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November 2006

Issue #5

## TCNJ Forensic Chemistry News

The Forensic Chemistry Concentration continues to be an active part of the sciences at TCNJ. In the summer of 2006, two TCNJ undergraduates participated in undergraduate research in Forensic Chemistry, supported by a National Institute of Justice grant. Ten TCNJ students also were interns at the New Jersey State Police Laboratory. This Fall, five students are involved in forensic research projects involving detection of blood, analysis of pigmented inks, and applications of GC and GC/MS in Forensic Science.

With a few small changes, the Forensic Chemistry Concentration is now also available to Biology Majors. In the 2006-07 academic year, we will be offering the annual Forensic Chemistry course, as well as Forensic Applications of Mass Spectrometry. These courses are open to not only students working to complete the Forensic Chemistry Concentration, but to any Chemistry or Biology student who would like to learn more about the field.

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## New Jersey State Police Laboratory Director



### T.A. Brettell Announces Retirement

Dr. Thomas A. Brettell, Director of the New Jersey State Police of Forensic Sciences, has announced his retirement after 30 years of service. He began his career as a Chemist with the New Jersey State Police Forensic Science Bureau in 1976. In 2002, he became the first Director of the Office of Forensic Sciences.

Dr. Brettell recently guided the Central Laboratory and the DNA Laboratory through any incredible growth phase, having recently moved into a new, state-of-the-art 200,000 square foot "Tech Plex". He also was key in restructuring salary scales which makes New Jersey State Police scientists among the highest paid in the nation.

Dr. Brettell has accepted a faculty position at Cedar Crest College in Allentown, PA.

TCNJ would like to thank Dr. Brettell for his continued support of the College. He taught in the Criminal Justice Department for many years, and created the TCNJ/NJSP Internship program- an important program in which our students continue to participate.

# The Forensic Science Profession in New Jersey and the NJAFS



If you are interested in Forensic Science, and hope to work in the field, it is important for you to know about local organizations that can provide information and contacts for you. Forensic Scientists in New Jersey are well-served by an active organization, the New Jersey Association of Forensic Scientists (NJAFS). NJAFS organizes scientific meetings, and offers an annual scholarship to undergraduate students who intend to pursue careers in Forensic Science. If you are interested in becoming a member, applications are available through their website, <http://njafs.org>.

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## If you want to be a forensic scientist, you may not want a college degree in Forensic Science!

Partly in response to the unprecedented interest in CSI, Forensic Science degree Programs are being created around the country. In some cases, these programs have students take a few Chemistry courses, a few Biology, Statistics, Law, and Physics courses. While such programs have “breadth”, they may not have sufficient “depth” in any one area to qualify someone as a true scientist.

So, how do you prepare for a career in forensic science? If you are going to work in a State laboratory, it depends on the state. In New Jersey, the required education for the position of forensic scientist is a M.S. degree in a basic science (Biology, Chemistry) and one year of experience in an analytical laboratory, OR, a B.S. degree in a basic science and two years of lab experience. At least 24-credits in Chemistry and/or Biology courses are required. Summer internship experiences may count towards the laboratory experience requirement.

If you want to work in a DNA laboratory, your course work must include a Molecular Biology course as well as courses in Genetics, Statistics, and Biochemistry.

The NJAFS website specifically states the following: “Some students have chosen an undergraduate degree major in Criminal Justice with a minor/concentration in Forensic Science, with the intention of pursuing a career as a bench level forensic scientist in a forensic laboratory. While NJAFS fully respects the value and relevance of this major, an applicant will not qualify for a position as a forensic scientist in New Jersey with an undergraduate major in Criminal Justice. Your undergraduate degree major must be in a science to qualify.” The also state: “Generally, throughout the nation, the requirements are very similar. We’re starting to see more graduates with degree Majors in Forensic Science, but the Biology/ Chemistry majors are still widely accepted and it is expected that they will be for quite some time.”



# Government Funding-Forensic Science Issues



In the September 2006 issue of Academy News, a newsletter of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, Barry Fisher describes in his column, the Legislative Corner, some initiatives that are currently being considered by the US Senate Appropriations Committee. We don't yet know if these will appear in the final version of the Federal budget, but it is interesting to know what initiatives are being discussed.

They include:

**Forensic Scientists.** The Committee recommended \$4,000,000 to hire additional forensic scientists at the FBI's new Regional Computer Forensic Laboratory. This lab investigates cyber crimes, child exploitation, and terrorism related cases. They recommend an additional \$28,000,000 for this laboratory, to expand their capabilities in handling of digital evidence.

**Training.** The Committee recommended more than \$30,000,000 for an FBI Forensic Science Training Academy.

**New Centers.** A recommendation was made to fund a National Center for Explosives and Training Research, with a cost of \$30,000,000.

**DNA.** As DNA analysis continues to be the "gold standard" in Forensic Science, backlogs continue to grow in laboratories. The Committee recommended \$175,568,000 to "strengthen and improve" the current Federal and State DNA collection and analysis systems.

This issue of the Academy News can be found at <http://aafs.org/pdf/Sept06.pdf>.

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## Local Meetings/Conferences.

### **November 1-4**

32nd Annual Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientist Meeting-Held at the Tarrytown Double Tree Hotel in Westchester County, NY.

Contact: Elayne Schwartz  
914-231-1810  
[ess6@westchestergov.com](mailto:ess6@westchestergov.com)

### **January 22-26**

5-Day Professional General Biofeedback BCIA Seminar-Held in Philadelphia, PA.

Contact: Biofeedback Foundation of Europe  
514-489-8251, ext. 135  
[workshops@bfe.org](mailto:workshops@bfe.org)

### **April 6-8**

Present and Future Technological Advances in Human Identification-Held in Virginia Beach, VA.

Contact: Martha M. Allen  
804-786-0073  
[mallen@vifsm.org](mailto:mallen@vifsm.org)