

IMPACT

In 2015, the AAFS’ Humanitarian and Human Rights Resource Center (HHRRC) funded the “Application of Stable Isotope Forensics to the Identification of Unidentified Border Crossers from the Texas-Mexico Border” to California State University, Chico. **This research helped create large reference datasets of stable isotope values that can be used to predict probable regions of origin of unidentified deceased individuals, including undocumented border crosser deaths along the southern border of the United States.** The research supported numerous graduate student positions, provided baseline data for future research projects, and resulted in several additional collaborative projects.

Dr. Eric Bartelink, CSU-Chico



Douglas Ubelaker, Chair
2015-2020
Dawnie Steadman, Chair
2020 - present

IMPACT

In 2024, the University of Dodoma (Tanzania), in partnership with Vanderbilt University (USA), was awarded funding by the Humanitarian and Human Rights Resource Center (HHRRC) **to support a capacity-building initiative for the Tanzania Police focused on the application of stable isotope analysis in the identification of the deceased.** The rationale was to respond to the challenge of the migrants who chose the southern route from the Horn of Africa as an escape route to South Africa. This HHRRC support enabled the Tanzanian law enforcement and forensic practitioners to receive specialised training in the application of stable isotope analysis for identifying unknown deceased individuals, especially in cases involving undocumented persons, migrants, or mass disasters.

Dr. Isaac Onoka, University of Dodomo, Tanzania

Facilitate research that advances forensic science application to humanitarian action

Provide resources to laboratories and teams conducting humanitarian work

Outreach to the international community

Clyde Snow Award
8 Awards bestowed since 2018

IMPACT

The HHRRC grant was a turning point for forensic humanitarian work in the Republic of Georgia. It enabled our team (Georgian Association of Forensic Anthropology/GAFA) to conduct the first systematic recovery and analysis of human remains from Soviet-era repression, specifically from mass graves associated with Stalin’s Great Terror in the Adjara region. **This led to the first scientific identifications of victims executed without trial during the 1937–1938 purges, and the return of their remains to surviving family members. For these families, many of whom had endured decades of silence and uncertainty, the project brought long-awaited answers, truth, and the opportunity for dignified reburial.** Without HHRRC’s support, this essential combination of scientific rigor, ethical family engagement, and national remembrance would not have been possible. This work has deeply shaped the direction of our national forensic anthropology efforts.

Dr. Meri Gonashvili, Republic of Georgia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HYwdYmn6ivA&t=3s>

Research Awards

61 Research Awards since 2016

\$320,751 awarded since 2021

30 countries

USA, Africa, South America, Australia, Europe, Middle East, SE Asia, Pacific, Asia

Poster Symposia

54 Posters presented since 2021

Supported by the Forensic Technology Center of Excellence, RTI

Documentaries

Resources

COVID-19 facts and resources

Scientific libraries given to laboratories in 4 countries

Webinar series

Science podcasts

FTCoE Virtual Library

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In 2020, I was honored to receive the Humanitarian and Human Rights Resource Center (HHRRC) Award for my research project titled “*Fingerprint Scan of the Dead: Real-Time Identification During the Search and Recovery Phase in Large-Scale Disasters.*” This research was made possible through funding provided to the HHRRC back then and it is crucial for the by the Forensic Science Foundation (FSF) to continue supporting such initiatives. **This kind of support is vital for the advancement of humanitarian forensic science, enabling experts and researchers around the world to develop solutions that address critical needs.** My research has contributed to raising awareness of the importance of proper identification and management of the deceased during disasters in Malaysia.

Dr. Khoo Lay See, National Institute of Forensic Medicine, Hospital Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia