



B43 Mentorship to Colleague Inspired by Service: An Evolution to a Brother- and Sister-in-Law Forensic Family Relationship

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After attending this presentation, attendees will be shown how a mentoring relationship can evolve to a peer relationship and sometimes may also lead to a family connection.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by showing how a “forensic science family” relationship was shaped by two individuals who rose to leadership positions in forensic science.

Larry Quarino and Desiree Reid met in 1984 at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City. Desiree was an undergraduate working toward her Bachelor of Science degree in Criminalistics while Larry began work toward a Master of Science in Forensic Science. Both studied under Dr. Peter De Forest who always emphasized the importance of service to the forensic science community. John Jay students regularly attended professional conferences and Larry and Desiree understood what was expected of them as future criminalists and professionals.

Larry and Desiree always had a close friendship and Larry’s fiancée, Denise, always tried to find a nice boyfriend for Desiree. Larry also kept his eyes and ears open to help Desiree get the proverbial foot in the forensic door. That door was opened one day when Desiree was afforded the opportunity to pursue a summer internship at the New Jersey State Police North Regional Lab, where Larry worked in what was referred to in those days as the Serology Unit. Larry was assigned stewardship of the new intern and became her mentor. Larry had such confidence in Desiree’s abilities to perform tasks that he occasionally got in trouble for giving Desiree an excessive amount of responsibility. Larry believed so strongly in Desiree’s future potential as a criminalist that he convinced a coworker to persuade his wife to hire Desiree in her laboratory. After sojourning a few years at the Union County, NJ, Prosecutor’s Office Forensic Science Laboratory, Desiree was offered a drug chemist position at the North Regional Lab in 1989; however, Larry’s and Desiree’s reunion was short-lived, since within a few months of Desiree’s start date, Larry left for a supervisory position with the brand new Department of Forensic Biology at the Office of Chief Medical Examiner in New York City.

Although Larry and Desiree no longer worked together, they maintained a friendship. Larry and Desiree were among the inaugural group who took the American Board of Criminalistics (ABC) General Knowledge Examination at the 1993 American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) meeting in Boston and, happily, both passed. Both Larry and Desiree are huge supporters of certification and both have served on the Board of Directors of the ABC. Desiree even had the honor of serving as president of the organization for several years.

Desiree’s commitment was never more evident than in the weeks and months after the attacks of September 11, 2001. For several months, Desiree (as well as many others) gave up weekends to work as an unpaid volunteer at the New York City Office of Chief Medical Examiner on the World Trade Center Identification project. Larry, on the other hand, earned a doctorate in 2000 and embarked on a career as a forensic science academician. He has served as a Commissioner and Chair of the Forensic Science Education Program Accreditation Commission and currently serves as the Chair of the Criminalistics Section of the AAFS and is President-Elect of the Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientists.

Denise, now Larry’s wife, finally did find a special someone for Desiree: her brother Anthony. Desiree and Anthony were married in 2006. Even though Larry’s and Desiree’s professional relationship has changed from one of mentorship to colleagues and their personal relationship has changed from friends to brother- and sister-in-law, they continue to be supportive of each other’s careers. A few years ago, Desiree gave a talk on drug chemistry to the students at Cedar Crest College where Larry serves as program director and recently Desiree reached out to Larry for help with a drug chemistry project. Nobody from their John Jay days could have ever imagined how Desiree and Larry would one day find themselves in a “forensic family.”

Forensic Family, Reid, Quarino