



ASTEE

September 2023

ASTEE Newsletter

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2023

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Message from the President

Greetings Trace Examiners,

We are getting close to our joint meeting between ASTEE and the Northwest Association of Forensic Scientists (NWAFS) in Salt Lake City. Jon Burdett from CRAIC is sponsoring an ASTEE reception Monday evening 6:00-8:00pm in the Watson meeting room. Besides **Kelsey Winters** and **Brenda Christy's** workshop on gasoline and **Sandra Koch's** workshop in hair, several vendors like CRAIC and Foster and Freeman will be offering Trace related workshops. This is a workshop only meeting. I hope to see you there! For more information go to <http://nwafs.org/wordpress/fall-meeting/>

Another Trace related ASTEE workshop to be hosted by the Hamilton County Coroner's Crime Laboratory is in the planning stages. This workshop is scheduled for April 16-18 on Basic Tapes. **Andria Mehlretter** and **Will Randle** will be the instructors. More information will be available as the planning continues. Be sure to check your ASTEE emails for future details.

The Outreach Committee met in May, and we are asking all ASTEE members to please consider supporting this new Committee by sending ideas, PowerPoints, Information sheets, or anything you can think of to help spread the awareness of Trace Evidence to me at michael.trimpe@hamilton-co.org. There will also be a forum to post these ideas to. The goal is to create a master ASTEE PowerPoint that will be made available to the membership for use in outreach. ASTEE currently has **364** members. We hope to keep growing!

Daniel Mabel reported that videos have been uploaded to the OSAC/NIJ/RTI Trace Evidence Collection app and the update for the application will be released soon. Be sure to disseminate this app and educate police officers and investigators regularly!

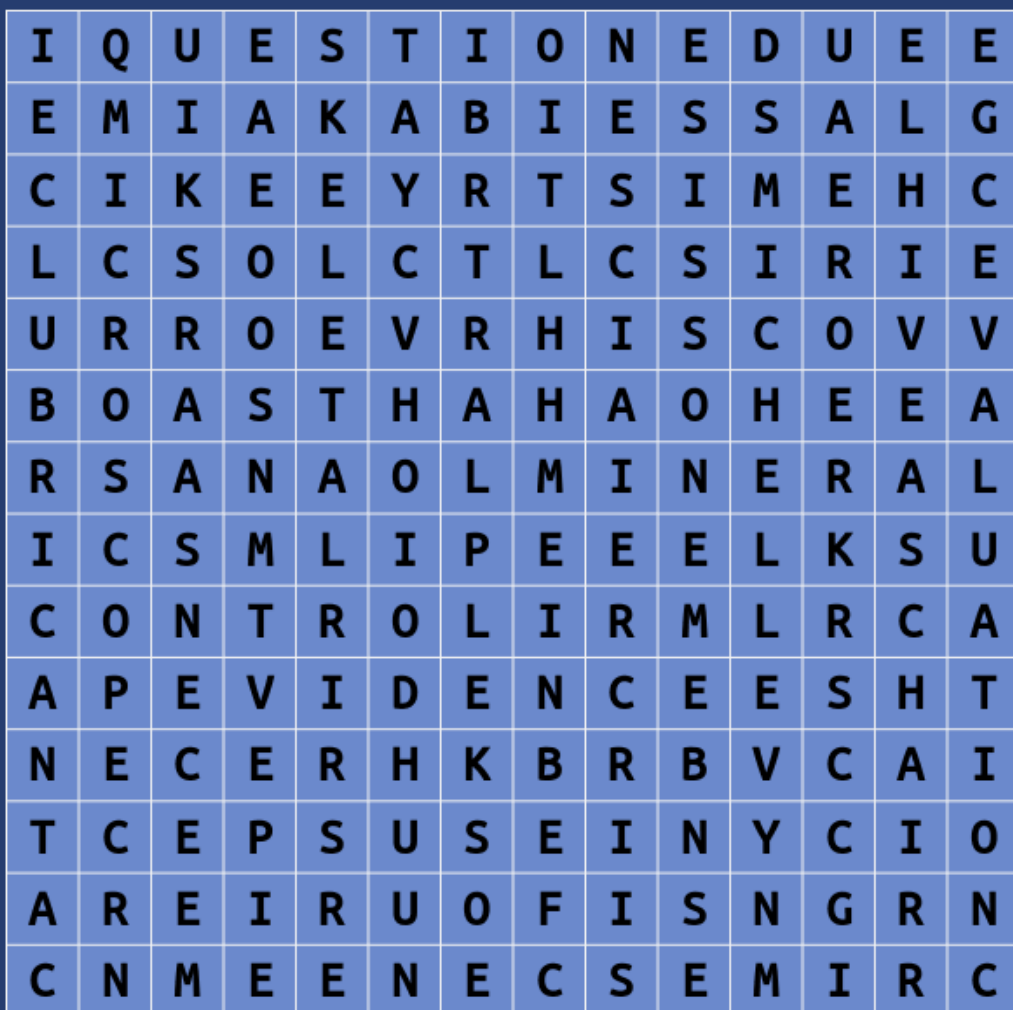
Thank you and Blessings!

Michael A. Trimpe, Hamilton County Coroner's Crime Laboratory Director
2023 ASTEE President



A bit of Fun...

Forensic Trace Evidence Word Search



CONTROL
 KOEHLER
 MINERAL
 FOURIER
 MICHEL-LEVY
 ISOTOPIC
 GLASS
 CRIME SCENE
 QUESTIONED
 FIBERS
 EVALUATION
 MICROSCOPE
 EVIDENCE
 SUSPECT
 CHEMISTRY
 LUBRICANT
 SKELETAL
 HAIR

Important Dates

September 25 – 27th	Joint ASTEE and the Northwest Association of Forensic Scientists (NWAFS) meeting, Salt Lake City, Utah (see www.nwafs.org)
September 29th	Standard Practice for Interpretation and Report Writing in Forensic Comparisons of Trace Materials , 1pm (see page 8 for more details)
October 10 – 24th	ASTEE online elections — a link will be emailed to members with voting instructions
November 20 – 24th	23rd Triennial Meeting of the International Association of Forensic Sciences (IAFS) Sydney, Australia (see www.iafs2023.com.au)
April 16 - 18, 2024	Basic Tape workshop hosted by the Hamilton County Coroner's Crime Laboratory



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ASTEE at a Glance – Committee Updates

Awards Committee

2023 Edmond Locard Award for Excellence in Trace Evidence

Congratulations to Dr. Thomas Kubic (right), the winner of the Edmond Locard Award for Excellence in Trace Evidence. Dr. Thomas Kubic is the Full Time Associate Professor & Doctoral Program Director of Forensic Science at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, C.U.N.Y. The nomination letter submitted by Nicholas Petraco highlights Dr. Kubic's contributions to the field of Trace Evidence, just some of which are presented here:

"I nominate Dr. Thomas A. Kubic for the Dr. Edmond Locard Award. Dr. Kubic has been working as a trace evidence examiner for over fifty years.

Besides teaching and being involved in extensive research on trace evidence issues, he has worked on thousands of cases involving trace evidence. Dr. Kubic has both work experience and subject matter expertise in: Laboratory Analysis of all types of materials encountered as physical evidence at scenes of crimes. Dr. Kubic has worked on thousands of forensic investigations including death investigations: homicides, suicides, accidental; arson, explosion, and terrorist bombings; assault, burglary and robbery, insurance fraud; kidnaping, sex crimes, and child abuse. Dr. Kubic has been qualified as an expert witness hundreds of times in criminal trial, civil trials, and many types of legal proceedings."



We would also like to congratulate our **Research Grant Award Winner:**

Jared Estevanes (left), Sam Houston State University, PhD student, for the Research Grant Scholarship Award



Other Awards that are being offered soon:

Professional Development Award: The ASTEE Professional Development Award supports trace evidence training by providing funding for a McCrone Research Institute class and up to a \$500 travel stipend. Virtual training courses qualify for this award but will not include the \$500 travel stipend. The award is valid for the current year through September of the

following year. Professional development activities not only deepen our knowledge and skills as professionals, they also energize us with a new enthusiasm.

Question about an award? Ask us at ASTEEAwards@gmail.com More information about our awards can be found at <https://www.asteetrace.org/awards>

Thank you to Jennifer Chen, Michelle Drake, Dr. Geraldine Monjardez, Luther Schaeffer and Chad Schennum, for their continued service on the ASTEE Awards committee.

Also, a thank you to Darrel Hall at the Oregon State Police Laboratory for his years of service as Chair of the ASTEE Awards Committee and also for helping the transition to the new Awards Committee chair.

Multi-Functional Analytical Workstation for Forensic Laboratories

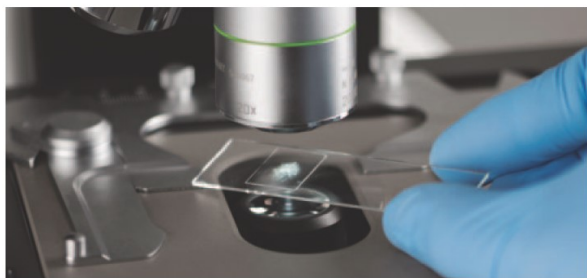
ffTA

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ANALYSIS

The All-in-One Workstation for Trace Evidence Analysis



A modular system, the ffTA is built around a single microscope



Analyze a wide variety of evidence types



ffTA casework management software

A powerful and flexible multi-functional system, ffTA provides the crime laboratory with a range of analytical facilities on a single microscope, operated through a single PC.

By switching from module to module the operator is able to perform a wide range of analytical tasks to extract the maximum amount of forensic evidence in the shortest possible time.

ffTA modules include:

Raman Spectroscopy for the study of materials including paint chips, fibres, inks, and drugs.

UV-VIS-IR Microspectrometry non-destructive analysis of organic compounds including paint and fibres.

GRIM Glass RI Measurement analysis and grouping of glass fragments.

Fluorescent Imaging identification of biological samples, chemicals, and illegal substances.

Polarized Light Microscopy for the examination and identification of natural and synthetic fibres.

Digital Image Processing enhancement and comparison of images captured using a 5MP digital camera.

ASTEE at a Glance – Committee Updates continued...

Elections Committee

ASTEE will be holding elections in October for the following 2024 Board of Directors positions:

- President-Elect (1-year term, then serves as President for 1 year): Fulfills the President's duties should the president be absent, leave office or become incapacitated. The President's duties include: presiding at Society and Board meetings; conducting the business of the Society, and promoting the fulfillment of the Society's objectives.
- Secretary (2-year term): Records the minutes of the Board and Society business meetings, maintains the Society records, records members' attendance at all business meetings, and files (or appoints an agent to file) any and all necessary documents with New Jersey. In the absence of the Secretary from a business meeting, the presiding officer shall appoint a temporary Secretary to record the minutes of the meeting.
- Director (3-year term): Act at the direction of the executive board (President, President- Elect, Treasurer, and Secretary) to carry out assigned tasks on behalf of the Society. Directors are voting members of the Board.

Serving on the ASTEE Board is a great way to contribute to the organization and to have a positive impact on the forensic science community. If you are interested in serving on the ASTEE Board of Directors in any of these positions, please send a photo along with a brief bio detailing your qualifications and the reasons why you would like to serve on the Board to Lindsey Admire, ladmire@ncdoj.gov by September 6, 2023. The election will take place via electronic ballot in October.

Research Committee

The Mission Statement of the ASTEE Research Committee is threefold:

- To advance the field of trace evidence forensic science through the promotion of research
- To enable fruitful collaborations between practitioners, academics, and interns
- To ensure this research is carried out in a scientifically sound, thorough, and publishable manner

There are a number of research needs, organized by subdiscipline, listed on the ASTEE website and on the forum. Feel free to contribute any additional needs you may have...I know students are always looking for thesis ideas! <https://forum.asteeTrace.org/category/17/research-needs>

If you are a student interested in conducting research, or you are looking for an internship, please visit our website to find additional resources, including a list of funding opportunities and internship positions. www.asteeTrace.org

If you are a lab analyst or researcher looking for students, please reach out to the Research Committee and we can help match potential candidates. <https://www.asteeTrace.org/rcommittee>



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News You Can Use

From NIST, with permission



In the summer of 2020, the [Organization of Scientific Area Committees \(OSAC\) for Forensic Science's Trace Materials Subcommittee \(SC\)](#) conducted an interlaboratory data collection exercise to evaluate the OSAC Proposed Standard "[Standard Practice for Interpretation and Report Writing in Forensic Comparisons of Trace Materials](#)," with the first round of the study focusing on forensic paint analysis. The document is currently under revision in the SC as **OSAC 2022-S-0029, Standard Guide for Interpretation and Reporting in Forensic Comparisons of Trace Materials**.

On **September 29, 2023, 1:00pm ET**, members of the Trace Materials Subcommittee will provide a virtual seminar with the study participants to review the interlaboratory study, including the published results.¹ In this session, presenters will highlight:

- Evaluation of the interlaboratory interpretation of simulated paint cases,
- Interpretation guide allowed the use of systematic criteria to reach consensus answers,
- Participant's results and feedback, and
- Additional interlaboratory studies using the OSAC Proposed Standard.

Pre-registration for the session is not necessary. The interlaboratory study summary presentation will be recorded. Following the presentation there will be an unrecorded question/answer session.

Mark your calendar and join us on September 29, 2023 at 1:00pm Eastern Time.

MS Teams: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 233 808 060 136 --- Passcode: CWFTaK

Call in (audio only) --- [1 443-339-4347](tel:14433394347), [9573628333](tel:9573628333) --- Phone Conference ID: 957 362 833#

¹Andria Mehlretter, Meghan Prusinowski, Hal Arkes, David Flohr, Cedric Neumann, Scott Ryland, Donna Sirk, Tatiana Trejos, "Interpretation and report writing in forensic comparisons of paint evidence: An interlaboratory exercise," Forensic Chemistry, Volume 35 (2023); <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.forc.2023.100513>.

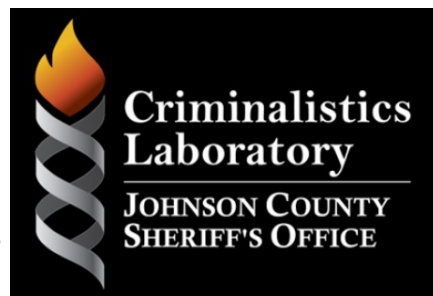
Interested in participating in the next interlaboratory data collection exercise to evaluate **forensic glass analysis**? The next interlaboratory study is scheduled for fall of 2023. Register your interest in participating [here](#).

Johnson County Sheriff's Officer Vacancies

Application Deadline: Posted until filled

The Johnson County Sheriff's Office is seeking qualified applicants to fill multiple Forensic Scientist positions within our Criminalistics Laboratory. Laboratory disciplines include: **Biology/DNA, Controlled Substances, Crime Scene Investigation, Digital Evidence, Firearms & Toolmarks, Latent Prints, Toxicology, and Trace Evidence**

Apply here: <https://jocogov.hua.hrsmart.com/hrsmart/ats/Posting/view/6481>



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May we introduce you to... Annie Kisler-Rao, Trace Evidence Technical Leader at the Georgia Bureau of Investigation

What Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s) are the focus of your work? Hair, fiber, glass, paint, plastic/tape, fractured materials, general unknowns.

What is the top activity on your bucket list?

I enjoy traveling, and there are many places I would like to visit. Two places I haven't been to that I would like to see are Angkor Wat in Cambodia and Machu Picchu in Peru.

What do you like to do in your down time? I play ice hockey (as does my husband and one daughter...my other daughter is learning to skate). I also enjoy spending time with my husband and kids, doing things like playing board games, biking, and spending time outdoors (in the cooler seasons – summer is too hot here!).

What is the most interesting place you have been? It's hard to choose, but I might go with Japan. I was fortunate to be able to travel a lot as a kid and lived in Hiroshima for three years.



May we introduce you to... Devin Crago, Section Supervisor for Firearms and Trace Evidence (Material) at the Texas DPS Crime Laboratory

What Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s) are the focus of your work? Hair, fiber, paint, impressions, tape, filaments

What is your favorite quote? *Flying is learning how to throw yourself at the ground and miss.* Douglas Adams

Who has been a mentor to you and how have they helped you? Steve Robertson was a mentor to me and really helped me to learn how to think things through and adapt that knowledge to any case circumstance. He was a

big proponent of always being able to understand and explain why you were doing any step in an analysis.

What do you like to do in your down time? Escape Rooms – it has become an obsession for both in-person and online escape rooms. I also love to cook and enjoy any challenge that starts with “could you make....?”

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GLASS REFRACTIVE INDEX

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