



# ASTEE

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2022

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December 2022

ASTEE Newsletter

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## Message from the President

Dear ASTEE Members,

It has been my great honor and privilege to serve ASTEE as President this year. The Trace Evidence community is thriving, and I have seen many examples of its growth throughout 2022. September's MAFS/ASTEE meeting in Des Moines was a big success and I'm quite jealous of those who were able to be in attendance! There was an excellent reception at Bubba which was made possible



by generous support from longtime sponsor CRAIC Technologies. After the challenges we've all faced the past few years, I'm glad that so many people were finally able to gather in one space to share stories and catch up on time missed. ASTEE also had a fantastic opportunity to promote membership in our organization through a booth in the meeting's vendor hall. I really appreciate the willingness of the members who represented ASTEE by speaking with passersby and handing out our newly minted lanyards (if you didn't get one at the meeting, be sure to head to the ASTEE Store and grab one so you can rep ASTEE wherever you are!). Owing to the efforts made at our booth, we added to our ranks and we're now up to 354 active members.

I'm happy to announce that we will be continuing the momentum of the 2022 meeting with a move further West! For the first time in its history, ASTEE will be partnering with the Northwest Association of Forensic Scientists (NWAFFS) for a meeting in 2023. The meeting is set for Monday, September 25th through Wednesday, September 27th, 2023 in Salt Lake City, Utah. It will be held at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Salt Lake West Valley City, 3524 Market St, West Valley City, UT 84119. There will be much more to follow as the meeting approaches, but go ahead and mark your calendars now. I'm excited that ASTEE

## Message from the President continued...

will have a long-overdue opportunity to directly engage with its members on the West coast, and I'm hopeful that we can promote ASTEE to a new audience so we can grow even more...400 members, here we come!

Speaking of self-promotion, the Board of Directors is interested in the idea of forming an Outreach Committee for ASTEE. The committee's main goal would be to advocate for the value of Trace Evidence. Materials (e.g., PowerPoints, info sheets, etc.) would be developed and presented locally, regionally, and nationally to anyone willing to listen, from lab directors to police chiefs or politicians. Once developed, such materials could be presented by any ASTEE member who was willing to take on the role, and ASTEE could even provide funding for those willing to represent the organization and the field in this way. If you are interested in joining this new effort to advocate for Trace Evidence, or if you have additional ideas of how it could be implemented to benefit the community, please contact us at [asteetrace@gmail.com](mailto:asteetrace@gmail.com).

I've made a few requests of you this year. I first asked for new faces to volunteer to serve ASTEE. Second, I asked all current members to pay forward the benefits of their membership by recruiting colleagues who had not previously joined. Then I challenged experienced members to find new ways to pass on their Trace Evidence knowledge to the next generation of forensic scientists. My final request in 2022 should be an easy one: Find your nearest microscope and use it to look at something for fun! We all have so many demands on our time and energy when we're at work; sometimes it requires significant, deliberate effort to shift our focus away from turnaround times, audits, and subpoenas and to remember why we love Trace Evidence. For me, that focus shifts when I look through a microscope. I recently looked at a paint cross-section using fluorescence microscopy and noticed that the emission colors of two adjacent paint layers looked exactly like the flag of a country I visited a few years ago. That moment made me smile from behind my microscope, and it brought me renewed focus. What causes that shift in focus for you? As 2022 draws to a close and we enter the holiday season, I encourage you to think about what you find fulfilling in Trace Evidence and seek it out as a tangible reminder and a way to refresh your perspective for the coming year. If you find that moment and are willing to share it, please reach out to me at [daniel.e.mabel.civ@army.mil](mailto:daniel.e.mabel.civ@army.mil) because I would love to hear why you love what you do. Happy Holidays and Happy New Year, all.

Best regards,



Daniel Mabel (he/him/his)

2022 ASTEE President

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## Important Dates

January 16, 2023	Applications due for Hooke College of Applied Sciences Training Award
February 13-18, 2023	75th American Academy of Forensic Science's Annual Conference Orlando, Florida
March 31, 2023	ASTEE annual fee payments due, check your member portal



## Laboratory & Evidence Software for the Criminal Justice Professional

Our solution integrates case pre-logging, property and evidence tracking, analytical results, forensic laboratory management, DNA sample management and processing, and reporting.

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## JusticeTrax Cloud

JusticeTrax products are now available as SaaS installations.



## Forensic Soil Survey Request

Are you in law enforcement, are you a forensic soil analyst, or a forensic service provider? If you are over 18 and fluent in English, we're interested in hearing about your experience and thoughts about forensic soil or geological materials evidence. You are invited to participate in a voluntary survey run by Dr. Gwyneth Gordon of Arizona State University about geological soil evidence. For more information, go to this website: <https://forms.gle/N6c2qdBWxPPgh2pd7>.



If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788. Please reference IRB STUDY#00016934.

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## 2022 Edmond Locard Award for Excellence in Trace Evidence

The Edmond Locard Award for Excellence in Trace Evidence was awarded virtually at the ASTEE reception on September 13th 2022 to Dr. José Almirall of Florida International University (FIU). The nomination letter highlighted Dr. Almirall's countless contributions to the field of Trace Evidence, just some of which is presented here.

Dr. Almirall is a Distinguished Professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry and Director of the Center for Advanced Research in Forensic Science (CARFS) at FIU. Beginning as a practicing forensic scientist at the Miami-Dade Police Department Crime Laboratory, he testified in over 100 criminal cases in state and federal courts over his 12 years there. Since beginning his academic appointment at FIU in 1998, he has authored over 160 peer-reviewed scientific publications and contributed rigorous method validations and standardized methods for techniques now widely used by forensic practitioners. He has mentored impressive numbers of post-doctoral fellows, Ph.D., Master's and undergraduate students in forensic and analytical chemistry, many of which have gone on to esteemed careers of their own, providing further contributions to the field of forensic science and trace evidence.



Dr. Almirall has also strongly contributed through his affiliations: a Fellow of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS), the founding chairman of the Forensic Science Education Programs Accreditation Commission (FEPAC) of the AAFS, past Chair of the SWGMAT Glass subgroup, the editorial board of the *Journal of Forensic Sciences* and Editor-in-Chief of *Forensic Chemistry*. He was appointed to the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Commonwealth of Virginia by the Governor of Virginia and served in that capacity for 10 years. He has served on the Forensic Science Standards Board (FSSB) of the NIST-sponsored Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) and as Chair of the Chemistry and Instrumental Analysis SAC of the OSAC.

In short, Dr. Almirall has impacted trace evidence in innumerable ways with his passion, leadership, guidance, and positive influence creating an everlasting legacy, and making him a worthy recipient of the Edmond Locard Award for Excellence in Trace Evidence for 2022.



## TRACE EVIDENCE ANALYSIS



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## ASTEE at a Glance – Committee Updates

### Awards Committee

Congratulations to our award winners:

- Dr. José Almirall for the Edmond Locard Award for Excellence in Trace Evidence. Dr. Almirall is Professor Emeritus, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at Florida International University, and Program Director, Division of Chemistry at the National Science Foundation
- Zachary Andrews, Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Forensic & Investigative Science, West Virginia University, for a Travel Award to the MAFS/ASTEE Fall Conference
- Megan Prusinowski, Doctoral Candidate, Department of Forensic & Investigative Science, West Virginia University, for a Travel Award to the MAFS/ASTEE Fall Conference
- Chelsey Zutz, Forensic Specialist, Trace Evidence Services, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, for the Professional Development Award
- Shayna Grey, Forensic Scientist 2, Trace Evidence Department, Cuyahoga County Regional Forensic Science Laboratory, for the Hooke College of Applied Sciences Training Award

The Hooke College of Applied Sciences Training Award is open again. Applications are due January 16, 2023. This award is given in the form of a registration for any upcoming course offered by Hooke College of Applied Sciences (course schedule can be found at <https://www.mccrone.com/courses/>) and up to a \$500 reimbursement for travel. Virtual training courses qualify for this award but will not include the \$500 travel reimbursement.

We have had some changes to the awards committee. Three ASTEE members have recently joined the committee. They join three longtime committee members. Starting in December, John Chester will take over as the committee chair. Welcome to the new committee members and thank you to those who continue to serve on the awards committee!

Newest awards committee members:

- Luther Schaeffer, Chemistry Section, HSI Forensic Laboratory,
- Geraldine Monjardez, PhD, Department of Forensic Science, Sam Houston State University, and
- Jennifer Dao, Criminalist, Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation

Longtime awards committee members:

- Michelle Drake, Forensic Scientist, Virginia Department of Forensic Science,
- Chad Schennum, Forensic Scientist, Virginia Department of Forensic Science, and
- John Chester, Forensic Scientist, Indiana State Police Laboratory.

More information about our awards can be found at <https://www.asteeTrace.org/awards>

### Education Committee

Be sure to visit the ASTEE member forum! We have been posting various journal articles, conference materials, and online resources for your enjoyment. Please post anything you would like to share with the membership! If you have any questions, please contact the committee at the e-mail listed below.

If you have ideas for potential webinars, you can recommend someone (including yourself) who may be able to offer a workshop or webinar, or you or your laboratory are interested in hosting a workshop (virtual or otherwise), please send an e-mail to [astee.edu.committee@gmail.com](mailto:astee.edu.committee@gmail.com)

## ASTEE at a Glance – Committee Updates continued...

### Elections Committee

Here are the results of the 2022 ASTEE Election. Thank you to all that ran and to Sue Gross who helped run the election this year! Next year we will be looking to fill the President Elect, Secretary, and a Director's position. It is a great way to get involved in the forensic community. We encourage you to think about running in 2023.

A huge thank you to those board members that will be stepping down. Your service to ASTEE not only strengthened this organization but also furthered Trace Evidence as a whole. Congratulations to the new board members and thank you to those who will be continuing their service!

#### President Elect

Katie Igowsky 100%

Abstain 0%

#### Treasurer

Kelsey Winters 100%

Abstain 0%

#### Director

Candie Shegogue 42%

Kaitlin (Katie) Mertz 32%

Devin Crago 26%

(write in) Will Randle 1%

Abstain 0%

#### ASTEE Bylaws

Approve changes 93%

Abstain 6%

Do not approve changes 1%

#### ASTEE Code of Ethics

Approve changes 91%

Abstain 8%

Do not approve changes 1%

Please consider updating your membership status if you are eligible. Contact the ASTEE membership chair, Stephanie Freiwald, for more information at [Stephanie.Freiwald@dps.texas.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Freiwald@dps.texas.gov).

Due to Katie's new position as President Elect, she will be stepping down as Executive Secretary but will remain on the election committee. Someone new will be appointed to the position soon. 😊

If you are interested in serving on any of the committees please email ASTEE!

### Events Committee

ASTEE will be hosting a reception at AAFS on Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup> 2023! Details TBD.

### Publications Committee

#### Newsletter

We are always looking for new content to share with ASTEE Members! Please send any ideas for ASTEE Newsletter content, including *News You Can Use* topics, to Kiersten Coffin ([Kiersten.Coffin@dps.texas.gov](mailto:Kiersten.Coffin@dps.texas.gov)).

#### JASTEE

The most-recent JASTEE issue (12-1) was published in December and is available at <https://www.asteetrace.org/jastee>.

These publications are first and foremost made possible by contributing authors and peer reviewers. Thank you to everyone who is committed in this way to advancing the Trace Evidence discipline and sharing knowledge. JASTEE is always looking for new submissions. Please reach out to Heidi Prough ([proughh@michigan.gov](mailto:proughh@michigan.gov)) with any questions.

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GLASS REFRACTIVE INDEX

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## OSAC Update

By Jenny A. Lounsbury, MSFS, PhD  
Trace Materials Executive Secretary  
Forensic Scientist IV  
Texas Department of Public Safety Crime Laboratory, Houston, TX

The Organization of Scientific Area Committees for Forensic Science (OSAC) was created in 2014 to provide a structured system comprised of several subcommittees (SC) for the creation and maintenance of discipline-specific standards. As of November 1, 2022, the OSAC Registry contains 119 forensic science standards (93 published and 26 OSAC Proposed Standards) representing 21 disciplines.

In 2020, the Forensic Science Standards Board (FSSB), in collaboration with the OSAC Program Office (OPO), reviewed the structure and names of the Scientific Area Committees (SACs) and SCs. As a result, the Geological Materials SC merged with the Materials (Trace) SC to form the new Trace Materials SC, and the Fire Debris and Explosives SC and the Gunshot Residue SC merged to form the new Ignitable Liquids, Explosives, & Gunshot Residue (ILEGSR) SC. These mergers facilitate better communication amongst experts on related topics and both subcommittees have continued to be highly productive.

### Trace Materials SC by the Numbers:

30 Members and ~36 Affiliates  
9 Task Groups  
14 Standards on the Registry  
1 OSAC Proposed Standard  
7 Standards Sent to an SDO (plus 6 revised Standards)  
16 Standards Under Development

### ILEGSR SC by the Numbers:

35 Members and ~28 Affiliates  
10 Task Groups  
12 Standards on the Registry  
1 OSAC Proposed Standard  
9 Standards Sent to an SDO (plus 7 revised Standards)  
9 Standards Under Development



Additionally, OSAC and the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM - the SDO for both the Trace Materials and ILR/GSR SCs) have reached a new agreement to allow free public access to the standards on the Registry. Therefore, there are hyperlinks on the Registry that take you directly to that standard: <https://www.nist.gov/organization-scientific-area-committees-forensic-science/osac-registry>.

Finally, if you would like to stay informed about OSAC News and Events, you can join the mailing list here: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USNIST/subscriber/new> or if you are interested in joining OSAC, you can apply to become an SC or Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) member: <https://www.nist.gov/organization-scientific-area-committees-forensic-science/apply-join-osac>.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to e-mail me at [jenny.lounsbury@dps.texas.gov](mailto:jenny.lounsbury@dps.texas.gov).



## May We Introduce You To...

### May we introduce you to... Casey Hughes

**Occupation:** Senior Criminalist at the CA Dept. of Justice, Riverside Lab

**What Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s) are the focus of your work?** Physical Match, Impressions, Paint & Polymer

**What is your favorite quote?** "If you strike me down, I shall become more powerful than you can possibly imagine." - Obi-Wan Kenobi, Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope

**Who has been a mentor to you and how have they helped you?** Gina Williams and Marianne Stam, my current and former coworkers, respectively. They are/were always willing to answer the million questions I have and are great trainers!

**What do you like to do in your down time?** I like to play music (flute, bass, sing) and craft (crochet, quilting)

**What is the most interesting place you have been?** The Canadian Rockies. A few years ago, after a PDQ workshop in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, my husband flew up to meet me and we spent 3 days exploring the Rockies. It was breathtakingly beautiful.



### May we introduce you to... Jeremy Morris

**Occupation:** Forensic Scientist Supervisor (Trace Evidence and Crime Scene Sections)

**What Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s) are the focus of your work?** I'm authorized for hair assessment, fibers, paint, tape, physical fit, chemical unknown, and fire debris. Fire debris comprises the largest number of cases but I enjoy paint and chemical unknowns the most.

**Who has been a mentor to you and how have they helped you?** This is difficult because I learn something from every examiner I meet. For those who would be closest to mentors in trace evidence for me it would be Chris Bommari-to and Will Randle. Chris guided me through my early days in MAFS, exemplified the value of moving away from the status quo with his conclusion scale, and taught me the importance of critically evaluating analytical data. My first forensic science job was with the Missouri State Highway Patrol. Although I started in drug chemistry, I interacted with Will occasionally. When I transition into trace in 2005, Will trained me in fibers and tape and has been a listening ear to numerous questions and a source of an incredible amount of knowledge and experience.



**What is the top activity on your bucket list?** I would love to go big horn sheep hunting but that's unlikely to happen. Other than that, at some point I hope to visit New Zealand.

**Tell us something that would surprise others about you.** I was a free-lance sports writer for local newspaper for two years. I primarily covered high school sports but also covered the local semi-pro baseball team – the Ozark Mountain Ducks. When I submitted my "tryout" article, I had literally no journalistic experience at all. Walking through the gate to cover my first high school sports event was terrifying because I realized I had absolutely no idea what to do. Somehow I figured things out. Oh, I also crowd-surfed at a Sponge alternative rock concert but don't tell anyone.

## May We Introduce You To...continued

### May we introduce you to... Kyle Mueller

**Occupation:** Forensic Scientist Section Supervisor for the Phoenix Police Department Laboratory Services Bureau's Trace Evidence Section

**What Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s) are the focus of your work?** Gunshot Residue, Fire Debris, Footwear and Tire Track Impressions, Fibers, Tape, Physical Match, and general physical and chemical unknowns.

**What is the top activity on your bucket list?** I love to travel, so travelling to new places is always on my list but I think the top of my bucket list is finishing a triathlon (a sprint triathlon, not the big one). At this point I'd be happy with just crossing this finish line before the race ends and everyone leaves for home ☺

**What do you like to do in your down time?** I enjoy spending down time with my wife and kids, reading (patiently waiting for GRRM to finish Winds of Winter), playing video games, or projects around the house. My favorite pastime is watching my kids play sports (my daughters play club volleyball and my son plays basketball).

**What is the most interesting place you have been?** I'm grateful for having the ability to travel when I was younger, so it's hard to pick one interesting place I've been but my top three would have to be Banff in Canada, Lake Como in Italy, and Tahiti. They're all so beautiful and bring back lots of good memories travelling with family (Canada), friends (Italy), and my wife on our honeymoon (Tahiti). Tahiti probably edges out the other two because the over-water bungalows are super cool!



### May we introduce you to... Thomas R. "Rusty" White

**Occupation:** Forensic Scientist/Team Lead, Trace Evidence Section, Texas DPS Crime Laboratory

**What Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s) are the focus of your work?** I am the team lead for our Ignitable Liquids Residue and Gunshot Residue analyses

**What is your favorite quote?** My favorite (work-related) quote is by Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Wherever a man commits a crime, God finds a witness. Every secret crime has its reporter."



**Who has been a mentor to you and how have they helped you?** My first Trace Evidence supervisor, Steve Robertson, taught me more than I can remember. He also encouraged me to get active in the international forensic community.

**What do you like to do in your down time?** In my downtime, I spend time in my garage woodworking. It's a hobby I learned from my grandfather.

**Tell us something that would surprise others about you.** My nickname did not come from my red hair, or from my middle name. My dad decided to call me "Rusty" before I was born.



# MAFS-ASTEE



ASTEE exhibitors booth and reception at Bubba





# MAFS-ASTEe continued...



Wizards of Forensic Science Gala





# Holiday Fun

The Texas DPS Austin Crime Laboratory's Social Committee hosts a door decorating contest every year. The Trace Evidence Section won this year with their North Pole M.E. Frosty door! Check out the tissue specimens, suspects, offense report, case notes, and autopsy report on the next few pages!





# Holiday Fun continued...



# Holiday Fun continued...



## Offense Report

At 12:24am on 12/11/2022 NPPD HQ received a call from Buddy the Elf about a snow plow and run on Candy Cane Lane. Officers Tinsel and Jingle were dispatched and met Buddy there alongside his friend The Narwhal at 12:37am.

Buddy explained that he and The Narwhal were exchanging early Christmas gifts when they saw Frosty thumpity thump thumping over the hills of snow when a snow plow “came out of nowhere” and ran over Frosty’s lower third. The snow plow paused as Buddy ran toward Frosty to help, but the driver quickly sped off. Frosty was on the ground in disarray, his carrot nose and old silk hat knocked completely off him. Buddy saw no signs of life and called for emergency dispatch.

EMTs arrived prior to Officers Tinsel and Jingle and declared Frosty dead on arrival. His body is being transferred to the North Pole Medical Examiner’s Office.

Buddy described the driver of the snow plow as a reindeer, approximately 5 ft tall (6ft tall with antlers). He does not recall whether or not the reindeer’s nose was very shiny.

Note: this case may be connected to the grandma run over by a reindeer walking home from her son’s house last Christmas Eve.



# Holiday Fun continued...



## Case Notes

Following the snow plow and run officers called on Dasher, on Dancer, on Prancer and Vixen, on Comet, on Cupid, on Donner and Blitzen as well as Rudolph to record alibis for the attack on Frosty.

Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, and Donner all had alibis placing them on camera at Santa's Workshop working the midnight shift. Rudolph, Dasher, and Blitzen, however, had flaky stories.

Rudolph claimed to be home shining his nose, but several eyewitness reports have him in the Red Light District, just 2 miles away from Candy Cane Lane, at 11:30pm prior to the offense.

Dasher claimed to be at the local hot chocolate shop playing reindeer games, however we have yet to find a corroborating witness for this event.

Blitzen was visibly intoxicated when the officers called on him. He could not provide an alibi for 12:37am on 12/11/2022 and testing later came back to state he had a BAC of .63.

Search warrants are being requested for the homes of Rudolph, Dasher, and Blitzen with the intent of comparing any snow plow tires to the impression on Frosty's snow.

# Holiday Fun continued...

Pathologist Name: Dr Kris Kringle  
Case # 1225

## Autopsy Report

Who Is the Deceased?

Name: Frosty "The Snow" Man  
Age: 53  
Sex: Male  
Address: 12 Thumpity Lane  
City, State, Zip: North Pole, 99705  
Phone #: (605)-313-4000

Age	Race	Sex	Length	Weight	Eyes	Hair	Beard
53	Snow W	M	42 Candy Canes	3 Elves	Coal	Silk Hat	Icicles
Blood Type		Contents in Blood		Rigor Mortis		Liver Mortis	
Jolly		Happy Soul		Melting		Melted	

Marks and Wounds



Magie in old silk hat  
Iceberg heart  
Carrot nose  
2 Eyes made out of coal  
Snowflakes in lungs  
Partially digested  
candy canes in  
stomach  
\* Possible tire impression

Probable Cause of Death

Snow Plow and Run

Date of Autopsy

12/12/22

Location of Autopsy

North Pole ME



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