



OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD CORDRAY



CRIMINAL JUSTICE VOL.2
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COVER STORY



Audio/video lab assists agencies throughout Ohio

By Mary Alice Casey

It happens on TV every night: An analyst zeroes in on the face of a suspect captured on a video camera half a mile away. Another isolates the hushed conversation of two people conspiring amid the din of a crowded restaurant. Yet another zooms in on the pupil of a murder victim to see a reflection of the murderer.

Good fodder for primetime? Sure. But the fact is, some pretty amazing feats are being accomplished at the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission's Forensic Audio/Video Lab. And its services are available at no cost to law enforcement throughout Ohio.

"We all know that crime shows are a stretch, and what they portray as possible in an audio/video lab such as ours is no exception," says OOCIC Executive Director Jeff Rossi. "But our analysts provide some great results for Ohio law enforcement. They've got state-of-the-art equipment and the know-how to enhance audio and video recordings, create still photos for quick distribution to the media and provide a lot of other services."

Others share Rossi's view. Some testimonials:

- FBI Special Agent Harry Trombitas says the lab's video enhancement work helped convict a bank robber who killed a Columbus police officer.
- Detective Ryan Allar of the Belmont County Sheriff's Office reports that a still photo the lab pulled from a grainy video was enough to draw a confession from a convict who robbed a motel at knifepoint.
- Anne Pennington, a detective with the Columbus Division of Police, says enhanced video of two murder suspects boarding a city bus and exchanging property with another rider helped prompt a confession from one of the suspects and the conviction of the other.



Forensic audio/video analyst Bryan Mott enhances a surveillance video that captured a robbery in progress. PHOTO BY BRAD DAUGHERTY

Established about eight years ago, the lab operates under the umbrella of the OOCIC, part of the Attorney General's Office, and is available to any local, state or federal law enforcement agency in the state.

This year, forensic audio/video analysts Brad Barkhurst, Bryan Mott and Megan Timlin have processed 800-plus items for more than 100 agencies using the lab's first-rate forensic audio/video tools.

"They'll work with you and get something done quickly if you need it for court or because of the severity of the crime," says Trombitas, who coordinates bank robbery investigations for the FBI in 12 Central Ohio counties. "They've always been really good about dropping what they're doing in order to pull images that I can get out to the media."

Trombitas used the lab's services to win a conviction in federal court for the 2005 robbery of a Fifth Third Bank branch in Columbus. The robber—wearing a ski mask and hooded jacket—entered the bank, spotted Columbus Police Officer Bryan Hurst working special duty behind the counter and immediately began firing at him. Hurst returned shots, striking the robber and prompting him to flee the bank empty-handed.

The bank's multiplex video system captured the scene on several cameras, producing footage that jumped from one angle to another. Lab analysts isolated the view from the camera showing the robber entering the bank, shoving people to the ground and firing on Hurst to create still photographs and a video presentation for use in court.

"We've been able to solve a number of bank robberies because of their work," Trombitas says. "They have far more capabilities than most law enforcement agencies do."

Trombitas, who also has access to the FBI's forensic audio/video lab in Quantico, Va., says the OOCIC lab is especially helpful when he needs a quick turnaround. Among other things, the lab has helped him determine the makes and models of getaway cars, establish the number of people in a vehicle and develop video presentations for court proceedings.

Although the lab's average turnaround time is

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CAPABILITIES OF OOCIC'S FORENSIC AUDIO/VIDEO LAB

- Forensic video and audio analysis and enhancement (digital and analog)
- Presentation videos for court proceedings
- Still prints from video
- Tape authentication
- Forensic animation
- Reconstruction of damaged tapes
- Prints from various media
- Prints from cell phone and digital cameras
- Video and audio duplication (digital and analog)
- CD duplication
- Format conversions

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S
LAW ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCE
An opportunity for state, county and municipal
criminal justice professionals to discuss trends and
solutions for keeping their communities safe
Oct. 13-14
Hyatt Regency, Columbus
Call (740) 845-2684 for more information

TWO DAYS IN MAY
Conference for victim advocates, lawyers and
law enforcement
May 16-17
Hyatt Regency, Columbus
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TDM@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov
or call (614) 644-1234

OHIO PEACE OFFICERS' MEMORIAL
Honoring Ohio's fallen peace officers
May 5
Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy, London

COMING IN 2011



FROM THE DESK OF THE OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL



Dear Colleagues,

One of the most enjoyable things about being Ohio's attorney general has been the opportunity to work alongside the great men and women who make up Ohio's law enforcement community and to get to know you better. In my last occasion to write to you in *Criminal Justice Update*, I want to convey how proud my staff and I are of the important work we accomplished with you.

In the face of tight budget times, we increased the convenience and availability of training. The Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy worked with other agencies to bring 110 regional training sessions to more than 5,000 law enforcement officers around the state this year. We also greatly expanded our eOPOTA online course offerings.

OPOTA recently was awarded Flagship Agency status by its national accrediting organization and, as you have seen, providing you with great customer service has been the academy's special focus.

At the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation, we respond promptly and professionally to crime scenes in every county. We have beefed up our capacity to analyze computer

crimes and made a multitude of improvements to the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway, ensuring this important tool is both powerful and easy to use.

We also sharply reduced BCI laboratory backlogs, allowing us to analyze DNA evidence from property crimes for the first time and to begin developing new protocols for sexual assault kit testing. The reduction in pending cases enabled us to expedite all local law enforcement requests for emergency processing of evidence, meaning that in some cases we've been able to turn around lab results within just a few days.

The changes we made in the break-in-service law are keeping officers on the streets rather than hanging them up in state bureaucracy.

Some of this progress stems from the law enforcement roundtables we held around the state. Our goal was to listen to you and respond to your needs, a process that was mutually beneficial.

For prosecutors, we provided two free training days on prosecuting capital cases this fall. More than 270 prosecutors attended. Many of you also have benefited from the work of our Special

Prosecutions Unit, which has assisted with some of your toughest cases, including homicides, child sexual abuse and public corruption.

Meanwhile, the extraordinary individuals who work with Ohio crime victims joined forces with us to confront such issues as human trafficking and domestic violence, helping us to make real strides on these problems.

My staff and I are working with members of the incoming administration to ensure a smooth transition. I have every confidence they will find ways to build on our successes and develop new approaches to help you do your best work.

I have enjoyed working with you and for you. I appreciate your service and dedication, and I am forever grateful for your friendship and consideration.

Sincerely,
Richard Cordray
Richard Cordray
Ohio Attorney General

IN THE COURTS



When force is necessary, know the standard and detail the incident

By John Green

The phrase "use of force" encompasses everything from overcoming passive resistance to employing deadly force. While many law enforcement officers will never have to use deadly force, most have or will need to use some type of force at times.

Officers should be familiar with constitutional precedent and write detailed reports of these incidents. While they often are guided by departmental policy in determining when and to what extent force may be used, constitutional standards will determine whether an officer may be subjected to civil or even criminal action resulting from the use of force.

The U.S. Supreme Court examined this issue in 1989 in *Graham v. Connor*. In that decision, the court held that the use of force must be judged using a standard of "objective reasonableness."

Recognizing that officers must make split-second decisions in rapidly developing and tense situations, the court said the question is whether an officer's actions in using force were "objectively reasonable" given the facts and circumstances confronting them without regard to their underlying intent or motivation.

Officers' reports must document and clearly articulate the facts surrounding the use of force and the situation leading up to it. They should avoid boilerplate language.

Critical points to include in the report are:

- Number of suspects versus officers
- Size of the suspect and the officer
- Verbal danger clues
- Physical danger clues
- Evidence of impairment
- Information known to the officer prior to the encounter

John Green is a legal instructor with the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy.



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COVER STORY



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Original tape submitted to lab



Original housing



Original tape in new housing

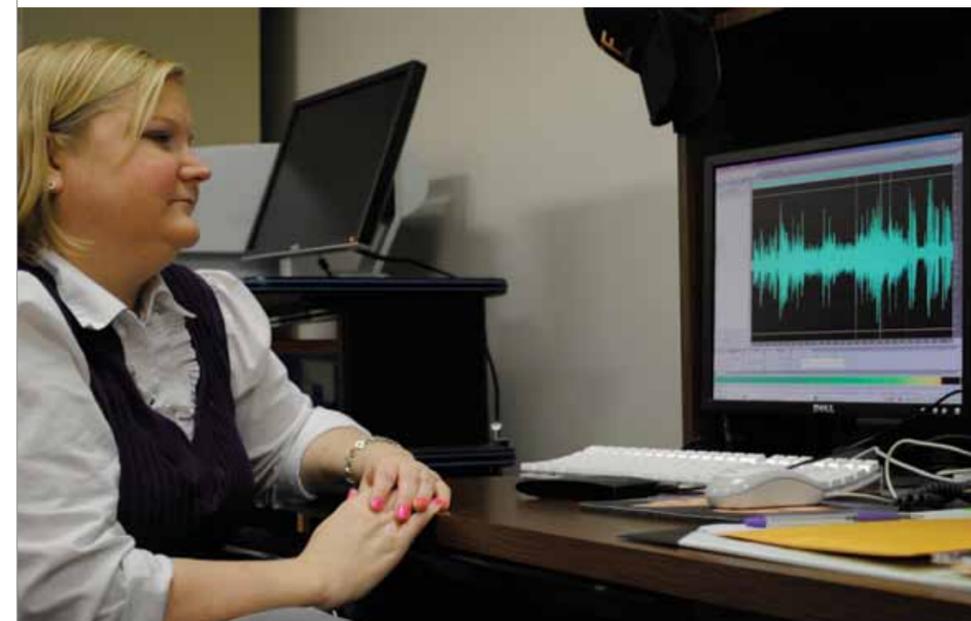
about 14 days, analysts sometimes are able to complete projects for law enforcement while they wait.

"They get you a work product as quickly as they can and then they dig deeper," says Allar, who provided the lab with a dark, low-contrast video from the armed robbery of a Red Roof Inn and walked out the same afternoon with still photos that eventually confirmed the suspect's guilt. "He knew he was done for (when he saw the photos) and cooperated fully."

Before Allar's department discovered the Forensic Audio/Video Lab, it relied on local copy shops for simple tasks and shipped items to costly vendors in more complicated cases.

"Departments like ours just don't have funds for those kinds of expenses in our budgets," he says. "Plus, this lab is close and very user friendly. I think a lot of cases are going to go down because of their work." ■

Mary Alice Casey is a senior editor for the Ohio Attorney General's Office.



Forensic audio/video analyst Megan Timlin listens to an interview she enhanced for an Ohio law enforcement agency.

PHOTO BY BRAD DAUGHERTY

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE LAB'S SERVICES

- Call the analysts at (614) 277-1000 if you have questions about lab capabilities and for information on how to submit evidence in person or by FedEx or UPS.
- In the case of digital video, get the native files and/or video player if possible. Copying the video to a DVD, CD or other type of media may not yield good results. The lab's analysts also can go on location to retrieve video.
- Arrange for files to be extracted from a digital video camera as soon as possible. Some equipment records over existing footage to save space.
- Don't play an old analog video that contains potential evidence. Let the lab convert it to a digital format first.
- Make sure the time stamp on the video camera is accurate and provide as much additional footage as possible. The analysts often find evidence (such as someone casing a business he later robs) outside the specified time span.
- Consider arranging for the analysts to testify in court if that will help your case.
- View "FBI: Caught on Camera" on YouTube for advice on surveillance camera issues. Low resolution, bad camera positioning, poor lighting and improper settings can sabotage efforts to obtain good video.

TRAININGS



Becoming fully skilled with your duty belt can save innocent lives — including yours

By Drake Oldham

Being familiar and competent with the equipment on your duty belt is one of the most important skills you can master as a law enforcement officer. There's no time to fumble with gear when a routine incident or citizen contact turns into an assault on the public, you or another officer.

Here are a few simple concepts that can improve your training and competency:

- Train like your life depends on it. Each time you handle your equipment is a training opportunity. If repetition is the mother of all skill builders, you need to make sure you're developing useful skills rather than reinforcing bad habits.

For example, don't cheat on the range by not securing your pistol in the holster. It may help you draw faster during the annual firearms qualification, but it could cost you your life when faced with a spontaneous lethal threat.

- Arrange the equipment on your duty belt so you can get to it with either hand. Use pouches and techniques that provide a secure grip on your

tools. Position gear to be accessible with either hand. Include two sets of cuffs, two flashlights, a baton on the right and oleoresin capicum spray on the left. Avoid putting anything bulky toward the back that could injure you in a fall. An "open top" magazine pouch allows for quick loading and is more secure than traditional pouches.

- Practice with your gear from awkward positions, such as while seated in your patrol car or lying on your back.
- Be polite and professional with everyone you meet, but have a plan if they decide to attack you. Your body won't go where your mind hasn't been. If a routine call were to escalate into a fight for your life, how would you respond? Visualize yourself recognizing the threat and winning the encounter.

We all know that departmental training budgets are tight. With a little time and creativity, you can provide your own quality training. ■

Drake Oldham has served in law enforcement for 13 years, including as a special response team member and patrol officer. A full-time instructor for the past five years, he specializes in firearms and tactical operations at the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy.

New courses bolster eOPOTA lineup

The Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy has added a record number of classes this year to its free, Web-based instruction program, eOPOTA. Fifty-three courses are now available.

Ohio peace officers had completed nearly 22,000 course sessions this year as of early November. The most popular sessions focus on Senate Bill 77, human trafficking and exploitation of senior citizens, all of which provided continuing professional training credit. OPOTA staff members also updated eOPOTA's courses on search and seizure and confessions and interrogations.

Courses added to eOPOTA in 2010 were:

- Animal Encounters
- De-escalating Mental Health Crises
- Graduated Driver Licensing
- Human Trafficking Awareness
- Human Trafficking Response
- Motorcycle Safety
- Operating a Vehicle Impaired Statutory Review
- Operation Street Smart drug series
- Senate Bill 77's Effect on Investigative Procedures

To access eOPOTA, visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/OHLEG.

Regional Gang Investigation Training

This course updates law enforcement on regional and state gang intelligence briefings, investigative resources, statute and federal prosecution options.

- **Jan. 10, Youngstown State University**
OPOTA Course 53-436-11-01

Tuition cost: Free
To register, visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/OPOTARegistration.

Electronic Surveillance Training

Eligible investigators and prosecutors will learn legal, administrative, practical and technical tactics to conduct wiretapping and electronic surveillance in this two-day course.

- **Jan. 18-19, London OPOTA Campus**
OPOTA Course 03-430-11-01

Tuition cost: \$130
To register, visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/OPOTARegistration.

Supervision in a Nutshell

This course features segments on supervising methods, legal issues, budget administration, motivation and field supervision.

- **Jan. 21, Richfield OPOTA Campus**
OPOTA Course 51-494-11-01

Tuition cost: Free
To register, visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/OPOTARegistration.

Ohio Gang Investigator Specialist Training

Participants will review case studies from Ohio police departments and learn about gang-related issues, including traditions and trends, statutes, expert testimony and crime mapping.

- **March 8-10, London OPOTA Campus**
OPOTA Course 03-446-11-01

- **April 26-28, Richfield OPOTA Campus**
OPOTA Course 53-446-11-01

Tuition cost: Free
To register, visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/OPOTARegistration.

BASICS

The weeklong course instructs victim advocates on issues related to child abuse, domestic violence, crisis intervention, legal advocacy, trauma care and death notification. Continuing Education Units are available through the Counselor, Social Worker and Marriage and Family Therapist Board.

- **June 12-17, London OPOTA Campus**
- **Sept. 11-16, London OPOTA Campus**

Tuition cost: Free
To register, visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Events.

NEWS & NOTES



Task force issues guidelines pertaining to biological evidence

Members of Ohio's Preservation of Biological Evidence Retention Task Force have issued guidelines regarding evidence collection, handling, storage, retention and cataloging under new state requirements implemented earlier this year.

The passage of Senate Bill 77 created the new legal mandates, which apply to those responsible for the collection, storage or retrieval of biological evidence in cases of aggravated murder, murder, voluntary manslaughter, first- and second-degree involuntary manslaughter, first- and second-degree aggravated vehicular manslaughter, rape, attempted rape, sexual battery and underage gross sexual imposition.

The guidelines, which reflect current best practices, and a variety of related resources are available online at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/BiologicalEvidenceRetentionTaskForce.

BCI labs set to double use of robots for DNA testing in 2011

The Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation's Laboratory Division is staged to double the number of robots it uses in DNA testing by mid-2011.

Six robots already are in use — two each at the London and Richfield labs to process blood evidence and two in London to process convicted offender samples for the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) database.

This fall, the Attorney General's Office received an \$831,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Justice to purchase four more robots for testing sexual assault kits. Two additional robots have been purchased to meet the requirement of Senate Bill 77 that BCI process and add to the CODIS database the DNA of all felon arrestees in Ohio beginning July 1, 2011.

BCI began using robotic equipment in October 2009, allowing it to sharply reduce turnaround times for local law enforcement in need of DNA testing. The robots also have made it possible for BCI to analyze blood evidence from property crime scenes for the first time.

New OHLEG page aids in sexual assault investigations

Sexual assault crimes can be among the hardest to investigate. Now, the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway (OHLEG) features a Sexual Assault Response and Investigation page to provide authorities with tools to prosecute these crimes.

The page includes templates for search warrants, supplemental report forms, relevant case law, Ohio statutes and a drug-facilitated sexual assault protocol to assist law enforcement officers in their investigations.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, one in six women and one in 33 men will be a victim of sexual assault in their lifetime. Overall, about 77 percent of victims know the perpetrator. In the case of college-age women, that figure rises to about 90 percent.

The Attorney General's Office will work with law enforcement to add materials to the site. To share suggestions, e-mail Sandy Huntzinger at Sandra.Huntzinger@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov.

FLIP connects officers with translation assistance in their area

Law enforcement officers in need of language translation services might want to turn to the Foreign Language Interpreter Program (FLIP).

The service, available through the Middle Atlantic-Great Lakes Organized Crime Law Enforcement Network (MAGLOCLLEN) and Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS), is provided at no cost to participating law enforcement agencies.

Here's how it works: Officers proficient in a foreign language enter their names into a database along with details about their level of proficiency. Officers in need of translation services access the database and specify what language they need to have translated and their ZIP code. A database search returns the names and contact information of officers who are willing to help.

In one recent case, officers found a note at the site of a questioned death. They suspected it was a suicide note, but they weren't sure. After determining it was written in Croatian, they turned an officer through FLIP who was able to translate the note and provide valuable information.

For more information about the program, contact MAGLOCLLEN Law Enforcement Coordinator Alan Hayes at (513) 317-0721.

Statistically speaking

Recent upgrades to the state's Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) database mean the system now can accommodate palm prints, giving law enforcement another resource to identify and catch criminals.

More than **343,000**

palm prints have been added to the AFIS database since the upgrades began two years ago.

Of the **3,800** latent prints Ohio

law enforcement agencies collected from crime scenes and submitted to the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation this year,

19% were palm prints.

BCI is integrating palm prints that departments have in their own files, allowing other agencies to benefit. The biggest contributors have been:

- Hamilton County and Cincinnati law enforcement, **280,000**

- Columbus Division of Police, **110,000**

- Cleveland Division of Police, **70,000**

- West Chester Police Department, **30,000**

37 other departments also have contributed palm prints.

In 18 cases so far, palm prints collected from crime scenes have matched those recently added to AFIS.

A \$2 million grant from the Department of Justice made the AFIS upgrades possible.

To contribute your agency's palm prints to AFIS, call (740) 845-2215.

Cut It Out empowers salon professionals in fight against domestic violence

By Mary Alice Casey

Toray Green of Akron knows that she and other professional hair stylists can serve as lifelines to victims of domestic violence. And now she's armed with training from the Ohio Attorney General's Office to take on the role.

Green is among about 830 Ohio salon professionals, students and victim advocates who have been trained to recognize domestic violence signs and provide information to victims since Attorney General Richard Cordray reintroduced Cut It Out in Ohio in 2009. A national program, Cut It Out debuted in Ohio in 2004, but had fallen into disuse until the office resumed trainings last year.

"I felt so empowered by the training," said Green, who attended a Cut It Out session in Akron in October. "I was glad to know that somebody recognized the unique connection between hair stylists and their clients. We talk to women in a way that others don't."

Looking back, she said she realizes how she could have helped past clients with information she received through Cut It Out. The program uses the relationship between salon professionals and women — and the fact that hair stylists, nail technicians and others who work in salons often are in a position to see signs of domestic abuse — to create a window of opportunity for victims.

The Attorney General's Office provides two-hour

Cut It Out trainings that earn salon professionals continuing education credits from the Ohio State Board of Cosmetology. The training is free and can be scheduled anywhere in the state.

To extend the program's reach, Sandy Huntzinger of the Attorney General's Crime Victims Assistance and Prevention Section has prepared more than 50 people who work in victim advocacy and related fields to present Cut It Out sessions in their areas. The office also alerts future stylists to the program through trainings at Ohio's eight Regency Beauty Institute campuses.

Victim advocate Sarita Spinks of the Domestic Violence Center of Greater Cleveland, who made arrangements for two Cut It Out trainings in Cleveland earlier this year, said the information and concepts are on the mark.

"All of those who attended left with a deeper understanding of the impact of domestic violence and a willingness to help," Spinks said. "They realized that they are in a position to help someone in need and, perhaps, save a life."

Last year, Ohio law enforcement agencies reported receiving more than 69,000 domestic dispute calls, about 33,700 of which resulted in domestic violence or related charges, according to the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation. While law enforcement agencies are required by law to submit their monthly domestic violence statistics to BCI, not all agencies do so. For that



Sandy Huntzinger of the Ohio Attorney General's Office conducts a Cut It Out training session.

PHOTO BY BRAD DAUGHERTY

reason, and because domestic violence is an underreported crime, the number of incidents is known to be much higher.

For more on Cut It Out or to schedule a training session, call the Ohio Attorney General's Office at (800) 582-2877 or visit www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/CutItOut. ■

Put the brakes on bullying

Law enforcement officers can help ease problem that affects too many youth

By Kathleen Nichols

News of the tragic consequences of bullying splashes across our TV screens and newspaper pages far too often these days, detailing the agony many young people endure on a regular basis.

A 2009 National Institutes of Health study found that more than half of students in grades 6 through 10 reported being verbally or socially bullied in the previous two months. Nearly 21 percent had been physically bullied, and more than 13 percent experienced cyber bullying.

Law enforcement officers, particularly those with a regular presence in schools, are in a

unique position to help address the problem. But as illustrated during the recent Creating Safe Learning Environments in Ohio Schools Conference, sponsored by the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, collaboration is key.

Several attendees said they were not involved in the development of school policies and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyber bullying. And many suspect an underreporting of such incidents, inhibiting their ability to investigate potential crimes.

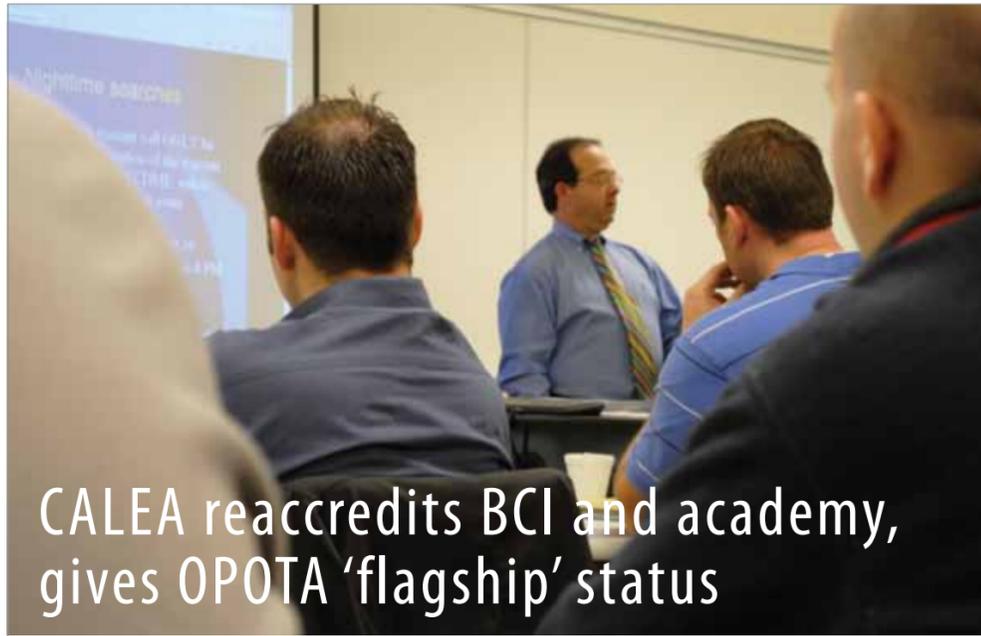
This advice from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services can guide law enforcement officers to help curb bullying:

- Enlist the support of school administrators. A bullying prevention plan can only succeed with support from the highest authority in the school.
- Select and implement a research-based bullying prevention program. For ideas, visit www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov.

- Be accessible to students and staff. Encourage them to come to you with concerns about bullying or other issues.
- Create an anonymous reporting system. Provide a locked box for reporting incidents, and place it in an accessible but private area. Investigate reports thoroughly and sensitively.
- Alert responsible adults and increase supervision, two steps proven to reduce the frequency of bullying.
- Work with staff members to create a safety plan for children who are bullied.
- Suggest the implementation of behavior contracts and other types of creative probation for bullies.

The Attorney General's Office provides resources and presentations for students, parents and educators on bullying, cyber safety and related topics. For more information, e-mail Kathleen.Nichols@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov or call (614) 995-5416. ■

Kathleen Nichols is a youth violence program coordinator for the Attorney General's Office.



CALEA recredits BCI and academy, gives OPOTA 'flagship' status

The Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) has recredited the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy and Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation following on-site visits earlier this year.

An internationally recognized credentialing body, CALEA gave both entities within the Ohio Attorney General's Office positive reviews and singled OPOTA out as a Flagship Agency. CALEA member organizations are assessed every three years. OPOTA and BCI underwent their most recent site visits this past spring.

Flagship Agency status recognizes public safety agencies that serve as models for how to address compliance, policy development, record maintenance and other issues. It is granted to academies and law enforcement agencies based on past accreditation records, the most recent assessment and standing within the public safety community.



"The academy's staff is professional and exhibits pride in its work and organization," CALEA assessment team leader Aimee Joy Parish wrote in OPOTA's evaluation report. "All of the facilities are state of the art."

OPOTA provides about 500 advanced law enforcement training sessions annually on campuses in London and Richfield and 53 courses online through eOPOTA. The academy launched a series of regional trainings in 2009, and this year presented 110 sessions across the state in collaboration with other agencies. More than 5,300 law enforcement personnel have attended.

BCI provides identification, investigative and laboratory services to law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Agents are on call around the clock to respond to crime scenes and assist with investigations. Scientists and forensic specialists analyze physical evidence and maintain convicted offender and suspect DNA profiles. Identification specialists oversee information that assists in criminal investigations, including fingerprints, palm prints and corresponding criminal histories. The bureau is based in London and has offices in Bowling Green, Richfield and Youngstown.

"The Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation is an invaluable resource to law enforcement agencies throughout the state of Ohio, providing technological and investigative assistance to Ohio's front-line law enforcement officers, all free of charge," wrote Susan Maycock, CALEA team leader for the BCI assessment.

CALEA was created in 1979 by law enforcement's major executive associations — the International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, National Sheriffs' Association and Police Executive Research Forum — to improve the delivery of public safety services. ■



SYSTEM UPGRADE INCREASES SPEED, DECREASES DOWNTIME

The Attorney General's information technology staff completed an upgrade in mid-November that vastly improved the performance of the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway (OHLEG).

The Web-based platform, through which law enforcement accesses the state's criminal history database and about a dozen other tools and information sources, has more than 22,000 users statewide. Last year, they used the OHLEG search engine more than 3 million times.

That level of usage wasn't envisioned when OHLEG came online with just one application in 2003, and in recent years demand began to outpace the system's capabilities, said Michael Sawczyn, chief information officer for the Ohio Attorney General's Office.

To address increasingly common problems with system speed and availability, IT staffers undertook a six-month project to migrate the resource to a new platform. As a result, the search engine returns results up to eight times faster in most cases. Different requests run at different speeds, and factors such as time of day, usage and accessibility of other systems also come into play, Sawczyn said.

The more than 200 law enforcement agencies that rely on the OHLEG Records Management System for maintaining their daily records will benefit from the upgrade in the form of increased speed and decreased down time.

Attorney General's Office staff members also have been working to upgrade system security. The new measures will make it possible for OHLEG to link to databases at the national level in the near future.

Contact the OHLEG Help Desk at OHLEGSupport@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov or (866) 406-4534 if you have questions or suggestions related to the system.