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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, October 28, 2008

MASSBAY COMMUNITY COLLEGE SPONSORS
FORENSIC DNA: SCIENCE, LAW & LIBERTIES 2008 CONFERENCE
*Nationally-known legal and science experts to debate emerging
DNA profiling laws and their impact on civil rights*

Wellesley Hills, Mass. – The promises and potential hazards of new DNA forensic science laws and their implication on American civil liberties will be debated in the conference **FORENSIC DNA: SCIENCE, LAW & LIBERTIES 2008**, on November 7-8, 2008 at Massachusetts Bay Community College (MassBay). The program is sponsored by the Forensic DNA Science Program at MassBay, the nation’s only forensic degree program in this technology.

The conference will present leading experts in the fields of DNA forensics science and law who will examine the science, debate the pros and cons of using advanced forensic DNA analysis to develop a national profile database, and discuss the checks and balances needed to ensure that American civil liberties and rights are protected.

Forensic DNA: Science, Law & Liberties will focus on the science of identifying human remains using forensic DNA methodologies. Guest speaker will be world-renowned scientist and leading DNA expert, Dr. Daniel Vaněk, president, Czechoslovak Society for Forensic Genetics. Dr. Vaněk will present new advances in the DNA analysis of bones and other human remains and discuss his recent work identifying remains uncovered in mass graves located in Bosnia and Rwanda. He will also outline new DNA testing techniques that now allow comparison of biological samples from a relative of the deceased to identify massacre victims, serial killers and missing persons, as well as bring perpetrators of these crimes to justice.

Forensic DNA: Science, Law & Liberties will also examine the growing and volatile legal disagreement that exists between law enforcement and civil libertarians regarding the use of DNA science to protect American society and individual civil liberties. Baltimore defense attorney Stephen Mercer will discuss the promise of DNA technology in exonerating or convicting crime suspects, working with or adversarial to forensic labs, and sound legal strategies for use in DNA criminal cases. Mercer will also shed light on the merits and/or flaws of identifying criminal suspects using the newly emerging technique of “familial searching”.

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In addition, a distinguished panel of six national legal experts will debate opposing views on the increased use of forensic tools to establish DNA databases and familial DNA analysis. Specifically, the panelists will present their perspectives on whether the development and use of a national DNA profile database may serve a national security purpose but ultimately lead to a police state; or if it will restrict law enforcement ability to protect American society from both internal and external threats.

Panelists include: California District Attorney Rockne Harmon (Alameda, CA); Colorado District Attorney Mitch Morrissey (Denver, CO); Attorney Sam Silverman, Lexington MA; Attorney James Dilday, Boston, MA; and Mr. Mercer.

The opening plenary address will be given by Attorney Angela McConney, General Counsel of the Massachusetts Civil Service Commission. Symposiums will be offered by Dr. Vanek; Mr. Mercer; and Richard Tanton.

Dr. Bruce Jackson, who is a nationally known forensic DNA expert and Professor and Coordinator of the Forensic DNA Science Program at MassBay, organized the conference. "This event will help shed light on what may be one of the greatest social issues, not only in American society in the 21st Century"; but every society where freedom is cherished," said Dr. Jackson.

The event is open to the public. For additional information, visit: www.massbay.edu. To register online, visit: http://www.regonline.com/63357_658784s

About MassBay Community College

Massachusetts Bay Community College (MassBay) is an open-access, accredited two-year public educational institution. The College grants associate degrees and certificates in a range of disciplines through its five divisions of academics: the Division of Health Sciences; the Division of Humanities; the Division of Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (S.T.E.M.); the Division of Social Sciences & Professional Studies; and the Division of Transportation & Energy. Offering over 60 academic programs, MassBay serves Boston and the MetroWest communities with locations in Wellesley Hills, Framingham and Ashland (Automotive Technology Center).

---www.massbay.edu---

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