National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs)

Missing Persons Training
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Agenda

• Missing Persons Issues
• Plan/Status
• Current Missing Persons Database
• Unidentified Decedents Database
• New Beta Version of Missing Persons Database

Key Points of BJS Report (2004 data)

• 13,500 unidentified human remains on record in medical examiner and coroners' offices across US
• 4,400 (estimated) unidentified human bodies are received in medical examiners' and coroners' offices in an average year
• About 1,000 remain unidentified after one year
• About 600 undergo final disposition, such as burial, cremation or other means
• ½ of medical examiners and coroners' offices in US have policies for retaining records on unidentified human remains
  – Vast majority of offices serving large jurisdictions did have retention policies in place
Missing Persons: The Challenge

- Identification of missing persons is an ongoing national challenge
  - 108,000 plus missing person cases in NCIC
  - 6,900 plus unidentified decedents in NCIC
  - An estimated 40,000 plus unidentified remains exist across the United States

- Historically, there has been an inability to maximize resources and share information among entities charged with identifying remains and entities conducting investigations

NamUs: Plan

- First national online repository for missing persons and unidentified decedents
  - Provides an online searchable unidentified decedent database (currently 1,985 cases)
  - Provides access to resources and information
  - Will provide an online missing persons database
- Ultimate Goal: automatic searching of missing person cases against unidentified decedent cases

NamUs: Plan cont.

- Phase 1 (July 1 – Sept 2007)
  - Completed rollout of NamUs Unidentified Decedent Database
  - Began design of NamUs Missing Persons Database
  - Finalized resources for the site including info on state missing person clearinghouses, MEs, Coroners, legislation, and victim assistance resources
- Phase 2 (through end of 2008)
  - Develop and launch national online missing persons database
- Phase 3 (2009)
  - Release automated search feature of the NamUs System (automatically compares MP and UID cases)

2007 - 2008 - 2009
NamUs: Status

- Formed NamUs Unidentified Decedent Advisory Group
  - 17 state, local and federal practitioners
- Formed NamUs Missing Persons Working Group
  - 25 state, local and federal practitioners
- 1985 UID cases in NamUs UID Database
  - 1226 cases with no NCIC #
  - 759 cases with NCIC #
  - 63 cases with fingerprint cards
- Crosswalk system developed to transition NCIC data
- Contract with forensic odontologist and forensic anthropologist to offer free services for state and locals
- Privacy Impact Assessment is in Progress
- Extensive Outreach: 2500 letters, phone contact, presentations
- NIJ will put resources in state MP clearinghouses

NamUs: Big Contributors

- Unidentified Decedent Cases (34 States)
  - Florida: 593 cases
  - New Jersey: 270 cases
  - Arizona: 201 cases
  - Nevada: 167 cases (most from Clarke County)
  - Texas: 148 cases (most from Harris County)
  - Maryland: 131 cases
  - Georgia: 126 cases
- Expecting many more from California, Texas, and Arizona
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Phase 2 (through Sept 2008)

- Develop national online missing persons database

Phase 3 (2009)

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Database Login (in development)

State Information Pages (available now)

Click on map or drop down menu
State Page: Interactive Mapping

Maps
- Law Enforcement Agencies
- Medical Examiners and Coroners' Offices

Maps: Law Enforcement Agencies

Maps: Medical Examiner & Coroner Offices
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SOLVED

New Missing Persons Database (under development)
Still a work in progress
NFSTC has produced a new outreach video.

The video is being reviewed and edited.
What YOU Can Do to Help...RAISE AWARENESS

- Tell your family, friends, and co-workers about NamUs
- Take advantage of the resources available on the NamUs ([www.NamUs.gov](http://www.NamUs.gov)) and Missing Persons Database websites.
- Inform your local officials (law enforcement, medical examiners, coroners) about this important initiative.

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NamUs Missing Persons Database

- ORA, Inc. has create the pilot Website for the Missing Persons Database
NamUs Missing Persons Database

- NFSTC has edited mapping locations and updated features
- Over 700 locations have been updated

NamUs Team has:

- Formed a Working Group comprised of professionals from law enforcement, universities, government agencies, state clearinghouses, victim advocates, volunteer organizations, non-profit organizations, medical examiners/coroners/forensic anthropologists, technology, web development and communications experts
- Sent over 2500 letters to Medical Examiner and Coroner offices across the country requesting their assistance in entering their unidentified decedent records into NamUs
- Instituted an ongoing program to make phone contact with medical examiners, coroners, and clearinghouses to increase awareness of NamUs
- Increased entries into the Unidentified Decedent Database to over 795 unidentified cases (as of 3/26/08)

Thank you for your attention and support.
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National Missing Persons Database