



Exploring Forensic Science in PG County



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CPSP359G

College Park Scholars Academic Showcase, May 3, 2024

Site Information

Prince George's County Police Department Forensic Science Division

7600 Barlowe Rd, Palmer Park, MD 20785

Sgt. Lynn Grant

To analyze forensic evidence in an effort to provide clients with reports and expert testimony (adapted from MSP's statement)

To analyze forensic evidence and utilize their findings in Prince George's County, Maryland

Introduction

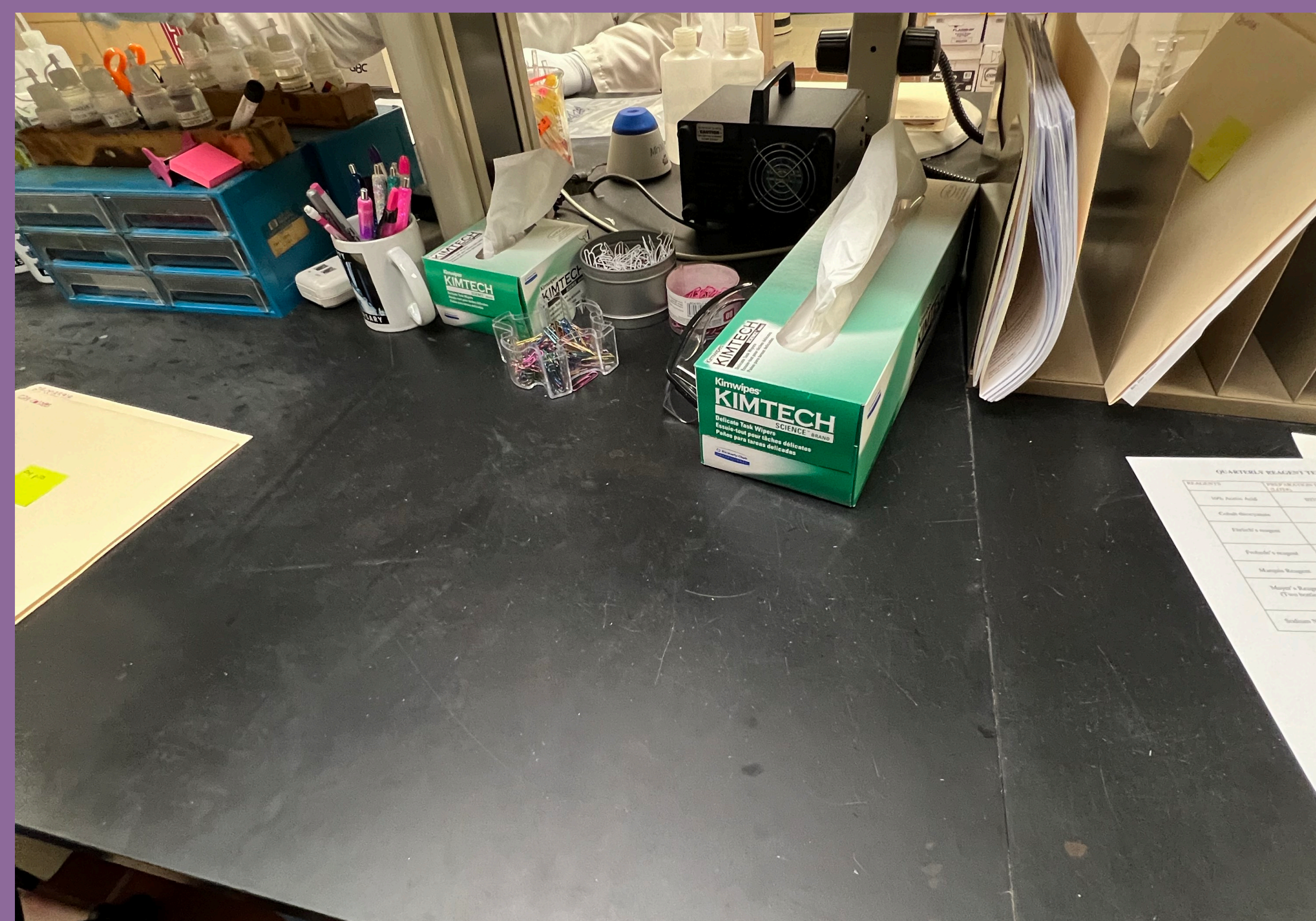
This past summer I interned at PGPD's Forensic Science Division, where I was able to see the day-to-day of the scientists that work to provide evidence for cases in the area.



Here's a picture of me inside the driver's seat of my supervisor's car! My internship wasn't all work, and my supervisor and I definitely went on some fun trips sometimes.

Impact

Since this division serves PG County and sometimes assists in outside cases, its impact is enormous. Through the work of the PGPD Forensic Science division, cases are able to be substantiated with ample evidence found by experienced scientists. For example, they are sent evidence from active cases, and then expected to provide all of the looked-through evidence back to the police department/courts to help. They also may help by testifying in court based on the results they found.



Here's a picture of the inside of the drug lab, where I was able to see the way the scientists handled an unknown drug.

Discussion

There's a few subdivisions in the division, such as the Firearms Lab, the DNA Lab, and the Drug Lab. Each one plays a significant role in assisting a case. I spent the most time in the Drug Lab, where they analyzed drugs found at a scene to figure out the identity of the drug. They used tools such as the NMR and solubility tests. Lastly, they were able to compare the drugs to prior cases to later confirm what drug it is. On the administrative side, I was responsible for organizing casework—this is important because having a reliable archive is the norm for police departments.

Activities

Most of my work consisted of learning about how they analyze the drugs in the Drug Lab. Although you can usually tell which drug it is using chemical tests, they heavily rely on the GCMS to substantiate and confirm their results. I was also able to learn about the way they identify the type of bullets used, and how they're able to see the inside of a barrel. Otherwise, I was mainly focused on sorting through old case paperwork, so that they could easily make the transition into online reports.



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Thanks to Sgt. Lynn Grant, Kristen Lease, Dr. Holtz, and Dr. Merck. I also thank my family for all of the support throughout this process.

