

# THE IDENTIFIER

HTTP://WWW.SCIAI.ORG/ | SUMMER ISSUE | VOLUME 2 ISSUE 2.



SCIAI Spring Conference 2019

## SCIAI Announcements

- ◆ Don't forget to continue to check out the SCIAI Division website for updates on training! Contact us to have your agency's training information posted!
- ◆ Check out the SCIAI Division website for the newly added membership directory
- ◆ A draft of the new constitution and by-laws is posted on the web page for review by members.



2019 Officers

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Letter from the President

Conference Recap

Meet the Officers

In the News

Conference Speaker  
Spotlight



## LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

It's hard to believe how quickly 2019 is slipping by. I hope I'm not the only one who looked up from latent prints to realize it's July! My name is Trish Odom and I was honored to become the new President of the SCIAI in April. This is my second term as president (the first being in 2007-2008) and the field of Forensic Science has changed drastically since then. We are now in the third calendar year of the resuscitated and revamped SCIAI. Last year was a great year, largely due to the leadership of the immediate Past President, Tyler Bucholtz. We owe a debt of gratitude for all of the hard work Tyler did in his extended term as president. I look forward to working with him to keep the forward progress moving. I hope you were all able to attend the 2019 Spring Educational Conference. We had amazing speakers at a lovely venue. It was well worth a trip to Greer!

The newly elected officers and I have begun to work on the Spring Educational Conference for 2020. We have a few ideas we are excited about,

but we need your help, too. Our hope, and really our purpose, is to bring meaningful and interesting training to South Carolina at a reasonable cost. To do that, we need to know what training you need or want, and even what you could live without. If you teach a class, or know someone who does, please pass that information along to us!

I am looking forward to this coming year! Please let me know if I can be of any assistance to you.

Respectfully,

Trish Odom



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## 104th International Forensic Educational Conference

Sunday, August 11, 2019 - Saturday, August 17, 2019 Reno, Nevada Peppermill Resort

The IAI Annual Educational Conference is the largest organized event in the world that provides a full week of top of the line, cutting edge education and hands on training in forensic physical evidence examination and crime scene processing. Register now to ensure you experience all the IAI Conference has to offer!

You will be able to join Lectures on the latest technology, techniques, and research, sign up for limited space hands on Workshops to practice basic to advanced skills, and attend Meetings and Panels that provide an opportunity to discuss the latest professional topics and developments.

For more information: [www.theiai.org/conference.php](http://www.theiai.org/conference.php)

## Spring CONFERENCE 2019

Thank you to all who attended our spring conference!! I think we can all agree that our former President Tyler went above and beyond! Between the catered food and drinks from Smoke on the Water and the performance by the Synergy Twins, this conference put the bar very high for all future conferences! The event was a huge success with over 46 members representing agencies from across the state!

The Keynote speaker was D'Michelle Personne DuPre, MD. Eight guests speakers were featured during the event. Kelly Ayers challenged attendees with Observation Skills, and Rachelle Babler spoke on the topics of foot prints versus palm prints. John Black discussed the AAAS Latent Fingerprint Examination Report and his views on it; being the lone practitioner in the bunch.

A huge thanks goes out to the City of Greer for graciously offering the Event Center to the SCIAI.



## SPECIAL THANKS

To all our sponsors for joining our team and providing new, up-to-date products and services. Foray, Med-Tech, DataWorks Plus, Arrowhead Forensics, FARO, Attestor North America, Salicco Fingerprint Brush Company, Leica, Spinx Corp. and the City of Greer.





◆ Photograph from forensicscolleges.com

## MEET THE BOARD

Please welcome our newly elected officers for 2019!

**Trish Odom – President**

**Chris Scott – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**

**Chris Wilson – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**

**Christopher Gary – Secretary  
State Representative**

**Harold Bouknight – Sergeant at Arms**

**Nada Kerstein – Treasurer**

**Jeffery Scott – Vendor Representative**

**Jodi Hunt – Editor**

**Luke Spratt – Historian**

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Check us out!



@theSCIAI



SC Division of the  
International Association  
for Identification

## IN THE NEWS

Vacuum metal Deposition Physical Processing: VMD has been proven to process latent prints on porous and non-porous items. VMD has advantages over other methods of latent print development, especially items that have been exposed to harsh and adverse environmental conditions.

VMD is the physical process of coating evidence with a very thin metal film under high vacuum. Gold, Zinc, Silver, Tin, Aluminum, and some alloys are used to coat the substrate. The result is a reversed developed latent print. Since the process coats the substrate and not the latent print, it does not interfere with the collection of samples being submitted for DNA analysis. VMD can also be used to develop grab marks on fabric to aid in the collection of DNA. [www.goevidence.com](http://www.goevidence.com)

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### Cross examination on latent ID

#### Fingerprints found on bag over father's head disputed in trial

WORCESTER — A state police fingerprint examiner testified Tuesday that two of Glenn R. Armstrong's fingerprints were recovered from a trash bag that was over the head of his father, 83-year-old Walter A. Armstrong.

The elder Armstrong's body was found on the floor of a bedroom when police conducted a well-being check on Jan. 11, 2017. A black trash bag was over the victim's head and was secured by a belt, according to earlier testimony.

Sgt. John Costa of the state police crime scene services section told the jury Tuesday that it was his opinion, based on an analysis and comparison he conducted, that two of the fingerprints recovered from the bag that was over Walter Armstrong's head belonged to Glenn Armstrong.

During questioning by Assistant District Attorney Joseph A. Simmons, Costa said he also analyzed prints recovered from the top two bags of a roll of similar trash bags found in the basement of the home. He said it was his opinion five of those prints matched Glenn Armstrong.

Under cross-examination, Costa said there were no set guidelines for how many points of comparison were necessary in order to identify a latent fingerprint as coming from a particular individual.

Costa also agreed with the defense lawyer's suggestions that there was no way of knowing when the fingerprints recovered in Armstrong's case were placed on the items upon which they were found and that there have been cases in the past in which erroneous identifications were made based on fingerprint analyses and comparisons.

The fingerprint examiner for the defense, John Brunetti, a retired West Haven Connecticut police detective, testified that his comparison of Armstrong's fingerprints with one of the prints recovered from the bag was inconclusive and the other latent fingerprint contained insufficient detail to even make a comparison.

<https://www.milforddailynews.com/news/20190507/armstrong-trial-investigators-say-sons-fingerprints-found-on-bag-over-fathers-head>

## IN THE NEWS

### **“the ACE-V methodology is the product of reliable principles and methods.”**

State of New Hampshire v. William J. Sullivan, Jr., Docket #'s: 03-S-1635; 1636; 1637

In August of 2003, William Sullivan, a teenager from Connecticut, and his juvenile girlfriend plotted to murder the girl's mother. After several failed attempts of poisoning and arson, William Sullivan beat and stabbed Jeanne Dominico to death in her home. There was one bloody simultaneous fingers impression and one bloody palmprint impression on the freezer door. These impressions, along with a latent impression developed on a baseball bat, were identified as having been made by William Sullivan. At the hearing, Simon Cole testified that experts generally do not testify as to the uniqueness of a defendant's fingerprints but rather as to whether the defendant was the source of a latent fingerprint. He stated that there are no empirical studies on the accuracy of latent fingerprint examiners nor has there been a validation study done on the practice of latent print identification. Simon Cole also acknowledges that any acclaimed error rate will be contested by one party or the other. After a combined 11+ hours of testimony over a three-day period, Judge Hicks ruled that “the ACE-V methodology is the product of reliable principles and methods.” The state was allowed to offer expert testimony regarding fingerprint identifications.

The court also stated that “the ‘subjectivity’ of the standards for determining when a sufficient match is made under the ACE-V methodology goes to the weight and credibility of the evidence and not its admissibility.” Simon Cole did not testify at trial. The defendant was found guilty of First Degree Murder.

[http://onin.com/fp/daubert\\_links3.html#nh\\_v\\_william\\_j\\_sullivan](http://onin.com/fp/daubert_links3.html#nh_v_william_j_sullivan)



## IN THE NEWS

### Free Federal-Sponsored Training *Continued from page 6*

“There are a lot of courses about hazmat scenes and a lot about how to process the scene. However, this is the only course that blends the two skill sets, so when you have finished the course, you have performed the tasks you will need to in the field wearing the PPE you will need to keep safe,” said NCBRT Instructor Debbie Hilliard.

“Overall, the course gives you the tools to be safer and more effective when responding to these hazardous incidents,” continued Hilliard.

NCBRT courses are certified by the Department of Homeland Security and covered under DHS’s Homeland Security National Training Program. DHS recertified the Advanced Forensic Investigations for Hazardous Environments course in March 2016. The recertified version of the course has been cut down from a five-day course to a four-day course. This has made the course much more streamlined by combining modules and allowing for more hands-on learning.

As a DHS primary training provider, NCBRT can offer this vital training at no direct cost to your agency. Visit [www.ncbrt.lsu.edu](http://www.ncbrt.lsu.edu) to learn more or to schedule this course.

NCBRT’s course catalog may be viewed here:

<https://www.ncbrt.lsu.edu/pdf/NCBRTCatalog.pdf>.

South Carolina Regional Representative:

Meghan Lawson:

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877-806-7404

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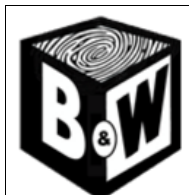
## Upcoming Articles

Look out for our next issue in Fall 2019! Do you have a topic you would like to see featured? Let us know!

- ◆ **Member Spotlight**— submit yourself or a deserving fellow member who has contributed to the forensic community.
- ◆ **Interview with an Officer**— get a closer look at some of our serving officers!
- ◆ **On the Case**— a unique case study submitted by our members will be chosen for recognition and training opportunities.
- ◆ **Forensics in the Community**— see how forensics are being used outside of the crime scene!
- ◆ **And More!**

**All submissions for publication consideration should be received by the Editor no later than September 1, 2019 to be considered for the Fall Issue.**

## John Black of *Black & White Forensics, LLC*



**Tell us about your work experience. How long have you been a practitioner in the field and what is your current position?**

I've been fortunate to work in the forensic science field since 1991. My first job was as a forensic chemist for the Drug Enforcement Administration in Miami, Florida. From there I went to SLED as a drug chemist for one year, and then applied for an internal transfer to the Latent Print/Crime Scene Department. I spent 12 years in that unit as a crime scene investigator, latent print examiner, footwear/tire track examiner and bloodstain pattern analyst. In 2006, I received an offer to work for Ron Smith & Associates (RS&A), so I moved my family to Mississippi for three years while I worked as a senior consultant and staff instructor. Ron then sent me to Largo, Florida to manage his new operation there in 2010. After 4 ½ years there I resigned to move my family back to South Carolina and to open my own company, Black & White Forensics, LLC. Currently I provide training in South Carolina to law enforcement, forensic personnel, attorneys and coroners. I also conduct private casework for attorneys – both prosecution and defense – throughout the

United States. I'm available to review/develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) and conduct casework audits for agencies. RS&A contracts with me to provide training for them throughout the U.S. and some international venues. To date I've been fortunate to conduct over 250 training classes in about 34 states, as well as Africa, Asia, Canada, Central America and Europe.

**What do you enjoy most about your job?**

I consider it a privilege to be able to share what I've been blessed to learn throughout my career. My focus is to help various criminal justice system stakeholders, such as attorneys, judges and jurors, to understand the value of the evidence in my areas of practice. I enjoy educating them about the strengths and limitations of the evidence. This helps attorneys ask more relevant questions, thus affording jurors a better understanding of the evidence to help them make more informed decisions.



**John Black** of *Black & White Forensics, LLC***What is something you have learned in your work experience that you can pass along to others?**

Ron Smith said something years ago that resonated with me instantly: "Knowledge isn't powerful unless you share it." I think we all have the responsibility to do this. The knowledge we have acquired only does us so much good. But when you share it, it benefits countless others. I've realized that when sharing this knowledge, you have to "meet people where they are." In other words, they may be hearing something for the first time and might not fully understand it, or it may contradict the way they've been trained. Taking the time to fully understand their perspective will better equip you to convey the information in a useful manner.

**What is your vision for the SCIAI?**

I thoroughly enjoyed my time as an officer with the SCIAI in the late 1990s - early 2000s. It is my hope that the current leadership will seek to provide ample and varied training opportunities throughout the state. It may also be beneficial to partner with NC or GA

**Is there a training course or certification you have completed that you feel has furthered your career?** Without a doubt, my latent print certification through the IAI has been extremely beneficial. I was fortunate to participate in some contract work for RS&A while I still worked at SLED. They were only using IAI-certified latent print examiners for a particular contract with the city of Boston, Massachusetts. I'm also certified by the IAI as a footwear examiner and senior crime scene analyst. All of these certifications are beneficial on the witness stand. Also keep in mind that any IAI certifications you acquire belong to you, not to your agency. Therefore, this may be beneficial if you are seeking employment with a different agency and other candidates aren't certified.

**Is there anything you'd like to talk about that hasn't been mentioned?** In addition to my services mentioned above, I'm also available to help agencies reduce their fingerprint case backlogs. You may reach me via email, [john@bwforensics.com](mailto:john@bwforensics.com), or through my website, <https://www.bwforensics.com>

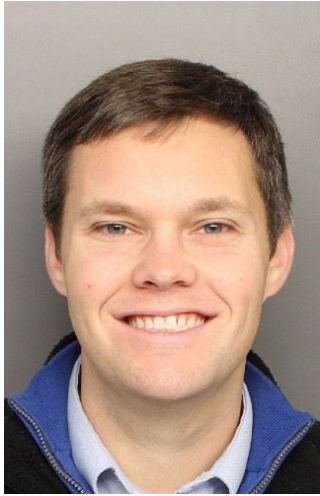
**Development of Latent Fingerprints on Thermal Paper by Immersion in Hot Water**

Author(s): Jonas, Albert; Rubner, Isabel; Oetken, Marco Published: 2019, Volume 69, Issue 2, Page 141

**Abstract from [theiai.org/jfi\\_abstracts](http://theiai.org/jfi_abstracts)** "This proof-of-concept study presents a new method of making latent fingerprints visible on thermal paper by briefly immersing them in hot tap water. When this technique is used, a dark positive impression appears while the paper remains white and the imprint is preserved. Various factors, such as the influence of time since deposition and the persistence of the developed impression, were investigated. Optimal results were achieved with fresh to several hours old fingerprints. For impressions that were several weeks old, this method was not sufficiently reliable. The brightness and contrast of the developed fingerprints changed within the first week after development. The contrast of faded impressions could be increased in 75% of the samples by re-immersion in hot water. On low-sensitivity thermal papers, such as parking tickets, no fingerprints could be developed that would be sufficient for identification. Additionally, because of the need to pretest a portion of the specimen to determine the adequate developmental temperature by cutting off small paper samples, further research is needed to avoid this damaging of the evidence."

## Christopher Gary, Secretary/ State Representative,

has been a fulltime latent print examiner for over 10 years. He started as an intern with



Greenville County Forensics in 2006 while a student at the College of Charleston. He slowly began to learn more about Latent Print comparison and after graduating college started working full time with Greenville County. His vision

for SCIAI is to see it continue to grow and bring in all of the state's practitioners in all Forensic Science disciplines. Christopher wrote, "I believe South Carolina has a wealth of highly trained practitioners that could network to-

gether to share knowledge and ideas for improving all of our agencies. The SCIAI has been given redemption through the hard work of the Officers from 2017-2019. I would like for all of us to get a little more involved as we all have something to contribute." In 2009 he was one of fourteen examiners selected to attend the NIJ's Second Latent Print Training Program in Tampa Bay, Florida. It was a ten week program for two weeks every other month with the curriculum taught by Ron Smith and Associates. The idea of the program was to take a novice examiner and train them to competency, assist with passing the IAI Latent Print Certification test, and prepare to testify as expert witnesses. Christopher felt it was an incredible networking opportunity amongst the students and instructors that has afforded him a variety of opportunities.

Examples of notable symbols within fingerprints submitted to clplex by latent print examiners.

[www.clpex.com/smiley/](http://www.clpex.com/smiley/)



Ioan Truta  
Boston Police

[www.clpex.com/smiley/](http://www.clpex.com/smiley/)

# Forensic Studies

Perspective on the dissemination of three-dimensional models of human skeletal remains online in the United States

A forensic survey looking to measure the opinion of residents in the United States of America over the online dissemination of three-dimension (3D) models of human skeletal remains.

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc-6lvKD9oPu69YVf\\_aWrnZC2JFNrBred\\_DM8Xj3xqfauNveQ/viewform?fbclid=IwAR1g7PWEwHLQpxyoyDgF6GAtVTxCs2fKdEMX-1BTKQ4swcD4R6MClhqKPco](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc-6lvKD9oPu69YVf_aWrnZC2JFNrBred_DM8Xj3xqfauNveQ/viewform?fbclid=IwAR1g7PWEwHLQpxyoyDgF6GAtVTxCs2fKdEMX-1BTKQ4swcD4R6MClhqKPco)

## Fingerprint Training Validation Study

Fingerprint Examiners are needed for an online experiment . Indiana University is recruiting fingerprint examiners for a short study that addresses grayscale perception. It involves conducting analyses in an environment where the contrast of the images can be adjusted and ground truth of the minutia can be revealed. It will be done online and it will require 6-11 hours of time to complete. If you would like to participate, please email Tom Busey at busey@indiana.edu

Study #0812000121

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## Handwriting and Footwear Black Box Studies – Register!

The FBI Laboratory, with Ideal Innovations and Noblis is conducting black box studies to evaluate the accuracy and reliability of forensic footwear examiners and document examiners.

Participants will be asked to perform a total of 100 handwriting evidence comparisons over a period of approximately eight months.

Participants will be asked to perform a total of 100 footwear evidence comparisons over a period of approximately one year.

The research team acknowledges that completing this study will require a significant amount of your time and energy; therefore, we will be offering one \$1000 and three \$500 awards in a drawing when the project closes. These awards are not based on your performance, but solely on your willingness to complete all of the test packets provided to you to the best of your ability.

Register:

<https://handwriting.idealinnovations.com>

<https://footwear.idealinnovations.com>

Participation is anonymous.

# UPCOMING TRAINING/EVENTS

**September 9-12, 2019:** Bloodstain Pattern Analysis – Fabrics Course, Lexington, SC.  
Instructors: Ross M. Gardner & Tom Griffin. Contact: Craig Gravel, Training Coordinator at 405-706-8489 or rcgravel@bevelgardner.com

**November 4-8, 2019:** Latent Palm Print Comparison Class, Sirchie, Youngsville, NC  
<https://www.sirchie.com/latent-palm-print-comparison-class-2>

**December 16-20, 2019:** Shooting Incident Reconstruction II – Bevel Gardner & Associates, Lexington, SC Contact: Craig Gravel, Training Coordinator at 405-706-8489 or rcgravel@bevelgardner.com

If you have upcoming training that you would like advertised in the newsletter, contact the Editor with course information and details!



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