



ASTEE NEWS

August 2025

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2025

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Message from the President

Greetings ASTEE Members,

We are quickly making our way through another year and as we pass the halfway point, I wanted to check in with our members and send along some updates.

We are in the final preparation stages for the MAFS 54th Annual Fall Meeting in Columbus, OH. We have another great line up of ASTEE workshops and I look forward to seeing everyone that can make it to the meeting. Just another reminder that the ASTEE reception is scheduled for the evening of Tuesday August 26, so try to make it out for that as well. Thanks again to our ASTEE Event Sponsor, CRAIC Technologies, for their continued support.



As we make our way forward in this new world of federal government cutbacks, we are seeing the fallout in many different areas. One of the areas impacted was the termination of the Forensic Technology Center of Excellence (FTCoE). This program provided knowledge transfer and integration to the state and local forensic practitioners to make the connection between forensic discovery and forensic process. The immediate impact was the eventual end to useful tools such as the Trace Evidence Collection App. Thanks to some quick thinking by some of our members, we are actively working with the NIJ to see if ASTEE can assume the rights to the data used to make the Trace Evidence Collection App. If we are successful, we have already started the process of finding other ways to transition that data to an ASTEE sponsored App that would make this valuable information available again now, and into the future. To be clear, this is all in the very beginning stages and we don't know if our efforts will be successful. I just wanted to let our members know that the ASTEE Board of Directors is fully committed to moving forward with this endeavor. We will keep you all updated as things progress.

Presidents message continued...

In other ASTEE Board of Director news, we have recently approved funds to modify the ASTEE Website to include a new/updated format for newsletters. It was recently suggested that our newsletter format could use some updating so our Communications Committee is hard at working in coordination with our web developer. We look forward to seeing these updates soon.

As the summer ends and we start the transition to fall, I hope your laboratory had the opportunity to host a summer intern. Our lab did and it's always encouraging to see that forensics and Trace Evidence have such a bright future. I want to send a thank you to any of our members that had the opportunity to mentor or even just engage with a future forensic scientist. Your time and talents made great impressions on these students and will hopefully lay the foundation for those that come after our time in this career has come to an end.

As we head to the cooler weather, it's time to start thinking about ASTEE 2026. In the next couple of months, we will be sending out a call for ASTEE Elections. In this next cycle, there will be openings for President- Elect, Secretary, and a Director. Please take some time to consider how you can contribute to this valuable organization. In addition to the elected positions, our committees are always looking for members to step up and volunteer their time. It is through our selfless members that ASTEE will continue to serve our organization for years to come.

I can't wait to see as many of you as I can in a few weeks at MAFS in Columbus. If there is anything that you need from us, let me know. I can be reached via email at micheal.a.villarreal2.civ@army.mil

Very Respectfully,

Micheal Villarreal

2025 ASTEE President

Western Australian Content...

The start of spring in WA is 1st September, but the Noongar people have the season *Djilba*, the season of new growth, followed by *Kambarang*, the wildflower season. At it's peak, vast areas of bushland burst into seas of yellow, purple and pinks, and it represents a time of life. It also represents peak tourist season, with abundant *grey-nomads* (the nickname for the retired 4wd-driving, caravan-hauling travelers) along the west coast of Australia.

Photo credit: total4x4.com.au/wildflower-drives-to-explore-this-spring



Upcoming Conferences or Training Opportunities

August 25-29, 2025	Midwestern Association of Forensic Scientists (MAFS) Annual Meeting (with ASTEE), Columbus, OH www.mafs.net/page-18481
October 12-16, 2025	27th Symposium of the Australian and New Zealand Forensic Science Society (ANZFSS 2025), Melbourne Australia, www.anzfss2025.com
October 20-24, 2025	Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientists (NEAFS) Annual Meeting, Lancaster PA www.neafs.org

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ASTEE at a Glance – Committee Updates

Awards Committee

2025 Edmond Locard Award for Excellence in Trace Evidence

The Edmond Locard Award for Excellence in Trace Evidence was awarded to Dr. Tatiana Trejos, Associate Professor of the Department of Forensic and Investigative Sciences at West Virginia University. The nomination letter highlighted Dr. Trejos' contributions to the field of Trace Evidence, just some of which is presented here:



A review of Dr. Trejos' CV reads like a public service announcement for the preservation and improvement of trace evidence analysis as a discipline in forensic science. Dr. Trejos has devoted her career and research efforts to developing ways to improve the collection, preservation, analysis, data evaluation and interpretation of all types of trace evidence. From glass to GSR to paint to questioned documents, Dr. Trejos has directed her research and that of her students toward practical and applicable projects that can be readily applied to the practitioners in the field and at the bench in order to best understand and utilize trace evidence for the purposes of furthering casework and investigative efforts.

Dr. Trejos is a frequent recipient of NIJ grants for the investigative of improving trace evidence research and interpretation and brings both an academic and practical perspective to her work with ASTM and OSAC in overseeing the drafting and editing of glass analysis standards. She has further contributed heavily to the OSAC Materials Trace Subcommittee with her research in physical fit analysis and has been an active member of the Physical Fit Task Group since its inception. She was also a co-developer of an interlaboratory exercise for forensic paint interpretation and has taken the knowledge gained from that work and used it to develop a similar exercise for forensic glass interpretation. From this work, her participation on the Interpretation Task Group for Trace Materials has also been thoughtful and of tremendous benefit to the work product and the community at large because it has informed her research and ancillary projects such as co-chair of the Trace Evidence Symposium that she has organized as a free educational opportunity to promote trace evidence presentations and research for the past several years.

Dr. Trejos continues to be an active collaborator in interlaboratory exercise efforts that are also more analytical in design in order to use the accumulated data to continue to improve ASTM standards and data analysis and interpretation. Her activity and advocacy in the area of trace evidence analysis is tireless and vital to the sustainability of trace evidence in forensic laboratories and the courts. She is highly deserving of The Edmond Locard Award for Excellence in Trace Evidence and recognizing her place in the lexicon of trace evidence pioneers can only continue to benefit its existence and improvement.

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 awards can be found at <https://www.asteetrace.org/awards>.

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

ASTEE at a Glance – Committee Updates, continued

Audits Committee

The 2023 and 2024 audits have been completed which means the Audit Committee is officially caught up!

Education Committee

We hope those who could attend enjoy the MAFS/ASTEE joint conference from August 24-29th in Columbus Ohio! There were several awesome trace training opportunities! Please share your feedback and what you'd like to see in future conferences and workshops.

Trace	The Fundamentals of Agilent ChemStation Macros <i>*Crossover with Drug Chemistry and Toxicology</i>	GCMS Oil and Dry Pump Theory and Maintenance <i>*Crossover with Drug Chemistry and Toxicology</i>	Analysis of Esoteric Ignitable Liquids - Vegetable Oils and FAMES	Homemade Explosives Awareness for the Forensic Chemist <i>*Crossover with Drug Chemistry</i>
Trace 2 (ASTEE)	Forensic Microscopy of Soil	Forensic Examination of Fabric Impressions		Foundations and Applications of Microspectrophotometry in Forensic Science
				Hair Root Staining: How Trace and DNA Can Collaborate for Efficient Casework <i>*Crossover with Biology</i>

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.

As a reminder, don't be shy... use ASTEE Zoom! We can reach a large audience, or a smaller group if you'd prefer to focus on a particular subdiscipline or topic. We welcome any ideas you may have for hosting special topic meetings, "bring your own slides" events or even just sharing interesting cases. This is a great opportunity to reach out to your fellow trace examiners! Email astee.edu.committee@gmail.com if you have something you'd like to present via ASTEE Zoom.

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

Publications Committee

Newsletter

A huge thank you to all members who have responded to recent "May We Introduce You To..." solicitations. We recently had a tremendous response for participation! If you were not included in this newsletter, fret not, we will be including you in the next one!

The Publications Committee is currently looking for a volunteer to take over as chair of this committee. If you are interested in finding out more about the Publications Committee or have any questions please email Kiersten Coffin (Kiersten.Coffin@dps.texas.gov).

JASTEE

Do you have a Trace Evidence case study to share? Have you started some original research that would benefit our community? Please consider submitting your completed work to JASTEE for publication in an upcoming issue. Manuscript submissions and questions may be directed to the Journal Editor, Heidi Prough (ProughH@michigan.gov).



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ASTEE at a Glance – Committee Updates, continued

Elections Committee

It's that time of year again when we are looking for new members to join the 2026 Board of Directors. If you have been looking for a way to become more involved with the forensic community, serving on the ASTEE Board of Directors is a great way and I encourage you to think about running! We will have 3 positions open for voting as follows:

- **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. Serves as a member of the Audit Committee. 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; designating committee chair members unless predetermined by the Bylaws; approving expenditures between \$100 - \$400; and serves as a member of the Elections Committee for two (2) years following service as the President.
- **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.

If you are interested in serving on the ASTEE Board of Directors in any of these positions or even if you are on the fence but have questions, please reach out to Lindsey Admire, ladmire@ncdoj.gov, by **September 2, 2025**. The election will take place via electronic ballot in October.

ASTEE Forum Highlights

Looking for new information and interaction on all things Trace Evidence? The ASTEE Forum is the place for it all! <https://forum.asteetrace.org/>

Gunshot Residue remains a hot topic in recent discussions. Two threads worth checking out cover key lab procedures: "GSR Manufactured Standard and Validation" and "GSR – particle count and time limits." If you're looking to dive deeper into validation standards or automated SEM/EDX feature analysis, head over to the Forum to explore or share your insights.

A unique post regarding nail polish has been posted. If you work in a forensics laboratory and have seen cases involving nail polish, please respond to this post!

This forum is your go-to space for everything from training opportunities and research questions to challenging casework, upcoming conferences, and even job openings. It's a great place to share, learn, and grow—so don't forget to sign up for email notifications and stay in the loop!

OSAC Update

The OSAC Registry now contains 235 standards, 250 SDO-published standards and 270 SDO proposed standards, representing over 20 forensic science disciplines. For more information see the Trace Materials subcommittee page on the OSAC website [Trace Materials Subcommittee](#). Additionally, you can visit the [Forensic Science Standards Library](#) for a complete list of Registry Archived and forensic science standards. Access to these standards is free, but now requires registration with ASTM for a compass account. This is also free and easy to do via the [NIST access to ASTM page](#), click on the green “ASTM Standards Access” button. This will launch the ASTM portal, then click register on this page to enter your details for an ASTM compass account. “NISTOSAC” should automatically add as the organization with this link, then add your organization as the additional one and complete your details.



May we introduce you to... Aletha Basconcillo

Occupation: Criminalist II in the Trace Analysis Unit of the LAPD Forensic Science Division

Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s)? Paint, Footwear/Tire tread impressions, Inhalants, GSR, Physical fit

Who has been a mentor and how have they helped you? Wayne Moorehead has been my longtime mentor. He was teaching me about microscopy and trace evidence analysis long before I was assigned to the trace analysis unit. His mentorship has spanned almost two decades, and he has helped my career in ways that are way too numerous to attempt to list here. I would not be where I am today or even half as skilled a microscopist had Wayne not invested the time to teach me.

Top activity on your bucket list? There is a tattoo artist in Alaska named Roger Sparks who was a former reconnaissance Marine and Air Force PJ. I would love to fly up there and have a deep conversation with him while I got a tattoo. A bonus part of the trip would be to go hiking around Alaska.

Something surprising about you? I am a warbird enthusiast and enjoy going to air museums and flying demos for WW2 era bombers and fighters. A few years back I bought a ticket to fly in a B-17 bomber as a birthday present to myself. During the flight, I got to make my way to the nose of the airplane where the bombardier sits. Despite its overall size, there are a lot of tight spaces to get through in that airplane! This was one of the few times I was happy to be 5'3".



May we introduce you to... Jennifer Crosbie-Loo

Occupation: Forensic Scientist with the NJ State Police Office of Forensic Sciences

Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s)? Impressions, Paint, Glass, Physical Fit, Hairs (suitability to DNA), Inks

Top activity on your bucket list? To travel to New Zealand! The scenery is stunning and I would love to do some hiking and camping out there.

What do you do in your down time? My husband and I like to walk/hike the different trails in our area. I also spend a lot of the time with my friends in my small group doing random things like dinners, game nights, and spa days.

Most interesting place you've been? It's a toss-up between Haiti and Greece. I traveled to Haiti in 2016 and 2017 and was blown away by how beautiful the country was and how kind the people were, despite the hardships they had faced. Unpopular opinion, Santorini was not my favorite part of Greece. My husband and I love history, so we were all about Delphi, Meteora, Olympus, and Athens.





PUBLISH IN ASTEE

- The Journal of the American Society of Trace Evidence Examiners (JASTEE) is always on the lookout for high quality contributions. If you have been sitting on a great idea for a paper, or if you presented at one of the past regional forensic association meetings or trace evidence symposia but have never written up your paper for publication, now is the time to act
- Everyone benefits when these papers are published and shared with the broader community through a peer reviewed format. We have big plans for JASTEE, but we cannot do it alone, so get writing, and contact Heidi Prough if you have any questions at ProughH@michigan.gov.



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May we introduce you to...Paige Yawn

Occupation: Special Agent Forensic Scientist

Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s)? Fire Debris Analysis, Fibers, Physical Comparisons, Chemical Analysis, Shoe/Tire Impressions

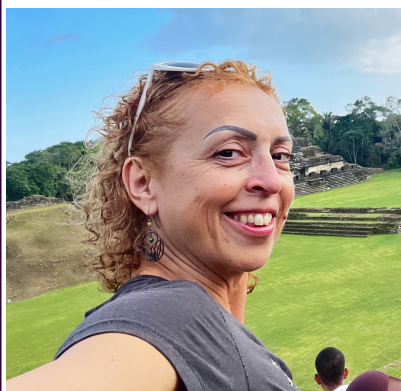
Top activity on your bucket list? I have no idea why, but something I have always wanted to do is go diving in a shark cage to see a Great White shark. I've never been diving (only snorkeling) so I'm nowhere near close to checking this off my list, but maybe one day!

What do you do in your down time? Anything outdoors! Hiking, camping, running, or just hanging outside with my chickens 🐔

Most Interesting Place you've been? My husband, son, and I love to travel and have had the opportunity to go to a lot of amazing places....but I would say the most interesting place we have been is the southernmost city in the world - Ushuaia, Argentina



May we introduce you to...Victoria Ivanova



Occupation: Criminalist III in Trace Unit of NYPD Police Laboratory

Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s)? Paint, Glass, Plastic Bags, Tape, Physical Match, Trace Evidence Recognition and Collection.

What do you do in your down time? Living in a metropolis like NYC I crave being outdoors more. It could be eating lunch in a local park, gardening, roller blading in the rain, or chilling at the beach. If it is outside in nature it is for me!

Something surprising about you? I have TNR certification (Trap-Neuter-Return and colony management for cats). Stray cats in NYC have very brief and dangerous lives. Volunteering to improve stray cats existence is very rewarding for me.

Most interesting place you have been? The most interesting trip I have taken was to Peru. It was only ten days, but I got to visit the capital Lima, Cusco, Machu Picchu, and Huacachina (an oasis in a desert).

May we introduce you to... Tatiana Johnson

Occupation: Forensic Chemist in the Trace Evidence Division at the US Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory.

Trace Evidence sub-discipline(s)? Currently- Hair, Physical Fit, and Fibers and Textiles however I also have some previous experience with GSR and general unknowns as well.

Favorite quote? *"You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You're on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the guy who'll decide where to go."* – Dr Seuss

Top activity on your bucket list? To purchase a larger farm – something 50 acres or more – and take a motorcycle trip around South America. We're working on the larger farm now, but the motorcycle trip might need to wait till the kids are a little older.

Something surprising about you? For people that don't know me, it might be surprising to learn that for many years I spent all my free time showing llamas all around the west coast. We don't currently have any llamas on our farm as we just don't have enough space right now. However, I do hope to get back to showing llamas at sometime in the future.





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