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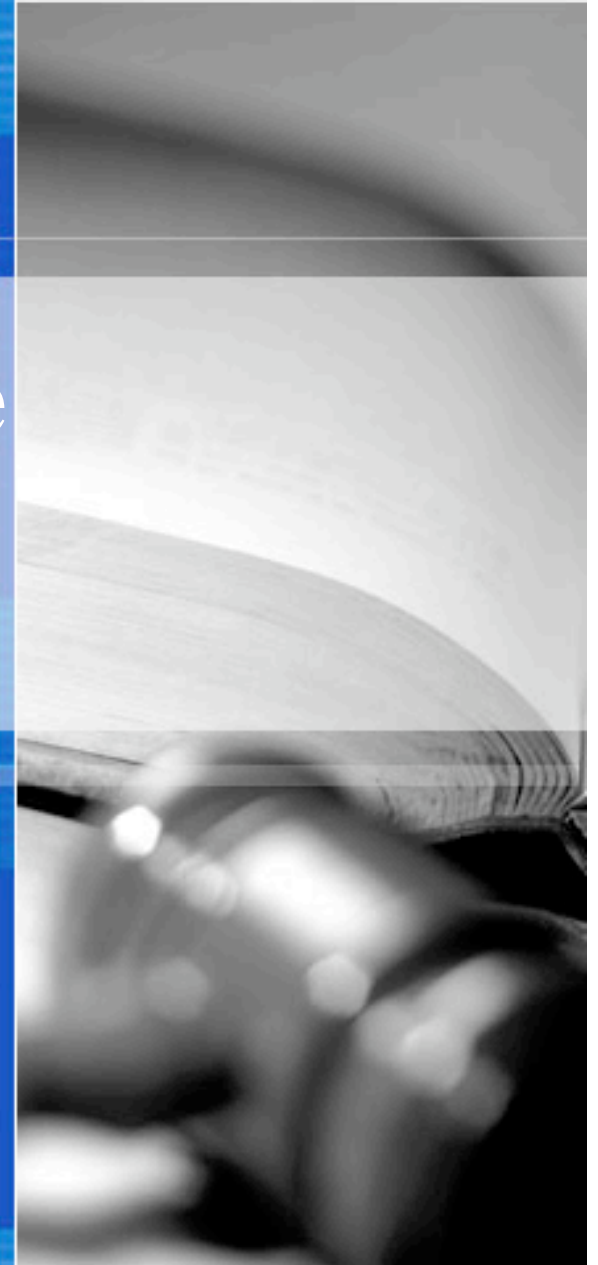


NIJ

# National Institute of Justice Solving Cold Cases with DNA

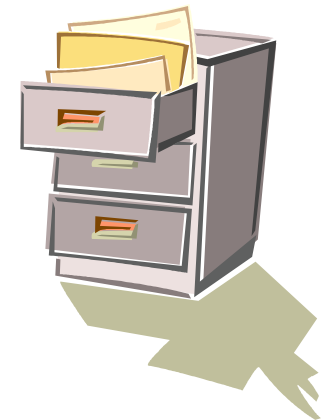
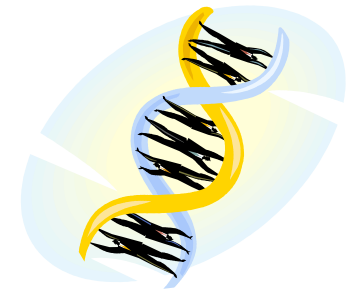
Chuck Heurich, Program Manager

Investigative and Forensic Sciences Division





# Solving Cold Cases with DNA Program





# Programs that involve Cold Cases

- Presidents DNA Initiative
  - Forensic DNA Casework Backlog Program
  - Training Program
    - Cold Case Regional Trainings
  - Missing Persons Program
- **Solving Cold Cases with DNA Program**
- Paul Coverdell National Forensic Science Improvement Program





# Cold Case Regional Trainings 2006

- 4 Regional Trainings
  - Midwest – Kansas City, MO (April 18 & 19)
  - South – Tampa, FL (June 8 & 9)
  - West – Phoenix ( Nov 2006)
  - North – Philadelphia (Sept 2006)
- 13 States represented at each
- Over 200 Cold Case investigators
- 2 days of Training
- All travel, lodging, food costs covered by DOJ



# Cold Case Regional Training Topics

- Elements of Success for Cold Case Units
  - Kansas City PD & Charlotte-Mecklenberg PD
- Cold Cases and the Crime Laboratory
  - Denver Crime Lab
- Law Enforcement Resources
  - ViCAP & NCIC
- Forensic Resources
  - IAFIS, CODIS, NIBIN



## Cold Case Regional Training Topics

- BTK Case Study 2006
- Green River Murders 2007
- Prosecutorial Issues and the Cold Case Investigation
  - Denver DA and Alameda County DA
- RCMP/NCMEC/NFA (Lunch presentations)
- Discuss 5 Unsolved Cases



# Cold Case Regional Training Topics

- Media relations
- Advanced Crime Lab Technologies
- Sexual assault cold cases and Units
- Forensic Anthropology
- Revisiting the Crime Scene



# Cold Case Trainings 2009

- Virginia Center for Policing Innovation (won a competitive award through the Forensic Science Training Development and Delivery Program)
- Four regional cold case trainings
- Richmond, Chicago, Portland, New Orleans
- Web-based “virtual cold case file”
- [http://www.vcpionline.org/course\\_description.asp?courseID=434](http://www.vcpionline.org/course_description.asp?courseID=434)





# NIJ Journal #260, July 2008



Cold Cases: Resources for Agencies,  
Resolution for Families

*by Charles Heurich*

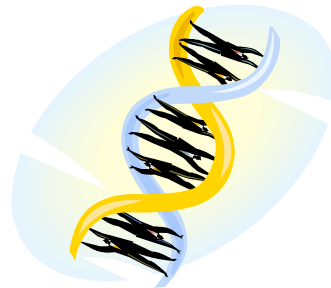
Cold Cases: Strategies Explored at  
NIJ Regional Trainings

*by Beth Schuster*

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/journals/260/welcome.htm>



# Solving Cold Cases with DNA Program





## Solving Cold Cases with DNA

- Originated in FY 2004 as a competitive grant program
- To provide funding to states and units of local governments to search, evaluate, select, and conduct DNA analysis on violent crime “cold cases” (i.e., old, unsolved cases) that have the potential to be solved through DNA testing
- In FY 2007 this evolved to UCR “Part 1” Violent Crimes (homicide, forcible rape, non-negligent manslaughter, robbery, and agg. assault)



# Cold Case Awards

- FY05      \$14.2M to 38 Agencies
  - FY07      \$8.5M to 21 Agencies
  - FY08      Up to \$16M to 42 Agencies
  - FY09      \$12M to 27 agencies
- 
- **OVER \$50M !!! Solely to Solving Cold Cases**





# 2005 Cold Case Program

- 10,128 Cases reviewed
- 2600 had Biological Evidence (26%)
- 2374 had DNA analysis performed (23% / 91%)
- 1473 resulted in DNA profiles (62%)
- 1269 profiles entered into CODIS (53%/72%)
- CODIS hits on 470 cases (37% of profiles entered)
- Over 60% of agencies reported requested stats in full.



# 2005 Cold Case Program

- Other stats, are they meaningful?
- DNA profiles were obtained in 13% of cases reviewed.
- Profiles were entered into CODIS in 11% of all cases reviewed.
- CODIS hits were obtained in 5% of the cases reviewed.
- What is the cost benefit? Is there one to solving a case?



## Success Story

- 2007 Massachusetts State Police award
- Outsourced 464 cases to a private DNA laboratory
- 186 cases yielded DNA profiles (40%)
- 170 cases had profiles eligible for CODIS (37%)
  - 54 hits to convicted offenders (32% - several hit to multiple cases)
  - 1 hit to another forensic case sample



Man Arrested In 9 Cold-Case Investigations - Milwaukee News Story - WISN Milwaukee - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.wisn.com/news/20773024/detail.html

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## Man Arrested In 9 Cold-Case Investigations

**Police: Victims All Women Linked By Same DNA**

POSTED: 8:14 am CDT September 7, 2009  
UPDATED: 4:00 pm CDT September 8, 2009

**MILWAUKEE** -- Milwaukee police have made an arrest in the investigation into several cold-case homicides.

[MPD Homicide Investigation Information, Timeline \(PDF\)](#)

- [12 News Talks To Father Of Serial Killer Victim](#)
- [Chief Says Good Police Work, Science Led Them To Suspect](#)
- [Former Girlfriend, Neighbors React To Serial Killer Suspect Arrest](#)
- [Family Members Reflect On Loss Of Loved Ones](#)

The nine victims were all women and are all linked to the same DNA profile.

WISN 12 News has confirmed that 49-year-old Walter E. Ellis was arrested Saturday in Fanklin.

According to the Milwaukee Police Department, they are talking with Ellis, a person of interest in connection with a number of cold-case homicides in Milwaukee.

"I'm shivering, I have goose bumps up my arm," said Chanita, a former girlfriend of Ellis.

She spoke to WISN 12's Kent Wainscott Monday through a closed screen

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- Walter Ellis Charged With 5 More Women's Deaths
- D.A. Opposes DNA Testing In Another Prostitute Murder
- Barber Shop Robbery Caught On Tape
- Walking Dogs In Hart Park May Soon Be Legal

start | Man Arrested In 9 Co... | Articles and Successe... | Presentations | 2009 IACP | 7:40 AM





April, 2009

DNA leads to suspect in 1970s Los Angeles serial killings - CNN.com - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.cnn.com/2009/CRIME/04/30/westside.killings/index.html?ref=newssearch

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## DNA leads to suspect in 1970s Los Angeles serial killings

updated 10:17 a.m. EDT, Fri May 1, 2009 Next Article in Crime »

READ VIDEO

By Alan Duke  
CNN

LOS ANGELES, California (CNN) -- A man who Los Angeles police believe raped and murdered dozens of women decades ago was arrested by cold case investigators this month after a computer matched his DNA to evidence from two killings in the 1970s.

1964 1971 1982 2009

John Floyd Thomas Jr. may have begun his killings as far back as 1955.

John Floyd Thomas Jr., 72, may have begun his killings as far back as 1955 and he could be one of the worst serial killers in United States history, according to Los Angeles Police Chief William Bratton.

"We have yet to reach the depths of what he has done," Bratton said Thursday.

Until his April 2 arrest, Thomas was a Los Angeles insurance adjuster. Police now call him the "Southland Strangler" -- named for the geographical section of Los Angeles County where they suspect he killed at least 30 women and raped many more.

Thomas, who sits in a Los Angeles jail, has been charged with two killings -- in 1972 and 1976 -- but prosecutors will likely add more cases when he faces arraignment on May 20, Bratton said.

While Thomas was arrested "a number of times between 1955 and 1978" for sex crimes and burglaries, detectives did not have the technology to identify him as a suspect when the region was terrorized by a series of killings then blamed on the "Westside Rapist," Bratton said.

Watch why the suspect may be L.A.'s most prolific serial killer »

Officials, using new computer databases and software, are now "looking to see what the patterns were," said Los Angeles Police Deputy Chief Charlie Beck.

"A lot of work has yet to be done," Beck said.

**STORY HIGHLIGHTS**

- Police say John Thomas Jr. may have begun killing as far back as 1955
- Thomas arrested April 2 and is charged with killing two women
- 72-year-old could be linked to dozens of other killings and assaults

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6	Message in a bottle follows girl home	

start DNA leads to suspect... Articles and Success... Presentations 2009 IACP 7:44 AM



# Success Stories

Lesson learned???

Getting profiles  
entered into  
CODIS in a timely  
manner can mean  
**EVERYTHING!!!**





# Success Stories

## SHARE YOURS!!!

Especially with your administration (and the press).

Nothing ensures the life of your cold case squad like the resolution you can provide to the victims and/or their families/loved ones.

It is VERY hard for Police Chiefs and politicians to dissolve these units with these advocates on your side!



# Contact Information

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Both Toes Down!