



B42 Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: An Update on National Efforts in Research and Development

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After attending this presentation, attendees will have a greater understanding of how the forensic science community has progressed in the area of research and development. Attendees will also be aware of findings from studies that are having an impact on the forensic science community and potential areas that require additional research.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing an update on national efforts to bolster the quantity and quality of forensic science research studies since the 2009 National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Report, *Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward*. This presentation will provide an overview of some studies that are beginning to have a positive impact on the perception that forensic science has been lacking in research.

Since 2009, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) has provided more than \$120 million to fund more than 300 research and development projects related to forensic science, resulting in more than 600 scientific publications, presentations, and final technical reports. In March of 2009, NIJ immediately began addressing recommendations in the NAS Report. There were two major recommendations made in the 2009 NAS Report related to scientific research. Recommendation three called for more research to address issues of accuracy, reliability, and validity in the forensic science disciplines. Recommendation six was to encourage research programs on human observer bias and sources of human error in forensic examinations. More specifically, there was an emphasis on the impression and pattern evidence disciplines such as friction ridge analysis, firearms and tool mark examinations, shoeprint and tire tread evidence, questioned documents, and bloodstain pattern analysis. Therefore, this presentation will focus specifically on progress in the impression and pattern evidence disciplines. NIJ's efforts have earned the support of many respected leaders in the scientific community, including members of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS). Douglas H. Ubelaker, former President of the AAFS, wrote in an article to the membership, "A recent major boon to research in forensic science has been the National Institute of Justice's Office of Investigative and Forensic Sciences (OIFS) whose sole goal is to strengthen the quality and practice of forensic science." Most importantly, the presentation will clearly demonstrate that research and innovation are the core requirements needed to continue the progress that has been attained and to strengthen the science in forensic science.

Research and Development, NAS Report, Strengthening Forensic Science