

2026 Forensic Science, Law and Public Service Conference

JUNE 16 • TUESDAY		
7:30am – 3:00pm	Registration	Stonebridge Foyer
8:30am – 9:50am	Welcoming Remarks/Opening Keynote <i>Speakers: Nicole Martin, Gooding Trampas</i> Texas Rangers – DPS Detectives: From Investigation to Prosecution This Texas-focused session provides an inside look at the roles and responsibilities of the Texas Ranger Division and how Rangers collaborate with local, state, and federal partners. Attendees will gain a step-by-step understanding of how a case progresses from initial response through prosecution. The presentation highlights key investigative stages, including crime scene processing, evidence collection, and the integration of information gathered through interviews and documentation. By examining how physical evidence aligns with investigative findings, participants will learn how Rangers reconstruct events to establish a clear, accurate narrative that supports successful prosecution.	Stonebridge Ballroom
9:50am – 10:10am	Break	
10:10am – 11:10am	Breakout Session 1A: From Trades to Teacher: Building your Teacher Toolbox (repeats at 11:20am) <i>Speakers: Carrie Chandler</i> Transitioning from industry expert to classroom educator requires more than content knowledge — it requires the right instructional tools. This engaging professional development session is designed specifically for former skilled trade professionals who are now shaping the next generation in public education. Participants will learn how to create a positive, productive classroom culture that reflects professionalism, high expectations, and increased student engagement. Teachers will get a crash course in unpacking curriculum standards, building aligned lesson plans, and implementing proven instructional practices that help meet the diverse needs of all learners. In addition, participants will strengthen their understanding of educator ethics and compliance to ensure safe, appropriate, and professional learning environments. By the end of this session, participants will leave with a practical, ready-to-use “teacher toolbox” filled with strategies, structures, and supports to confidently bridge their industry experience with instructional excellence.	Pedernales
10:10am – 11:10am	Breakout Session 1B: Trauma Informed Response and Interviews <i>Speakers: Tina Vitacco</i> Methods for interacting that prioritizes an understanding of the psychological, neurobiological, and emotional impact of trauma on victims.	Lavaca
10:10am – 11:10am	Breakout Session 1C - Shoe Imprint (T) <i>Speakers: Cassidy Byars, Casie Parish Fisher, MSc., PhD.</i> This workshop aims to review some key components in the identification of footwear impression to known sources. Participants will review shoe prints and discuss class and individual characteristics.	Sabine
11:10am – 11:20am	Break	
11:20am – 12:20pm	Breakout Session 2A: From Trades to Teacher: Building your Teacher Toolbox (repeat) <i>Speakers: Carrie Chandler</i> Transitioning from industry expert to classroom educator requires more than content knowledge — it requires the right instructional tools. This engaging professional development session is designed specifically for former skilled trade professionals who are now shaping the next generation in public education. Participants will learn how to create a positive, productive classroom culture that reflects professionalism, high expectations, and increased student engagement. Teachers will get a crash course in unpacking curriculum standards, building aligned lesson plans, and implementing proven instructional practices that help meet the diverse needs of all learners. In addition, participants will strengthen their understanding of educator ethics and compliance to ensure safe, appropriate, and professional learning environments. By the end of this session, participants will leave with a practical, ready-to-use “teacher toolbox” filled with strategies, structures, and supports to confidently bridge their industry experience with instructional excellence.	Pedernales

11:20am – 12:20pm	<p>Breakout Session 2B: Case Study - Burglary</p> <p><i>Speakers: Tina Vitacco</i></p> <p>This session examines a unique Texas burglary case involving a juvenile suspect who entered multiple habitations with the sole documented purpose of observing sleeping children. We will analyze the legal challenges of proving "intent to commit a felony, theft, or assault" when traditional criminal motives are absent. We will discuss the complexities of charging "Burglary of a Habitation" versus "Criminal Trespass" and the unique law enforcement response required for possible predatory and high-risk behaviors as well as possible mental health concerns.</p>	Lavaca
11:20am – 12:20pm	<p>Breakout Session 2C - Latent Fingerprint Processing</p> <p><i>Speakers: Cassidy Byars, Casie Parish Fisher, MSc., PhD.</i></p> <p>The purpose of this workshop is to discuss the the proper techniques of applying black powder and lifting fingerprints from nonporous surfaces. We will work through interactive activities that help students to understand and practice the process of lifting from beginning to end.</p>	Sabine
12:30pm – 1:30pm	<p>Lunch</p>	Stonebridge Foyer
1:30pm – 2:30pm	<p>Breakout Session 3A: AI in Criminal Justice Education: Bringing Learning to Life with AI Simulators</p> <p><i>Speakers: Robert Best</i></p> <p>Ready to transform your classroom from lecture-based learning to immersive, real-world application? This engaging breakout session is designed specifically for Texas Criminal Justice and Forensic Science CTE educators who want to elevate student learning through innovative, AI-powered experiences. In this hands-on session, you'll discover how AI simulators can bring criminal justice concepts to life—allowing students to step into the roles of investigators, forensic analysts, and legal professionals. These interactive tools provide meaningful opportunities for students to apply classroom knowledge across a wide range of topics, from crime scene investigation to courtroom procedures, in a way that is both rigorous and highly engaging. Participants won't just observe—they'll actively experience AI-driven simulations firsthand, gaining insight into how these tools can deepen understanding, increase student motivation, and support critical thinking skills. You'll also be guided through the process of creating your own classroom-ready simulators using accessible AI platforms such as MagicSchool AI, Gemini, SchoolAI, and more. The session includes ready-to-use templates, practical implementation strategies, and dedicated time to collaborate, brainstorm, and begin building your own custom simulation aligned to your curriculum. Whether you're new to AI or already experimenting with it, you'll walk away with concrete resources and a clear path to implementation. Bring a device (laptop, Chromebook, or tablet) to fully participate—this is an interactive, build-as-you-learn experience, not just a presentation. Join us to reimagine how students experience criminal justice education—where learning isn't just taught, it's lived.</p>	Pedernales
1:30pm – 2:30pm	<p>Breakout Session 3B: De-escalation</p> <p><i>Speakers: Tina Vitacco</i></p> <p>Primary goal of this presentation is to improve response to individuals in crisis who are behaving erratically.</p>	Lavaca
1:30pm – 2:30pm	<p>Breakout Session 3C: Spatter Matters! A Review of Bloodstain Pattern Analysis (repeats at 2:40pm)</p> <p><i>Speakers: Cassidy Byars, Casie Parish Fisher, MSc., PhD.</i></p> <p>Bloodstain pattern analysis is a key component in investigating crime scenes. This workshop will review key bloodstain pattern types as well as explore some of the science that can help solve a case. Participants will be able to review bloodstain patterns and analyze scenarios in which the stains were created.</p>	Sabine
2:30pm – 2:40pm	<p>Break</p>	
2:40pm – 3:40pm	<p>Breakout Session 4A: The Use of Practical Application Exercises in the Law Enforcement Classroom</p> <p><i>Speakers: Charles Wood</i></p> <p>This presentation will be focused on how to implement practical application exercises related to TEKS topics in the classroom to provide students with a deeper understanding of the topic of learning. This presentation will also focus on the importance of finding proper examples of techniques and tactics to use in the classroom so that correct information is passed on to the student for correct learning. It has been made apparent that some instructors within the Law Enforcement curriculum have little to no actual law enforcement career experience and are basing their method of instruction from information they are finding online such as YouTube and iCEV, for example. We have all heard that "just because it is on tv or online doesn't make it true." This also pertains to the information instructors are obtaining from the internet whether it be videos, text, etc. How do you trust what you are finding? I want to explore this topic with fellow instructors and plant a seed for them to verify information and seek out the best examples of information to pass on to students to promote a successful experience in their class and hopefully to promote a successful experience in a future career within law enforcement.</p>	Pedernales

2:40pm – 3:40pm

Session 4B: Case Study - Online Solicitation and Aggravated Sexual Assault

Lavaca

Speakers: Tina Vitacco

This session explores a high-stakes investigation where an adult offender traveled over 200 miles to commit an Aggravated Sexual Assault of a Child following online solicitation. We will analyze the digital evidence trail that linked the initial Online Solicitation of a Minor to the physical crime. Attendees will learn about the essential coordination between regional law enforcement agencies and the specific challenges of managing forensic evidence in a mobile-to-physical assault case.

2:40pm – 3:40pm

Session 4C: Spatter Matters! A Review of Bloodstain Pattern Analysis(repeat)

Sabine

Speakers: Cassidy Byars, Casie Parish Fisher, MSc., PhD.

Bloodstain pattern analysis is a key component in investigating crime scenes. This workshop will review key bloodstain pattern types as well as explore some of the science that can help solve a case. Participants will be able to review bloodstain patterns and analyze scenarios in which the stains were created.

4:00pm – 6:00pm

Networking Social

Stonebridge Foyer

JUNE 17 • WEDNESDAY

8:30am – 8:30am

Buses Depart Hilton Garden Inn for Rotating Tours @ 8:30AM SHARP!

8:45am – 10:45am

Rotating Tours (A) Forensic Anthropology and the Axial Skeleton, (B) Forensic Anthropology and the Appendicular Skeleton, (C) Postmortem Interval Estimation (PMI) and Forensic Archaeology**Station A: Forensic Anthropology and the Axial Skeleton**

Location: Grady Early Building

- Lecture on the Axial skeleton with hands-on laboratory component using the Texas State Donated Skeletal Collection (TXSTDSC).
- Sex estimation from the human skeleton using the axial skeleton (Discussion and hands-on lab activity).
- Age estimation from the human skeleton using the axial skeleton (Discussion and hands-on lab activity).
- Discussion of Forensic Anthropology Interpretation from the axial skeleton.

Station B: Forensic Anthropology and the Appendicular Skeleton

Location: Archaeology Lab

- Lecture on the Appendicular skeleton with hands-on laboratory component using the Texas State Donated Skeletal Collection (TXSTDSC).
- Stature estimation from the human skeleton using the appendicular skeleton (Discussion and hands-on lab activity).
- Trauma interpretation from the from the human skeleton using the appendicular skeleton (Discussion and hands-on lab activity).
- Discussion of Forensic Anthropology Interpretation from the appendicular skeleton.

Station C: Postmortem Interval Estimation (PMI) and Forensic Archaeology

Location: Forensic Anthropology Research Facility (FARF)

- Lecture on PMI estimation in the field with resources of FARF
- Field Exercise for location and recovery of surface scattered skeletal remains and material evidence at FARF
- Field Exercise for 3D scanning and photogrammetry models of clandestine burials.

11:00am – 1:00pm

Rotating Tours (A) Forensic Anthropology and the Axial Skeleton, (B) Forensic Anthropology and the Appendicular Skeleton, (C) Postmortem Interval Estimation (PMI) and Forensic Archaeology

1:00pm – 2:00pm

Lunch

2:15pm – 4:15pm

Rotating Tours (A) Forensic Anthropology and the Axial Skeleton, (B) Forensic Anthropology and the Appendicular Skeleton, (C) Postmortem Interval Estimation (PMI) and Forensic Archaeology

JUNE 18 • THURSDAY

8:30am – 10:30am

Closing General Session

Stonebridge Ballroom
