

May, 2008 - Monthly Update

FYI, this update is sent each month to all IAI board members, officers, committee chairs, regional representatives, division secretaries, certification board chairs and secretaries, division editors and IAI staff. This update contains information that is of particular interest to these groups. It is sent by e-mail to all those for whom I have an e-mail address and by regular mail to the rest. **If you receive this by regular mail but have an e-mail account**, please let me know and I will add your e-mail address to the distribution list. It is much more efficient and cost effective to send it that way.

Hello again from the IAI office.

2008 Louisville Conference

By the time you receive this *Update*, you should have received the 2008 Louisville Conference Registration Booklet. Contained in that booklet is the conference program as well as a registration form. Note that it is also possible to view the program and register for the conference through the IAI's website, www.theiai.org. Registering through the website requires the use of any major credit card. Registration by check or department purchase order must be done through the mail.

The IAI's Educational Program Coordinator Jim Gettemy has again put together an outstanding array of lecture sessions and workshops. It seems the workshop and lecture sessions get better each year. There is truly something for everyone. During the past few years conference attendance has continued to climb, evidence that attendees are drawn to the unparalleled educational opportunities offered at each year's conference. Congratulations to all those who make the conference a success to include the Conference and Exhibit Planners, the Registration folks, all the lecture and workshop presenters and volunteers. We thank you for your participation and hard work.

If you are planning to attend the Louisville Conference, please make your hotel reservations as soon as possible. The Hyatt and Marriott Hotels are sold out but there are rooms available (at least at the time I'm writing this) at the overflow hotels. Please visit the Conference section of the IAI's website to register for the conference or make hotel reservations.

Several administrative events will take place during the conference. As has been our custom, on Tuesday morning, August 19th, a meeting will be held of all certification board chairs and secretaries. Please mark that on your calendar as this is the only time during the entire year when all certification board officers are able to meet and discuss matters of mutual interest. Pat Davis, Chair of the Certification Quality Assurance Committee and I will co-chair the meeting.

The annual breakfast for division secretaries, presidents and regional representatives in attendance will be held on Wednesday, August 20th, from 7-9 a.m. This is the once a year opportunity for the division leadership to visit with each other and exchange ideas with staff and myself from the IAI office. Again, please mark this event on your calendars.

The IAI's Board of Directors will meet on August 15th, 16th and 17th. If anyone has items to be considered by the board, please send them to the Board Chair, Diana Castro at Diana.Castro@theiai.org or to me at iaisecty@theiai.org

Congratulations – Debbie Leben

Our sincere congratulations go out to Debbie Leben who was recently named the Director of the US Secret Service Forensic Laboratory in Washington, DC. Debbie is a longtime IAI member, a member of the IAI's Board of Directors and a very active, past president of the Chesapeake Bay Division. We congratulate Debbie on this significant life accomplishment and wish her all the best in her endeavors.

Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvements Grant Program

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is now taking applications for the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvements Grant Program. The solicitation opened on April 22 and will close on May 30th. There is approximately \$18 million dollars available for forensic science through the grant program and there are NO restrictions on how it might be used. This is very different from the DNA grant programs for example where expenditures must be tied to DNA. Funds from this program can be used for any purpose including training.

This program is a combination of formula grants to the states and discretionary grants the to directly to applicant agencies. I suggest you contact your state planning agency to determine how the funds directed to your state are disbursed and also consider applying for a discretionary grant directly from NIJ.

If you apply directly for a discretionary grant, be sure to read the application very carefully, especially the section where your agency must certify there is an entity in place to investigate any allegations of wrongdoing in your forensic organization. This is a provision that has been pushed long and hard by the Innocence Project and we have had some success with requiring a reasonable approach to that issue. The goal of the Innocence Project is to have a Texas and Virginia style forensic commission in every state. The commissions would be charged with investigating allegations of wrongdoing in forensic labs or identification units. There has been some success with the establishment of those commissions but as yet are not widespread.

The complete solicitation can be found at the following website:

<http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/sI000839.pdf>

Monthly Update on the IAI's Website

Please note also that this Update is sent directly to those listed above. It is also available to all members on the IAI's website by following these instructions (these instructions are also printed in each *Identification News*):

On the bottom right of main page of the IAI's Website is a link titled *Monthly Update*. Click on that link to get to the login page for the *Updates*.

Enter the following information to get to the *Monthly Update* page:

User Name: update

Password: 357cwv

Please note that the password **is case sensitive** therefore it must be entered in all small letters just as shown. After the name and password have been entered, the *Update* screen will appear.

Joe Polski