



DNA Backlog Clearance Project

Volume 1, Issue 6: October 2014

Focus of update:

This newsletter is designed to provide regular updates pertaining to the DNA Backlog Clearance Project. The project will continue until all testing is complete, reports issued by the external vendors, technical reviews finalized, and investigative follow up conducted. This edition will focus on updating stakeholders on progress made thus far on the investigation stage of this project.

CODIS Entries

CODIS entries to date	2,756**
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** These cases represent those where a profile was developed meeting CODIS guidelines and a CODIS entry has been completed.

Training Opportunity a Success

In late August, the SAK Task Force hosted a multidisciplinary training opportunity presented by national speaker, Anne Munch, JD. The training event was open to law enforcement, prosecutors, medical professionals, crime lab professionals, and advocates. The presentation titled, "Critical Issues in Sexual Assault," was successful by all accounts.

During the presentation, Ms. Munch focused on personal biases of sexual assault victims, issues and myths regarding consent, the impact of trauma on survivors of sexual assault, and offenders of sexual assault. Ms. Munch has a propensity for explaining issues in sexual assault cases in a new context which allowed attendees to view these issues uniquely and foster greater understanding.

The feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive. Of the 183 individuals who attended, almost half (49.18%) were from law enforcement, 22.4% were advocates, 12.21% were crime lab professionals, and the remaining included prosecutors and medical professionals. Almost all (98.01%) of the attendees felt the presentation was relevant to their work and would recommend this presentation be repeated in the future. The most common feedback was to have a longer training session with Ms. Munch.

Based on the feedback, this training opportunity was a successful event. We look forward to hosting similar trainings in the future.

Investigative Follow-Up Case Assignment:

	Assigned	Completed
CODIS Matches ¹	591	484
CODIS Ineligibles / Negatives ²	3862	3425
CODIS Eligibles ³	20	15
Total to Date	4473	3924

Investigative Follow-Up Results:

	False Arrest	Arrest Confirmation	New Charges
Total to Date	0	58	20

Note: These figures refer exclusively to the City-funded portion of the DNA Backlog Clearance Project.

¹ DNA profile identified through DNA analysis, resulted from either a direct CODIS hit (individual) or linked to another case.

² Lab analysis provided no evidentiary leads. Testing complete.

³ Lab analysis has identified possible DNA evidence. Multiple outcomes possible, including entering unknown profile(s) into CODIS. Testing in-progress.

Notification Continues

As the sexual assault kits are analyzed and reviewed, CODIS hits are directed to sergeants, cases are being assigned to investigators, and the notification process begins. For the investigators working these cases, this is an arduous and gratifying task.

First, the investigator must locate the victim to attempt notification. Once initial contact is made, the victim is provided an opportunity to learn more about the case and decide whether or not to continue with the investigation. The initial contact is often fraught with confusion, frustration and in some instances re-victimization resulting in flashbacks, nightmares, and increased anxiety.

All of these responses are expected and investigators are prepared to handle them as sensitively as possible. One response we hoped for but not certain we would receive, has surfaced repeatedly...Thank you. "Thank you for following up with my case...for contacting me years later...for not forgetting me. Thank you for helping me find justice." With these words, we are humbled and know the time and resources put into this project have been worth it.