/dfq8dy>.

Contact name/email/phone number: Josh Jorstad, [Joshua.jorstad@state.mn.us](mailto:Joshua.jorstad@state.mn.us), 651-793-2761

## **Forensic DNA Relationship Training: Sessions 1 & 2**

**Marshall University Forensic Science Center, Huntington, West Virginia**

**May 23 -26, 2016**

Contact: Judy Fry, Telephone: 304-691-8959 or Email: [jafry@marshall.edu](mailto:jafry@marshall.edu)

Website: <http://forensics.marshall.edu/Training/Training-Relationship.html>

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## **June 2016**

### **Basic Bloodstain Pattern Analysis**

**FORENSIC PIECES TRAINING & CONSULTING – Instructor Jan Johnson, CSCSA**

**Waynesburg University, Waynesburg, PA**

**June 6-10, 2016**

Comprehensive 40-hour workshop will provide participants training and assistance in the proper recognition of bloodstain pattern evidence. Satisfies the International Association for Identification 40 hour basic bloodstain analysis workshop for the purpose of the Bloodstain Pattern Certification Examination.

For more information visit: [http://www.forensicpieces.com/register-for-a-course?course=Basic-Bloodstain-Pattern-Analysis-\(June-6-10,-2016\):-Waynesburg,-PA](http://www.forensicpieces.com/register-for-a-course?course=Basic-Bloodstain-Pattern-Analysis-(June-6-10,-2016):-Waynesburg,-PA)

**Chemistry Refresher (for drug chemists, toxicologists, and trace analysts)**  
**Johnson County Crime Laboratory, Olathe, Kansas**  
**June 21 – 23, 2016**

This is a three-day workshop taught by a chemistry professor from Washburn University (Topeka, Kansas). Topics will include nomenclature of organic compounds, stereochemistry, isomerism, acids and bases, spectroscopy (IR and Mass Spec- theory and how to determine structure from it), and nomenclature of inorganic compounds.

Registration: MAFS Member - \$130, Non-MAFS Member - \$180

Registration Deadline: April 30, 2016

For complete information and to register, visit the MAFS Website at [www.MAFS.net](http://www.MAFS.net)

Questions? Contact Malinda Spangler at [Malinda.Spangler@jocogov.org](mailto:Malinda.Spangler@jocogov.org).

# RANDOX TOXICOLOGY

Take a closer look at our new  
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[randoxtoxicology.com](http://randoxtoxicology.com)



# 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Microscope Day at John Jay

Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016  
“New” Building, 524 W. 59<sup>th</sup> St  
New York, NY 10019  
(Fifth floor, Room 5.67)

**Presented by New York Microscopical Society and John Jay College**

Please join us for this event, which begins at 10:00 AM and concludes at 3:00 PM. It is an informal event where speakers will give short presentations with ample time in-between to interact with other attendees and speakers.

This year’s speakers and their presentation titles (exact times and order of speakers is subject to change):

10:00 Dr. Lawrence Kobilinsky, Chair, Department of Sciences, John Jay College – *Opening Remarks*

10:15 Dr. Jack Hietpas, FBI ORISE, “*The application of geochemistry and geochronology to forensic and intelligence problems*”

11:00 Detective Greg DiCostanzo, Firearms Analysis Section, NYPD Forensic Investigation Division, “*The John Lennon Shooting*”

12:00 **Lunch Break and mingling with the exhibitors**

1:00 Adam Hartley, Forensic Evidence Inc, “*The Boy Scout, the Hustler, and the Porn Queen*”

1:30 Dr. Jennifer Rosati, University of Windsor, Ontario and John Jay College, “*The evolution of genitalia in insects and its importance in the identification of forensically-related species*”

2:00 Cindy Vitale, Senior Forensic Chemist, DEA Northeast Laboratory, “*Microscopy in Drug Analysis*”

2:30 Last opportunity to mingle with the exhibitors

3:00 Dr. Peter Diaczuk, New York Microscopical Society / John Jay College - *Closing remarks*

Exhibitors: Several firms dealing with microscopes and microscope accessories have graciously agreed to set up exhibits of their products for the day.

Refreshments to be served. This event is free and open to all those interested in microscopy  
Photo ID necessary for entry into building

The Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientists

# The NEAFS Merchandise Shops

at

[cafepress.com/NEAFS](http://cafepress.com/NEAFS) and [NEAFS.qbstores.com](http://NEAFS.qbstores.com)

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The NEAFS Merchandise Shops make it easier than ever before to show your pride as a NEAFS member!

The NEAFS Merchandise Shop at [cafepress.com](http://cafepress.com) has great new merchandise emblazoned with the NEAFS logo: t-shirts, sweatshirts, mugs, tote bags, and so much more. We also have section specific logos, to give a shout out to Biology/DNA, Drug Chemistry, Toxicology, and Trace Evidence.

The NEAFS Merchandise Shop at [NEAFS.qbstores.com](http://NEAFS.qbstores.com) provides quality hats, shirts, bags (and more!) embroidered with all five logos: NEAFS, Biology/DNA, Drug Chemistry, Toxicology, and Trace Evidence.

You can feel good about your purchase, knowing that all income generated by the sale of these products funds the Carol De Forest Forensic Science Research Grant. Support your organization and its good works by shopping the NEAFS stores today!

[Cafepress.com/NEAFS](http://Cafepress.com/NEAFS) and [NEAFS.qbstores.com](http://NEAFS.qbstores.com) are open 24/7. Orders are processed and shipped quickly, and have a 30 day money back guarantee.

Have feedback on our new venture? Contact [merchandise@neafs.org](mailto:merchandise@neafs.org). We welcome your comments and suggestions, and will do our best to accommodate special requests!



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...and we plant a tree each time  
you reuse our free service return kits.

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- No hidden fees
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- Free seal, o-ring & shaft replacement
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# RAININ

Because the future is in your hands™

# Certification Reimbursement

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The NEAFS Board of Directors has voted to reimburse the American Board of Criminalistics and International Association for Identification exam sitting fees for five NEAFS members (regular or associate) in good standing who pass the ABC or IAI exam. This offer is for any exam completed in 2016. There will be an ABC exam offered at the NEAFS Annual meeting at Harrah's. After passing the examination, please fill out the Certification Reimbursement Form ([www.neafs.org](http://www.neafs.org)) and email the completed form with proof of passing the exam to the NEAFS Certification Chair Peter Diaczuk at [certification@neafs.org](mailto:certification@neafs.org). The reimbursement is based on a first come first served basis. Remember you must pass the ABC or IAI exam to be considered for reimbursement.

## Education

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Moving forward in the areas of education/training, I have been working with Keith Mancini to possibly utilize the NEAFS site to organize and store educational/training documents including SOP's. Organized by discipline, this would allow us to post useful documents, making them available to all of our members. These could then be used to develop and enhance both employee training as well as our testing protocols. In Drug Chemistry for instance, we could post unknown spectra for review and comments. Our lab has a narcotic tablet database sorted by imprint that is used by law enforcement and DA's to determine possible drug charges. We also would be willing to post our Duquenois Levine validation spreadsheet that contains over 100 tested herbs and spices along with the reaction pictures. Every lab has some great documents that would benefit other labs. By working together and combining our talents we improve our own lab, the profession as a whole, and NEAFS as an organization. If you are interested in contributing please contact me at [JWesley@monroecounty.gov](mailto:JWesley@monroecounty.gov).  
Jim Wesley

## Missing Something

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Be sure to check the NEAFS website for the latest **Job Opportunities**.

**B.O.D. Meeting Minutes and Financial Statements** will now be placed in the Member Area of the NEAFS website. If you have trouble logging in please contact the web master, [webmaster@neafs.org](mailto:webmaster@neafs.org).