

SERVICE.
INTEGRITY.
RESPECT.
QUALITY.

ADFS

employee newsletter



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ASCLD/LAB Accreditation

Thursday, December 4, 2008

ADFS was notified that the ASCLD/LAB Board has granted our department's accreditation. GREAT JOB!

DEFICIT PREVENTION PLAN

Governor Bob Riley announced in a December press conference his Deficit Prevention Plan for the State of Alabama. The plan has three key components:

1) Reduce state spending by 10

percent in state agencies—This will include - but not be limited to - a hiring freeze, a freeze on merit pay raises, stopping new vehicle purchases, limiting equipment purchases and professional service contracts, and curtailing travel by state employees.

2) The education budget will be

prorated at a rate of 12.5%—local superintendents had already begun implementing cost savings measures in preparation for proration

3) Draw down from the Rainy

Day Fund for education—half of the fund will be immediately drawn down to alleviate cash flow problems. The second half will be distributed throughout the remainder of the fiscal year.

Challenges and opportunities for 2009.

Congratulations are in order to all employees as ADFS has successfully completed the 2008 ASCLD/LAB accreditation audit. ADFS is reaccredited through October 25, 2013. Well Done!

I received official word from the Finance Department concerning budget cuts. The Governor has initiated a 10% Deficit Prevention Plan which is to reduce our expenditures from state funds in FY 2009 by 10%. This mandated budget reduction will sharply curtail out of state travel, promotions and merit raises as well as decedent transport. I am committed to addressing this reduction by every available option with as small an impact on employees (our most valuable asset) as possible. State budgets are cyclical with highs and lows. Alabama has been on the “high” side for quite sometime and now is on the “low” side. As an agency we will get back to basics. We must provide a solid product, in a timely manner while striving to save wherever possible. Remember, we are all in this together.

I will again be seeking passage of our DNA fee increase bill. The bill will also contain

legal permission to obtain a DNA sample from felony arrestees as well as post conviction DNA analyses on capital cases. As employees, if you are asked about this bill, we need to remember that it will assist law enforcement by preventing perpetrators from committing repeat offenses as we will have their DNA sample sooner and will also put to rest some of the arguments surrounding capital punishment through post conviction testing. The bill contains the funding source for these added services and will **NOT** increase taxes.

As we welcome 2009 and all that awaits us, I want to most sincerely and from the bottom of my heart, thank each of you for being the bright and inspiring people you are and for making our Department what it is. Whatever challenges await us we will face them together and what opportunities arise, we will accomplish them together. I am very confident in our abilities and that 2009 will be a great year for all of us!

Mike.



department of
forensic sciences



ISO: Without Tears

What is ISO?

ISO is the term used worldwide for the International Organization for Standardization, a network of national standards institutes from over 150 countries. ISO was formed in 1947 with the express purpose of developing standards that facilitate the international exchange of goods and services. Working with input from thousands of scientists and engineers from around the world, ISO committees have developed well over 17,000 standards in a variety of areas. Many of the standards apply to manufacturing and international trade, but some are "best practice" standards, such as the ISO 9001 requirements for quality management systems ⁽¹⁾. An important point to remember is that ISO is standards-creating body, not an accreditation body.

ISO/IEC 17025

ISO/IEC 17025 ⁽²⁾ is an international standard for best professional practice in testing and calibration laboratories. Because it applies to many different types of laboratories, it is written in broad, general terms. The standard is a combination of management system elements that meet the principles of ISO 9001 and the technical management system elements, many of which had their origin in a previous ISO guidance document, ISO/IEC Guide 25 ⁽³⁾.

ISO/IEC 17025 emphasizes a proactive systems approach to quality built around the following activities:

- Planning—Designing the laboratory management system according to quality standards and customer needs
- Doing—Using good practices to conduct testing
- Checking—Verifying results through quality control measures, audits and customer feedback
- Acting—Using available information to improve the management system

A positive characteristic of ISO/IEC 17025 is its flexibility. While ISO/IEC 17025 is quite specific about the elements that a laboratory must have in its management system, it does not specify how a laboratory must conduct its operations. The bottom line: ISO/IEC 17025 provides the outline for how a laboratory management system must be structured, but it is up to the laboratory to fill in the details in an appropriate way.

Amplification Documents and Other Standards

Although ISO/IEC 17025 is a rather extensive requirements document, it is general in nature, and forensic science is a field of

testing where additional, specific requirements or interpretive guidance are thought to be necessary to ensure an adequate level of laboratory performance. Documents that contain additional requirements or guidance for a specific field of testing are known variously as amplification documents, field-specific criteria or supplemental requirements.

There are several sources for amplification documents in forensic science. An accrediting body is allowed to create its own supplemental accreditation requirements and policies. Supplemental standards may also be created at a national level and might or might not amplify clauses of ISO/IEC 17025. An example is the FBI Quality Assurance Standards (QAS) for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories ⁽⁴⁾.

The hierarchy of accreditation requirements is thus: (1) ISO/IEC 17025, (2) supplemental standards and accrediting body policies, and (3) laboratory policies and procedures.

Excerpt from: Wojtowicz, Patricia. "ISO Without Tears: What Every DNA Scientist Should Know", *Promega Profiles in DNA*, Vol. 11 No. 2, pp 3 – 5.

ISO/IEC 17025

One way to lessen anxiety and uncertainty is to gain knowledge and understanding about ISO/IEC 17025 and what it means to be accredited to that international standard.

ISO/IEC 17025 provides the outline for how a laboratory management system must be structured, but it is up to the laboratory to fill in the details in an appropriate way.

REFERENCES

1. ISO 9001:2000, Quality management systems—requirements, International Organization for Standardization.
2. ISO/IEC 17025:2005, General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories, International Organization of Standardization.
3. ISO/IEC Guide 25, General requirements for the competence of calibration and testing laboratories, International Organization for Standardization.
4. Federal Bureau of Investigation (2000) Quality assurance standards for forensic DNA testing laboratories. Forensic Science Communications, Vol. 2 No. 3. This can be viewed online at: www.fbi.gov/hq/lab/fsc/backissu/july2000/codis2a.htm

Forensics in the News:

Retrial Granted for Lab Errors

Firearms mistakes linked to case on double slaying

Article from: Schmitt, B. and J. Swickard (Free Press Staff Writers), Issued October 10, 2008.

A man who faced sentencing in a double slaying was granted a new trial Thursday, a result of his lawyer challenging testing of evidence examined at the now-closed Detroit crime lab.

Authorities agree this is the first case to unravel from the crime lab debacle as it continues to unfold, but no one is willing to say how many convictions and guilty pleas may fall apart as the extent of botched lab work is revealed.

"Of course this is precedent-setting," said Detroit defense attorney Marvin Barnett, whose client, Jarrhod Williams, was granted a new trial. "Remember, I didn't even have to fight to get a new trial."

Barnett came to court Thursday hoping to call employees of the crime lab to testify about the bungled evidence in a motion to dismiss his case.

Instead, Wayne County Circuit Judge David Allen allowed Williams, 21, of Detroit to withdraw two no-contest pleas to second-degree murder charges stemming from a May 2007 double killing.

Assistant Wayne County Prosecutor Suzette Samuels did not object and said she is confident she still will get a conviction.

Williams pleaded no contest March 27 during a trial in front of Allen -- without a jury -- after Barnett hired an investigator, who discovered errors in the ballistics evidence.

Williams was on trial for first-degree murder in connection with the shooting deaths of Detroiters DeAngelo Savage, 33, and his 38-year-old friend Tommy Haney when prosecutors offered to let

him plead no contest to second-degree murder and serve 12 years in prison.

In Williams' case, Detroit Police lab investigators said 42 shell casings from the double killing were fired from the same weapon.

But David Balash, a retired Michigan State Police firearms expert, found that two weapons were used.

Acting on Balash's concerns, Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy ordered a review of the lab's work on firearms.

Two weeks ago, the State Police released a preliminary audit of the Detroit lab that showed, among other findings, an error rate of 10% in 200 firearms cases it reevaluated.

The audit also found that access to the firearms unit was unrestricted and evidence could have been contaminated because it was allowed to overflow into office and work areas.

Detroit Mayor Ken Cockrel, Jr. and Police Chief James Barren then shut down the entire lab, including the sections that did DNA, fingerprint, chemical and explosives analysis.

Williams was not sentenced in the shooting because Barnett filed a motion to dismiss the case after he learned of the lab's problems.

At Thursday's hearing, Barnett said he wanted to get testimony from Detroit Police crime lab workers about their fault findings.

Barnett urged Allen to hold the hearing, alleging crimes had been committed at the lab. But Allen said "it would be extreme to assume criminal wrongdoing."



Jarrhod Williams of Detroit, was granted a retrial after lab examinations were called into question.

ENTIRE LAB CLOSED

Detroit Mayor Ken Cockrel Jr. and Police Chief James Barren then shut down the entire lab, including the sections that did DNA, fingerprint, chemical and explosives analysis.

From a related article:

A group of scientists told the Detroit City Council on Tuesday that the closing of the police crime lab was hasty and left a slew of employees with tarnished reputations and job uncertainty.

The lab had accreditation for its work with DNA and biological materials, but it will lose it because of the ordered shutdown of the entire unit, said Patricia C. Wojtowicz of Tampa-based Forensic Quality Services-International, which evaluates crime labs.

Even though the closing "was not due to any evidence of improper testing ... accreditation requires an active functioning laboratory," Wojtowicz wrote to Detroit police.

Related article excerpt from: Schmitt, B. and J. Swickard (Free Press Staff Writers), "Crime lab shutdown slammed as too fast", Issued October 1, 2008.

Retrial Granted for Lab Errors continued from page 3

Instead, Allen told Barnett that his client could keep the plea, and be sentenced, or be granted a new trial.

Barnett and Williams decided to take the new trial. Williams remains in the Wayne County jail.

"It's a legal victory obviously because we get him a new trial," Barnett told the Free Press outside court. "But we won't see justice until a jury returns a verdict in this case."

Barnett said Williams made a false confession to police and now maintains his innocence.

Samuels said she's confident there's enough evidence to convict Williams.

"We have nothing to hide with a trial, nothing at all," she said. "We don't go to trial on cases with no evidence.

"We absolutely have the right to proceed to trial, and it's not malicious in any way, shape or form."

Wendy Savage, 57, the mother of victim DeAngelo Savage, said she's overjoyed that the case will be retried.

But she said the lab errors don't mean Williams is innocent.

"I do believe he was still the man behind one of the guns," Savage said Thursday.

"It seemed like when the crime lab problems came out, it shifted everything and the cases were going downhill."

Balash, the retired firearms expert, told the Free Press on Thursday that the Detroit lab may have been understaffed and overworked.

"But even if they have a caseload that could choke a horse, that's still no excuse for what went on in this case," he said. "For whatever reason, they chose not to look at all those shell casings."

Maria Miller, a spokeswoman for Worthy, said Williams' case is not necessarily the first in a floodgate of retrials.

"Each case is being evaluated on an individual basis," she said. The prosecutor's office currently is reexamining the past five years' worth of cases that went through the lab, and Miller said she could not estimate how many problematic cases will be identified.

"We're still working on the audit process," she said.

Meanwhile, the Wayne County Criminal Defense Bar Association has said the review needs to go back beyond five years, and that an independent review -- possibly involving federal investigators -- needs to look at all the lab work.

A meeting is scheduled for next week with the group and Worthy.

VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT— Breath Alcohol Calibration Program Receives ASCLD/LAB Accreditation

The Ventura County Sheriff's Department Forensic Sciences Laboratory has become the first lab worldwide to achieve accreditation for its Breath Alcohol Calibrations through the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/Laboratory Accreditation Board.

"The Ventura County's Breath Alcohol Calibration program is now recognized to meet more scientifically stringent specifications than the oversight provided in the past by the California Department of Public Health," said Renee Artman, laboratory manager. "I have always known that the sheriff's department provides a quality program to our community made up of state-of-the-art instrumentation and the best qualified and talented scientist in the field. Now this knowledge is shared among the forensic community."

In this program, the lab demonstrated that its technical operations and overall management systems meet more than 400 criteria of board requirements.

The onsite assessment was conducted in April, when both in-lab and in-field breath alcohol calibrations operations were evaluated.

Accreditation was granted during the June 21 board meeting.

Janet Anderson-Seaquist, sheriff's department alcohol section supervisor, has been appointed to serve on the board's Technical Advisory Committee representing the Breath Alcohol Calibration Discipline.

ADFS

Employees Making a Difference

Forensic Scientists Patricia Boyd and Donna Weaver of the Mobile Regional Laboratory participate in the 2008 Girls Exploring Math and Science Conference



84 girls who are considered "at risk" and have limited educational opportunities attended the conference

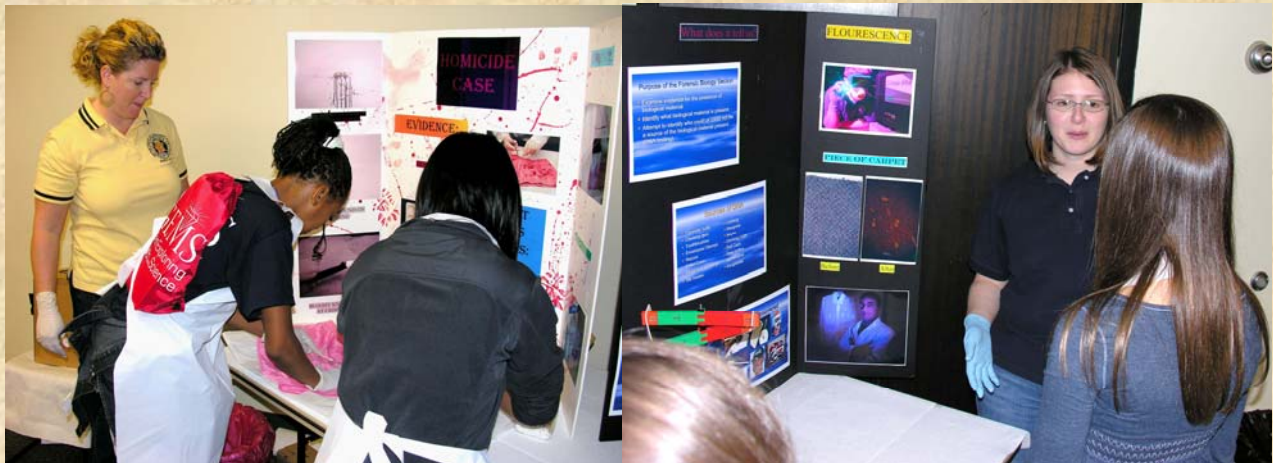
Letter to Mobile Regional Laboratory Director Scott Milroy:

Scott,

I just wanted you to know how much Women in Science and the Department of Clinical laboratory Sciences at USA appreciated the contribution your employees made to the 2008 GEMS Conference on Saturday Oct 18. There were approximately 300 middle school girls present to attend hands-on workshops in science and math related fields. Our workshop was filled to over capacity. We had about 75 girls attend our Solving Today's Medical Mysteries workshop that your employees participated in. The focus of the entire conference this year was Forensics. The keynote speaker was Michelle Dilbeck, a Criminalist III and ballistics expert from Alameda County California crime lab. We had 40 girls from Selma, AL and 44 from Mississippi who are considered "at risk" and have limited educational opportunities. These young girls are fascinated by forensics and your employees took their entire Saturday to share with them. I put some photos into a Word document and attached it to this email so you can see them in action. Please share the document with Donna, since I do not have her email address, and tell her how very much we appreciate her participation in this event.

Professor Vicki J. Barrett
Interim Chair and Program Director
Department of Clinical Laboratory Sciences
University of South Alabama

GEMS Organizing Committee



Donna Weaver provides girls with hands-on experience about evidence

Patricia Boyd explains the science behind forensic analyses

Riley Tours Implied Consent:



Governor Bob Riley speaks to ADFS employees at the Implied Consent Laboratory in Calera, Alabama to kick-off the state's fourth Take Back Our Highways campaign.

The ADFS Implied Consent Program is touted as the No. 1 program in the country by Governor Riley.

The statewide campaign began on Dec. 17 and ended Christmas Eve.

Article from: MacDonald, Ginny. "Alabama State Troopers Traffic Blitz Aimed at Impaired Drivers", The Birmingham News, Tuesday, November 18, 2008 ed.

Alabama State Troopers Traffic Blitz Aimed at Impaired Drivers

State troopers will begin a week-long statewide traffic blitz Wednesday that will focus on impaired driving.

The state's fourth Take Back Our Highways campaign will include sheriffs and police departments, the troopers' nine portable DUI-testing labs, called Batmobiles, and sobriety checkpoints set up at various points.

The 24-hour-a-day traffic blitz will continue until Nov. 26, the day before Thanksgiving. Another statewide blitz is scheduled to begin Dec. 17 and end Christmas Eve.

Every available state trooper will be on Alabama highways, said Lt. Col. F. A. Bingham, assistant director of the Alabama Department of Public Safety.

Trooper traffic stops will not be limited to impaired drivers, but will include all traffic violators, Bingham said.

Gov. Bob Riley kicked off the holiday campaign to get impaired drivers off the roads with a visit Monday to the state's DUI testing lab in Calera.

The Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences lab oversees all DUI testing in the state and trains about 7,000 officers across the state to use the instruments.

"This is the No. 1 program in the country," Riley said.

About 230,000 sobriety tests have been handled through the lab since 1999. Only 128 test results have been challenged in court, forensic officials told the governor.

An average of 2,200 tests are given in Alabama each month.

Lab workers also repair and evaluate all DUI-testing instruments at the state's 235 test sites.

The lab is funded entirely through DUI fines. "We are a freebie to taxpayers. If the public doesn't use it, they don't pay for it," said lab Director Mark Pevey.

"We are going to take drunk drivers off the road," Riley said. "What we can do is lower the death rate. If you drink, we are going to take you off the road, and we can prove our case."

Bingham said the Batmobiles - the "bat" stands for "blood alcohol test" - will be used in areas with a high number of DUIs. Troopers also will use semi-marked cars - cars that have the DPS emblem on passenger-side doors - and Dodge Chargers.

Bingham said drunk driving increases during the holidays because there's more traffic on the roads, the holidays are conducive to more alcohol use, and it's hunting season.

"Forty-two percent of all highway fatalities in the state in 2007 were because of drunk drivers," Riley said.

There were 153 highway deaths from Thanksgiving through New Year's last year. "We've got to do a better job," Riley said.

RILEY TOURS DUI TESTING LAB—

*Submitted by Mark Pevey
Implied Consent*

On November 17, 2008, Governor Riley selected the DFS Implied Consent Laboratory in Calera as the site for a press conference announcing the beginning of the state's fourth "Take Back Our Highways" Campaign and his intentions to reintroduce tougher DUI legislation in 2009. This legislation takes aim at persons who choose to drink to excess and drive. As proposed, the new DUI bill would double the penalties for persons convicted of driving under the influence with a blood alcohol level in excess of 0.15 %. Governor Riley also took this opportunity to recognize our breath alcohol testing program telling the media we (AL) have the number one breath alcohol testing program in the world. He added that if individuals chose to drink and drive they would be arrested and most assuredly convicted in large part due to our breath alcohol testing program.

Prior to the press conference we had the opportunity to take the governor on a tour of the lab (with the media in tow). It was certainly neat to dialogue with our Governor as he asked questions about the instrumentation and the program in general. Present for the occasion were Director Sparks, Deputy Director Carpenter, and of course the entire Implied Consent Lab staff.

"For those readers who may not be familiar with the Implied Consent Lab and program here some factoids:

- We are located in Shelby County
- Our staff consist of 12 individuals: 9-scientist, 2-ASA, 1-IT support
- AL averages about 28,000 DUI breath alcohol test annually



From left to right: Governor Bob Riley, Deputy Director Dale Carpenter (ADFS), Lt. Col. Bingham (DPS), Mark Pevey (ADFS), Greg Turner (ADFS), and Director Mike Sparks (ADFS)

- We review all DUI test data weekly
- We annually train approximately 6000 people at more than a dozen locations around the state
- We service 240+ breath testing sites scattered around the state at locals PD's and County Jails
- We perform 95% of all instrument repairs in house
- We make 50-60 service calls each month to the test sites
- We travel an average of 11,000+ miles in-state each month
- Receive 80+ attorney request for subject test information each month
- 240,000 DUI cases used the Draeger, IC personnel testified only 130 times.
- Recognized nationally and internationally as the leader in breath alcohol testing programs
- Our motto: "See Alabama, Join Implied Consent", okay, just kidding about the motto

**Any thoughts,
ideas or
suggestions?**

**Your contributions are what make our
newsletter possible!**

Please keep sending your thoughts, ideas or
suggestions for future newsletters
to Holli Baker at
holli.baker@adfs.alabama.gov



Happy Belated Birthday
Betty Smith (November)

January

Lisa Cary
Michelle Lloyd
Gary Wallace
John Dodd
Joel Orr
Alberta Young
Adel Shaker
Debra Calhoun
Patricia Calvert
L'Toya Coleman
Heather Harrelson
Jennifer Fails
John Brunner
Brian Wilson
Kevin Hollis
Sharee Wells
Darlene Williams
Adam Grooms

Sandy Little
Donna Naylor

February

Justin Sanders
Michelle Finch
Teryn O'Bannon
Andrea Headrick
Derek Headley
Heather Morgan
Joyce Johnston
Melanie Martin
Roderick Clark
Scott Belton
Casey DuBose
John Daniels
Charlie Pearce
Jason Kokoszka

March

Keith Busby
Sandra Webster
Grace Brooks
Tim McSpadden
Charles Barber
Andrew Gringas
Patrick Goff
Charlene Eagleson
Gary Crowe
Nancie Jones
Cristy Kissel
Kari Bowen
Tammy Hood
Clara Marshall
Kay Wilson
Joseph Fields
Carmanetta Spearman



CONGRATULATIONS!

Recent graduates of the Peace Officers Minimum Standards Training, (left to right) Lonnie Ginsberg, Curt Harper, and Andrew Gringas are shown being sworn into office.

Let's give a big round of applause to our very own Ironman!

Angelo DellaManna

Birmingham Regional Laboratory

The IRONMAN is special to triathletes, there is no bigger race or longer distance - 2.4 mile ocean swim, 112 mile bike, and a 26.2 mile marathon.

Angelo completed the grueling triathlon in just

12 hours, 21 minutes!

