



## National Missing and Unidentified Persons (NamUs) Training Academies

Although electronic data systems exist for information about missing and unidentified deceased persons, there are many such databases and federally operated ones such as the National Crime Information Center that are not readily accessible to, or searchable by persons such as medical examiners, coroners, and other members of the public who need the information. The establishment of the web-based, public accessible *National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (namus.gov)* for both unidentified deceased persons (UID) and assumed alive missing persons (MP) has established, for the first time, a “One-Stop” data-system for all “participants” in the investigation of missing and unidentified deceased persons. Wide-spread use of this system could facilitate the location of missing persons who have died and the identification of deceased persons whose names and identities are unknown.

The ultimate goals of a program like this is promoting and facilitating of consistent data collection and sharing protocols along with an understanding of the potential benefits associated with solving missing and unidentified person’s cases nationally. ***Uniform collection, reporting and sharing of critical data regarding missing and unidentified persons in the United States*** can only be reached if this project succeeds in implementing a dissemination strategy that:

1. identifies and organizes all primary stakeholders and user groups
2. creates and trains a “network” of individuals willing and able to deploy this unique educational programming
3. enlists the support of investigative agencies nationally
4. partners with the post-secondary institutions whose responsibility it will become to sustain this research by educating and training the next generation of investigators.

### **Participants**

Academy participants will be nominated by the appropriate leadership of the various stakeholder organizations and put together in five-person state teams, forming *NamUs investigation training teams*. Training team membership and affiliation criteria would be as follows:

### **Law Enforcement Representative**

The law enforcement representative is a sworn officer within a federal/state/local law enforcement agency or department of public safety. This individual should have “training officer” status with experience in the investigation of missing persons, specifically adults. He/She should be an active member of their state, national or international professional organization (e.g., National Sheriffs Association [NSA], International Association of Chiefs of Police [IACP], etc.) and considered in-good-standing with their agency of employment with at least 5 years experience in the field of missing person’s investigation.

This member’s primary responsibilities will be to support NamUs by:

- a. verifying cases awaiting publication to NamUs

- b. follow-up with agencies regarding case “exclusions” and “follow-up” notes
- c. serving as a NamUs resource for law enforcement agencies within their state
- d. serving as a NamUs resource for other participant agencies within their state
- e. presenting at state and local medical examiner and coroner conferences
- f. attend NamUs meetings (as required)

#### **Medicolegal Death Investigator Representative**

The medicolegal death investigator representative is a Medical Examiner (ME), Coroner (C) or ME/C Investigator. This team member will be a member in-good-standing with, or certified by the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME), the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (IACME) and/or the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators (ABMDI) with at least 5 years (full-time) experience in the area of medicolegal death investigation.

This member’s primary responsibilities will be to support NamUs by:

- a. performing basic case clean-up in UID Crosswalk
- b. verifying cases awaiting publication to NamUs
- c. serving as a NamUs resource for Medicolegal agencies within their state
- d. serving as a NamUs resource for other participant agencies within their state
- e. presenting at state and local medical examiner and coroner conferences
- f. attending NamUs meetings (as required)

#### **Missing Persons Clearing House Representative**

The missing person’s clearing house representative is an employee of a state/local government agency responsible for the evaluation and distribution of missing person’s data, including “adults.” This team member will be considered in-good-standing with their employer and have at least 5 years (full-time) experience in the field of missing persons investigation.

This member’s primary responsibilities will be to support NamUs by:

- a. performing basic case clean-up in MP Crosswalk
- b. verifying cases awaiting publication to NamUs
- c. interact with state law enforcement agencies to verify case details
- d. serving as a NamUs resource for missing persons agencies within their state
- e. presenting at state and local conferences
- f. attending NamUs meeting (as required)

#### **Forensic Science Representative**

The forensic science representative is considered an “expert” in their field of forensics and a member in-good-standing with the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) from one of the following AAFS membership sections: Criminalistics, Odontology, Pathology/Biology, and/or Physical Anthropology. This individual will hold appropriate status (i.e., diplomat) within their chosen specialty and have knowledge of various scientific identification techniques including; DNA, fingerprint, dental and radiographic applications in the

identification of missing persons. He/She should be considered in-good-standing with professional organizations such as the International Association of Identification (IAI) or the American Board of Criminalistics (ABC), with documented experience within their specialty area equal to 5 years full-time employment within the past 10 years.

This member's primary responsibilities will be to support NamUs by:

- a. verifying case specific forensic details prior to NamUs publication
- b. serving as a NamUs resource for Medicolegal agencies within their state
- c. serving as a NamUs resource for Law Enforcement agencies within their state
- d. serving as a NamUs resource for clearing house representative(s) within their state
- e. presenting at national, state and local forensic conferences
- f. attend NamUs meetings (as required)

### **Victim Advocate Representative**

The victim advocate representative is a paid or volunteer member of at least one of the "recognized" not-for-profit state or national missing person's organizations (e.g., DOE Network, National Center for Missing Adults [NCMA], etc.). This individual has a proven track-record of professional conduct while working with the many "participants" in the investigation, location and identification of missing persons. In addition, this person shall understand the personal and professional diligences required, endure investigations of this type and complexity. He/She should be considered in-good-standing with their community and local law enforcement agency or agencies.

This member's primary responsibilities will be to support NamUs by:

- a. performing basic case clean-up in UID Crosswalk
- b. verifying cases awaiting publication to NamUs
- c. serving as a NamUs resource for victim families
- d. serving as a NamUs resource for other advocate agencies within their state
- e. presenting at state and local missing persons conferences
- f. attend NamUs meetings (as required)

Participant's expenses to attend the training academy will be paid by a cooperative agreement with the Department of Justice with certain federal limitations (e.g. federal per diem rates).

### **There will be two academies in 2010:**

Midwestern Academy in St. Louis, MO – July 19-21, 2010.

Southwestern Academy in Albuquerque, NM – November 8-10, 2010.

### **Three academies in 2011:**

Northeastern Academy in Baltimore, MD – Dates TBA

Southeastern Academy in Atlanta, GA or Nashville, TN – Dates TBA

Western Academy Los Angeles, CA – Dates TBA