Partnering With Schools in Challenging Economic Times

Bullying, sexual harassment and dating violence are critical public health and safety issues facing today’s youth. There have been recent mandates for school-based policies and programs to address such issues, as well as calls for additional research. Although partnerships among school representatives and researchers are critical for success, unprecedented budget and personnel shortages in schools, along with decreased research funding, bring significant challenges. This panel includes two researchers and two school program and policy representatives with broad experience working with and implementing research and intervention in schools. They will share their challenges and lessons learned along with creative opportunities for continuing to advance this important work.

Deborah S. Delisle, Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC

Jennifer Loudon, Director, Youth Development and Positive Behavior Support, Chicago Public Schools, Chicago, Illinois

Sabina Low, Assistant Research Professor, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona

Nan Stein, Senior Research Scientist, Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts

10:15 a.m. Plenary Panel

Protecting our Protectors: Using Science to Improve Officer Safety and Wellness

Each year, 100-200 law enforcement officers die in the line of duty. Last year, 177 officers lost their lives — a 16 percent increase from 2010. As Attorney General Eric Holder noted after this increase in fatalities, this is a devastating and unacceptable trend. NIJ has developed a robust research portfolio to improve officer safety and wellness and, ultimately, save lives. This panel will discuss some of NIJ’s most promising work to reduce shooting and traffic-related fatalities — consistently the leading causes of officer line-of-duty deaths — and improve officer wellness, which is inextricably linked with officer safety.

Bryan Vila, Professor, Washington State University, Spokane, Washington

Carrick Williams, Associate Professor, Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, Mississippi

Karen Amendola, Chief Operating Officer, Police Foundation, Washington, DC

John Violanti, Research Professor, University at Buffalo, State University of New York, Buffalo, New York

10:15 a.m. Concurrent Session

Novel Approaches to Resolving DNA Mixtures

DNA mixtures have the potential to be critical pieces of evidence, if they can be accurately separated. Current differential extraction techniques are labor-intensive and time-consuming, just as current mixture deconvolution in the analysis stage is difficult, if not impossible, in many cases. Despite advances in processes that improve laboratory throughput, forensic DNA mixture extraction and analysis remains a laborious art, with the high cost and effort often precluding timely reporting. In view of that limitation, NIJ is funding several projects with different approaches to achieving the goal of reducing the time and cost of processing DNA mixture samples. This panel will feature projects that seek to separate DNA mixtures in the laboratory phase via processing methods and in the analysis via a software interpretation system.

Aaron LeFebvre, Associate Lab Director, Orchid Cellmark, Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas

Cassandra Calloway, Assistant Staff Scientist, Children’s Hospital & Research Center at Oakland, Oakland, California

Catherine M. Grgicak, Instructor, Boston University School of Medicine, Boston, Massachusetts