Issue 04

October 2026

VFSAAA Board of Directors

President's Notes



Sept 21 2026: 118th Session Begins
Nov 20 2026: 118th Session Graduates
Nov 20 2026: Board Meeting (in person)

2026-2027 Board Members

Big Thank You to all our alumni who came to Virginia Beach for Retraining in August. There were some great case studies, updates and always a pleasure to see everyone at the nightly socials!

At the 2026 annual retraining, a new board was sworn in:

President: Andrea Feldman (89th Session)
1st Vice President: Robby Richardson (89th Session)
2nd Vice President: Mike East (87th Session)
Treasurer: Heather Marshall (86th Session)
Secretary: Mark Garman (48th Session)
Sgt at Arms: Marilyn Durham (86th Session)
Immediate Past President: Sam Shumate (77th Session)
Legal Advisor: Rick Conway (4th Session)
Forensic Consultant: Jeff Dwyer (64th Session)

Eastern Director: Karyn Buhrman (72nd Session)
Central Director: Steve Stockman (54th Session)
Northern Director: Zach King (89th Session)
Western Director: Justin Rothgeb (109th)

https://vfsaaa.org/boardofdirectors/

Congrats to Sarah Dwyer, who was honored with an Honorary Membership to the Alumni Association.

-Andrea Feldman
VFSAAA President, 89th Session



As always, if you are interested in more Academy merch the website is:

https://vfsaaa.org/vfsaaa-merchandise-store-/

Email me (afeldma@gmu.edu) or Mike East (meast@goochlandva.us) for the password

If you (or a friend) would like to be featured in an upcoming newsletter please email me!

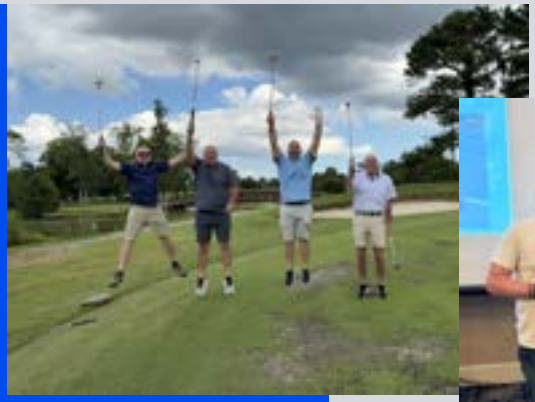
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President's Notes

RETRAINING 2026



















Issue 04

October 2026

VFSAAA Board of Directors

President's Notes

Alumni Highlight:

Forensic Tech Danielle Burch
115th Session



Danielle grew up in Dale City (Prince William County). She went to NOVA before starting her career with Waynesboro PD in 2011 before moving on to the Augusta County Sheriff Office.

Danielle currently serves as one of the first civilian evidence techs in Albemarle County



What was your first scene after academy graduation?

A sexual assault at the Royal Inn

Most important take away from the Academy:

There are so many things I learned during my session at the academy that I could just go on and on about. I had the great pleasure of being taught by this amazing staff at The Virginia Forensic Science Academy and meet some of the greatest people that I will forever call my family. The most important though, is I have learned to trust my gut, rely of what I have been taught, document EVERYTHING!!!!, I am always ready to learn new things, and lastly, I am pretty dang good at my job.

Oh also, one Daulton equals six feet😊

.

Why CSI?

My entire life I have been drawn to murder mysteries, crime documentaries, any kind of puzzle. I started in law enforcement in the records departments processing all the lovely paperwork, reading officer reports to merge, a lot of times talking to victims, victim's families, sometimes offenders, and various other people. Then you start hearing the stories from the officers or detectives that have just come from a scene. All of it would make the wheels turn in my head, wanting an opportunity to learn, see, work a crime scene. In 2022 that opportunity finally came when our departments first civilian graduated the Forensic Science Academy and took on the responsibility of training me. There is so much to working a crime scene for me. I go in knowing I am getting ready to encounter what could be and probably is the worse day of a person's life. If I can take my knowledge, my training, my experiences into that scene with respect and compassion to make any part of the situation the tiniest bit easier for the victims, their families, or friends during and after the scene has been worked then I am happy to be called at any time day or night. To be apart of piecing together what has transpired, work the crime scene, collect the evidence, proper packaging, documenting to the standards I have been taught and hold myself to, and if it helps make someone be held accountable for their actions or help exonerate someone. That is truly an indescribable feeling.

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President's Notes

Alumni Highlight:

Master Detective Chris Velasquez
110th Session



Chris grew up in Joshua Tree, California. He joined the Army and served as an infantryman in the 10th Mountain Division. Chris deployed twice to Afghanistan during his time in the Army.

Chirs worked for Petersburg Bureau of Police for approximately a year and a half before joining the Colonial Heights Police.

What was your first scene after academy graduation?

My first major crime scene after I graduated from the Forensic Academy was a homicide

Most important take away from the Academy:

The most important thing I learned from the Forensic Academy is the importance of attention to detail, objectivity, and preserving the integrity of evidence throughout an investigation. Even the smallest piece of evidence can make a significant difference in a case, so it is essential to follow proper procedures, document findings accurately, and maintain the chain of custody. I also learned the importance of remaining unbiased and allowing the evidence to speak for itself rather than letting assumptions influence conclusions. Ultimately, the academy reinforced that forensic work requires patience, professionalism, and a strong commitment to truth and justice.

Why CSI?

I've always been drawn to the idea of solving mysteries and figuring out the truth behind what happened. CSI and investigations interest me because they combine critical thinking, attention to detail, and problem-solving. I like the idea of looking beyond what's obvious, connecting the pieces of evidence, and giving a voice to people who may not be able to speak for themselves. What really draws me to the field is the opportunity to make a difference by helping bring answers, truth, and justice to difficult situations.

What is your favorite snack on a crime scene?

Probably trail mix or beef jerky!

VIRGINIA FORENSIC SCIENCE ACADEMY

Alumni Association

VFSAAA Annual Meeting Minutes

To: VFSAAA
Date: November 20th, 2026
From: Mark E. Garman/Secretary
Re: VFSAAA Annual Meeting Minutes

SECRETARY'S NOTE BECAUSE THERE WAS ONLY ONE RECORDER IN USE DURING THE MEETING, THE SIZE OF THE VENUE, THE VOLUME OF THOSE SPEAKING, AND THE BACKGROUND NOISE, SOME COMMENTS COULD NOT BE HEARD. WHEN THIS OCCURRED IT IS NOTED IN THE MINUTES.

Executive Board:

President	Andrea Feldman	
1st Vice President	Robby Richardson	
2nd Vice President	Vacant	
Treasurer	Heather Marshall	
Secretary	Mark Garman	
Sergeant-at-Arms	Marilyn Durham	
Immediate Past President	Sam Shumate	
Legal Consultant	Rick Conway	*ABSENT*
DFS Consultant	Jeff Dwyer	

Regional Directors:

Northern Director	Zack King
Eastern Director	Karyn Buhrman
Western Director	Justin Rothgeb
Central Director	Mike East

Committees:

Derek Richards	Benson Committee
Eric Deel	Audit Committee
Alison Fox	Nominating Committee
Marilyn Durham	Memorial Committee

Others Present:

Jason Austin	Member/DFS Instructor
Bryan McIntee	Member/DFS Instructor
Tiffany Alston	VFSA Admin

The meeting was called to order by President Andrea Feldman at approximately 11:00 am.

A quorum was established by SGT-at-Arms Marilyn Durham.

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President Feldman asked for a moment of silence for all members who passed during the previous year.

Secretary's Report:

The Meeting Minutes from June 12th, 2026, Board Meeting were presented to the membership by Mark Garman, Secretary. This was done by posting them on our website, www.vfsaaa.org. There were no questions or comments on the June 2026 Minutes.

A motion was made to approve the June 2026 Board of Director's Meeting Minutes. A second was also made. The motion passed unanimously. There were no abstentions, objections, or dissenting votes.

Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer's Report below was presented by Heather Marshall, Treasurer.

VIRGINIA FORENSIC SCIENCE ACADEMY

Alumni Association

VIRGINIA FORENSIC SCIENCE ACADEMY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Treasurer's Report June 11, 2026 through September 4, 2026

Heather Marshall, Treasurer

Previous Available Balance: from Treasurer's Report June 10, 2026				**$ 31,744.74**
Expenditures				
6/4/26	Bank	BOA (Commercial checks-new address)	$ 150.66	
6/4/26	Bank	BOA (Deposit tickets-new address)	$ 79.25	
6/12/26	CC	Delta Hotels (2026 conference payment)	$ 2,500.00	
6/15/26	CC	Jason's Deli (board meeting)	$ 272.00	
6/16/26	1576	Mark Garman (Network solutions-test)	$ 45.19	
6/22/26	1577	Jeff Dwyer (legacy reimbursement)	$ 318.94	
8/7/26	CC	Marked Promo (Tumbler order)	$ 390.00	
8/24/26	CC	Delta Hotels (2027 1st conference payment)	$ 2500.00	
8/27/26	CC	Delta Hotels (final 2026 conference payment)	$ 5259.14	
8/28/26	CC	Amazon (Binditek clear report covers)	$ 74.19	
9/1/26	CC	Shenandoah Trophies (merchandise)	$ 1495.98	
9/1/26	CC	Virginia SCC annual payment	$ 25.00	
		Total Debits		-$ 13,110.35
		Balance (after debits)		**$ 18,634.39**
Income				
6/15/26	Deposit (Paypal transfer)		$ 5,500.00	
6/23/26	Deposit		$ 980.00	
8/25/26	Deposit		$ 2250.00	
9/4/26	Deposit (Paypal transfer)		$ 8,000.00	
		Total Deposits		$ 16,730.00
		Balance (after deposits)		**$ 35,364.39**
Legacy Fund (117th)				$ 2517.32
Benson				$ 906.95
CD Balance				**$ 7,157.80**
		Total Funds		**$ 39,097.92**

Heather added that all the bills for the Delta for 2026 were paid and that the deposit for the 2027 seminar has already been paid. Additionally, our CD is making money and a check was issued to the Benson Fund.

A motion was made to approve the September 2026 Treasurer's Report. A second was also made. The motion passed unanimously. There were no abstentions, objections, or dissenting votes.

Old Business:

There was no old business.

New Business:

VFSA Class Recognition:

Jeff Dwyer recognized the graduates from the 116th and 117th Sessions of the VFSA.

116th Session	
Robert E. Allen III	Roanoke City Police Department
Daniel E. Clore	Louisa County Sheriff's Office
Krystal A. Collins	Montgomery County Sheriff's Office
Morgan N. Davis	Colonial Heights Police Department
Charles J. Elliott	Hanover County Sheriff's Office
Peter W. Griffenkranz	Richmond Police Department
Robert F. Herget	Smithfield Police Department
Matthew D. Meadows	Virginia State Police – Division III
Ronnie M. Pearce, Jr.	Virginia State Police – Division V
Dominic V. Torrice, Jr.	Stafford County Sheriff's Office
Michael R. Vandiford, Jr.	Southampton County Sheriff's Office
Nicholas P. Wood	Goochland County Sheriff's Office
117th Session	
Dwight D. Barnes, Jr.	Chincoteague Police Department
Elijah S. DeAtley	Harrisonburg Police Department
Kyle G. Gosney	Rockbridge County Sheriff's Office
Tyler T. Harding	Brunswick County Sheriff's Office
Logan J. Houston	Virginia State Police – Division V
Kayla D. Irizarry	Metro Transit Police Department
Bradley M. Johnson	Smyth County Sheriff's Office
Ethan J. Kolonoski	Newport News Police Department
Dale K. Roehrig	Arlington County Police Department
Abigail K. Shorkey	Manassas City Police Department

Committees:

Audit Committee:

Treasurer Heather Marshall reported that the 2026 Audit was done prior to Retraining by Eric Deel. The 2026 Annual Audit Report from Eric Deel, Audit Committee member/VSP is attached below.

To: Secretary, Mark Garman

From: Eric Deel, Virginia State Police

Date: August 11, 2026

Re: VFSAAA August 2025 to August 2026 Audit

On Tuesday August 11, 2026, an audit of the financial records and legacy funds for the Virginia Forensic Science Academy Alumni Association (VFSAAA) was conducted by members Heather Marshall and Eric Deel. Treasurer, Heather Marshall, presented records from August 22, 2025 through August 11, 2026 for review. All financial records were found to be in order and accurate.

/s/ Heather Marshall

Signature: Heather Marshall

Signature: Eric D. Deel

Cc: Heather Marshall
Eric Deel

Bylaws Committee:

Mark Garman, Secretary/Bylaws Committee member, gave the following report to membership.

Our Bylaws need to be updated because of the change of address for the DFS, the VFSA, and the VFSAAA. The new address is 8850 Times Dispatch Blvd Suite #100 Mechanicsville, VA 23116. There were also some minor grammatical issues to be corrected. The updates were posted on our website, www.vfsaaa.org , to be reviewed by the membership within the time limits required by our Bylaws.

A motion was made to approve the Bylaw changes. A second was also made. The motion passed unanimously. There were no abstentions, objections, or dissenting votes.

Mark advised that he would post updated Bylaws on our website, www.vfsaaa.org .

Membership Ethics Committee:

Mark Garman, Secretary/Membership Ethics Committee member, gave the following report to the membership.

The Membership Ethics Committee investigated an incident involving member Justin Sigmon. Sigmon was arrested in May of 2023 for the abusive sexual contact of a minor.

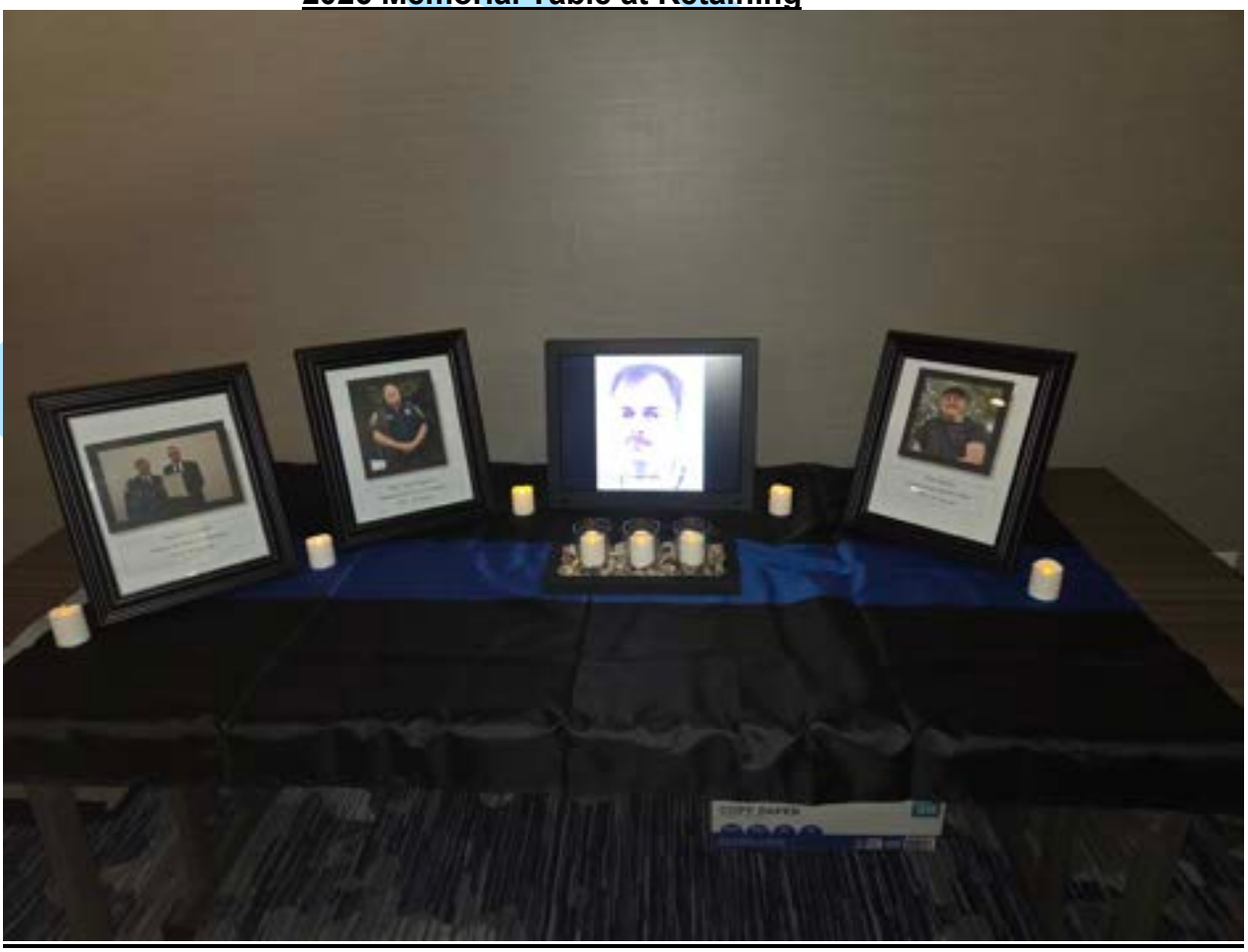
The incident occurred on a cruise ship and Sigmon was arrested in Miami FL when the ship docked. Sigmon was convicted in November 2023. Sigmon served his sentence and was released prior to February 2025. In March 2026 Sigmon was advised of the Committee's investigation and the that Committee would recommend to the Board that his membership in the VFSAAA be revoked. The delay in advising Simon of the investigation was a result of our Bylaws allowing a member to address the Board and the membership at Retraining in reference to the allegations. As Sigmon was incarcerated, that would not be possible for him to do so. In email conversations between Rick Conway, Legal Consultant and Committee Chairperson, and Sigmon in March of 2026, Sigmon said he was resigning from the VFSAAA. Rick advised him that his resignation would not be accepted and that the Committee would still recommend his revocation of membership to the Board. During the June 2026 Board Meeting the Board revoked Sigmon's membership in the VFSAAA.

There were no questions or comments by the membership.

Memorial Table for Retraining:

Marilyn Durham, SGT-at-Arms and Committee Chairperson, asked the membership to check the Memorial Table. She said that she also is still looking for photographs of deceased members.

2026 Memorial Table at Retaining



Sales Committee:

A report was given by President Feldman. She reported that sales were going well and listed several new items for this year.

Andrea also reminded the membership of the Sales Page on our website, www.vfsaaa.org , where various items can be ordered directly via link to Shenandoah Awards. The password can be obtained from any Board member.

Benson Fund:

Derek Richards, Committee Chairperson, said that the current IRS issues concerning Benson's charitable status are close to being resolved.

He said that Benson's balance was approximately $1330.00 but a $275.00 payment was due to the IRS.

Attached is Benson's Banking Statement prior to Retraining.

UNITED BANK

United Processing Center
P.O. Box 393
Charleston, WV 25322-8393

285 W18493REG09012607375 13 000000000 279671 002

DONALD C BENSON MEM SCHOLARSHIP FUND
INC
8293 MARY BALL RD
LANCASTER VA 22503-2517

Account Number: [redacted]
Statement Date: 08/31/2026
Page: 1 of 2

Customer Care Information

Phone: 800.327.9862
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 393 Charleston, WV 25322-6393
Visit Us Online: BankWithUnited.com

Important Message

We've updated both the United Bank Consumer and Business Terms and Conditions, with changes **effective September 1, 2026**. Here are a few of the most significant changes:

- **Account Security and Fraud Prevention:** We added new terms that allow for quicker action if we detect potentially unauthorized or fraudulent transactions.
- **Communications and Alerts:** We updated how we can communicate with you about your account, including automated fraud and security alerts.
- **Dispute Resolution and Arbitration:** We updated the dispute resolution process to require that we attempt to resolve disputes informally before initiating arbitration or a lawsuit.

Read the updated agreement at **BankWithUnited.com/terms**. You may request a paper copy of the updated terms by calling **Customer Care at 800.327.9862**.

CHECKING PLUS - NON-PROFIT **Account Number:** [redacted]

Balance Summary

Beginning Balance as of 08/01/26	**$481.50**
+ Deposits and Credits (1)	$0.04
- Checks Posted (0)	$0.00
- Withdrawals and Debits (1)	$10.00
Ending Balance as of 08/31/26	**$471.54**
Number of Days in Statement Period	31
Low Balance	$481.50
Average Balance	$481.50
Average Collected Balance	$481

Debits

Date	Description	Withdrawals
Aug 31	SERVICE CHARGE MAINTENANCE FEE	-$10.00

Website:

Mark Garman, Secretary, reported that our website, www.vfsaaa.org was up to date and is constantly a work in progress. He asked members to check the site and forward any suggestion or corrections. He also asked the membership to contact him ASAP if they notice any website issues.

PayPal:

Mark Garman, Secretary, reported that PayPal continues to work well for the Association. It is a work in progress and will continue to grow. Additionally, he reported that as of this meeting approximately $7,000.00 in payments, sales, dues, registration, and vendors were made using PayPal

Retraining Exploration Committee:

Jeff Dwyer, DFS Consultant, reported that the contract for having the 2027 Retraining Seminar at the Delta has already been signed.

Retraining:

Jeff Dwyer, DFS Consultant, stated that a big part of the success of the educational portion of Retraining was the multiple graduates who stepped up and volunteered to give presentations. He emphasized the importance of this towards keeping future Retraining Seminars successful and that several members have already contacted him hoping to make presentations next year.

The Dr. Paul Ferrara Member of the Year Award:

Marilyn Durham, SGT-at-Arms and Committee chairperson, reported that no awards were given for the Dr. Paul Ferrara Member of the Year Award at Retraining 2026. She said she needs help from the members in locating possible awardees.

Bob Zinn, Life Member, suggested that Regional Directors get more involved in locating possible awardees.

Social Committee:

Zack King, Northern Director and Committee Chairperson, reported that the Social was all set. He indicated that there would be an open bar for beer and wine. There will be a cash bar for other drinks. He said that several tickets were still available. He advised the members that the cost for the VFSAAA was approximately $90.00 per person and the member cost was $30.00 per person.

Raffle Committee:

Justin Rothgeb, Western Director and Committee Chairperson, reported that raffle tickets were still available and would be sold up to the drawings at the Social. He said that over $700.00 in tickets has already been sold.

Vendor:

Mike East, Central Director and Committee Chairperson, reported there were seven vendors at Retraining this year. He asked for members to thank them for being there, particularly Grimm Forensics, formally Evident Crime Scene Products, who makes a yearly donation for Retraining.

Information on the vendors who were at Retraining in 2026 will be posted on our website, www.vfsaaa.org. Those vendors were, Evident Crime Scene Products, Foster+

DRAFT

Freeman, Arrowhead Forensics, Trancite Logic Systems, Grimm Forensics, Aftermath, and Spacesaver Storage Solutions.

Dan Grinnan Fall Classic Golf Outing:

Karyn Buhrman, Eastern Director and Committee Chairperson, said the event went well.

2026 Golf Outing



Novelty T/shirt: Karyn Buhrman, Eastern Director and Committee Chairperson, said that there were several novelty T/shirts left to purchase.

Hospitality Night:

Karyn Burhman, Eastern Director and Committee Chairperson, said the event went well.

President's Newsletter:

President Feldman asked members for help with President's Notes newsletter. The newsletter is sent out after each meeting. She was looking for outstanding achievements by members to be acknowledged, new equipment, and interesting cases.

Nominating Committee:

Mark Garman, Secretary, filled in for Alison Fox, Nominating Committee Chairperson, who could not be present.

There was one nomination for Honorary membership in the VFSAAA. The letter attached below was previously posted on our web site www.vfsaaa.org .

DRAFT

COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCE

CENTRAL LABORATORY
A Nationally Accredited Laboratory
dfs.virginia.gov

8850 Times Dispatch Boulevard, Suite 100
Mechanicsville, Virginia 23116
(804) 786-4707 FAX (804) 746-4464

June 11, 2026

To: VFSAAA Nominating Committee

Re: VFSAAA Honorary Membership Nomination for Sarah K. Dwyer

During the 81st Session of the Virginia Forensic Science Academy in the spring of 2012, Ms. Dwyer began the tradition of offering a homecooked meal to the students of Academy sessions. I can still remember how she brought up the idea... pointing out how these students have spent the last several weeks either eating out or cooking in their small hotel kitchens. Since then, she has served heaping portions of homemade spaghetti and desserts, at our home, to 28 of the 36 sessions that have attended from the spring of 2012 to the fall of 2025. Four sessions missed out due to COVID and another four, well, the timing just did not work out for the Dwyer family but the students were fed nonetheless (two cookouts hosted by the Stockman family and two dinners out hosted by the Dwyer family).

At Annual Retraining, Ms. Dwyer presented to the group in 2014 and in 2015 created the novelty T-shirt design in which she spearheaded the ordering and distribution of customized shirts commemorating the 40th anniversary of the event.

Additionally, Ms. Dwyer has been in the field of Forensic Science for 22 years beginning as an Evidence Technician with the Chesapeake Police Department. She then became a Latent Fingerprint Examiner with the Virginia Department of Forensic Science (DFS). While at DFS, she became the first Latent Fingerprint Examiner in Virginia to defend the science of fingerprints in a Daubert hearing in Federal Court. Also, during her time at the Central Laboratory in Richmond she took part in Academy instruction for the 76th – 82nd sessions before leaving DFS for the Henrico County Police Division as a Senior Latent Print Examiner and where she is now the County's first civilian supervisor of the AFIS Unit. Ms. Dwyer is also a Certified Latent Print Examiner through the International Association for Identification (IAI) and serves on the Board of Directors for the Chesapeake Bay Division of the IAI.

I humbly nominate Sarah K. Dwyer for honorary membership in the Virginia Forensic Science Academy Alumni Association for BOTH her exemplary work in the field of forensic science and her unique continuous contributions to the Virginia Forensic Science Academy.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey W. Dwyer
Forensic Training Manager

A motion was made to approve the Honorary Membership for Sarah K. Dwyer in the VFSAAA. A second was also made. The motion passed unanimously. There were no abstentions, objections, or dissenting votes.

Mark then presented the slate for the 2026 2027 Board of Directors for the VFSAAA. The slate posted on our website, www.vfsaaa.org , in the required amount of time and is attached.

June 11, 2026

Andrea Feldman, President
Virginia Forensic Science Academy Alumni Association
8850 Times Dispatch Blvd.
Mechanicsville, VA 23116

Dear President Feldman,

As Chairman of the Nomination Committee and the Honorary Nomination Committee for the Board of Directors, I respectfully submit the following names to you and the members of the Virginia Forensic Science Academy Alumni Association for the 2026-2027 Board of Directors for consideration in the annual election at the Annual Membership Meeting to be held on September 9 through September 11, 2026, in Virginia Beach, VA.

Executive Board:

President	Andrea Feldman
1st Vice President	Robby Richardson
2nd Vice President	Greg Locke
Treasurer	Heather Marshall
Secretary	Mark Garman
Sergeant-at-Arms	Marilyn Durham

Regional Directors:
Below are the Regional Directors recommended by their respective regions:

Zack King	Northern Director
Karyn Buhrman	Eastern Director
Justin Rothgeb	Western Director
Mike East	Central Director

Honorary Membership:
- Sarah Dwyer

Sincerely,

Alison Fox
Digitally signed by Alison Fox
Date: 2026.06.11 10:45:09 -04'00'

Alison Fox, Nomination Committee Chairperson
Naval Criminal Investigative Service, Special Agent

Mark advised the Membership that Greg Locke, 2nd Vice President, resigned after the letter was posted and said that the position of 2nd Vice President was open. There was a nomination for Mike East, current Central Director, to serve as the 2nd Vice President. There were no other nominations for the position.

Mark advised that this left the position for Central Director open. There were three nominations for the position. They were George Vieira, Caleb Smith, and Stephen Stockman. Stephen Stockman was elected as the new Central Director.

There was a Motion to accept the slate for the 2026-2027 Board of Directors, including adding Mike East as the new 2ND Vice President and Stephen Stockman as the new Central Director. A second was also made. The motion passed by unanimous oral vote. There were no abstentions, objections, or dissenting votes.

The 2026-2027 Board of Directors was sworn in by Jeff Dwyer.

President Feldman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. A second was also made. The motion passed unanimously. There were no abstentions, objections, or dissenting votes.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:40 AM.

The next meeting of the VFSAAA will be a Board Meeting scheduled for November 20th, 2026, at approximately 11:30 AM after the graduation exercises of the 117th Session of the VFSA.

Mark Garman, Secretary _____

These Minutes were approved by the Board of Directors at the November 20th, 2026, Board Meeting.

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