



## Criminalistics Section – 2004

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### **B44 Dr. McCrone's Participation in LEAA Activities, Including Proficiency Testing, Certification, and Forensic Microscopy Workshops**

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Twenty-five years ago, crime laboratories were in a very different condition than they are today. The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) had released the initial wave of proficiency testing results and the reliability of examinations was being questioned. Crime laboratories were still undergoing expansion, and certification, accreditation, and *Daubert* were still far in the future. LEAA and NILECJ (National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice) provided some budgetary support to the forensic community but it was on a very limited basis. The proficiency testing studies had underscored the difficulties laboratories were experiencing in applying microscopical techniques to various forms of physical evidence. Training opportunities were severely lacking. One of the bright beacons in the field, though, was the course work offered by Dr. Walter McCrone in his facility in Chicago. The Forensic Sciences Foundation, Inc., secured a grant from LEAA, Dr. McCrone generously offered his services, and Walter and the McCrone Research Institute (MRI) went on the road all over the U.S. to offer training to state and local laboratory personnel. Nothing had been done like this before and has not been done (of this scope) since. With an advisory committee made up by the likes of Peter R. De Forest, John I. Thornton, and Barton P. Epstein, a curriculum was offered that reached more than 350 forensic scientists. This is but one example of the many contributions that Dr. McCrone made to the forensic science field.

#### **Dr. McCrone, Microscopy, Tribute**