

MERIT

MISSOURI

EMERGENCY RESPONSE
IDENTIFICATION TEAM

Annual Meeting – Saturday, March 28, 2026 – MDA Office

Attention All Dental Team Members! I am pleased to announce the 2026 Meeting of MERIT — The Missouri Emergency Response Identification Team — which is a statewide, forensic dental team that meets annually for CE and a business meeting. To reserve your place at the meeting, a registration form and registration fee of \$125 must be mailed, e-mailed or faxed to the MDA. — **Eric Wilson, DDS, DABFO**

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| Location: | MDA Executive Office, 3340 American Avenue, Jefferson City, Missouri |
| Date: | Saturday, March 28, 2026, from 9:00am to 4:30pm |
| Schedule: | 8:30am Registration 9am: CE Begins <i>Ages and Stages – Practical Dental Age Assessment in Forensic Casework</i> by Derek Draft, DDS. <i>Role of the Medical Examiner: Investigation and Identification</i> by Tatiana Bihun, MD. |
| CE: | 7.5 hours |
| Fee: | \$125 per person; Continental breakfast and catered lunch included. |
| Hotel Block: | Hampton Inn, 4800 Country Club Dr., Jefferson City MO 65109 |

See reverse side for an overview of course and objectives. **For those who need a hotel**, a block of rooms has been reserved at Hampton Inn for Friday, March 27. Room rates are \$151/nt for Double Queen or \$156/nt for King Rooms; For reservations, please call 573-634-7440 by March 16, under the Missouri Dental Association.

— 2026 MERIT Meeting Registration Form (\$125 per person) —

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| Name | ADA # | | |
| Address | | | |
| City | State | Zip | |
| Phone | Email | | |
| Credit Card # (MC, VISA, DISC) | Exp Date | CSV | |
| Credit Card Billing Address (IF DIFFERENT THAN ABOVE) | | | |
| Credit Card Billing City | State | Zip | |

Return to: MDA, 3340 American Ave, Jefferson City, MO 65109

Fax: 573-635-0764 or **Email:** riley@modentalmail.org.

One form must be completed for each attendee. However, one payment may be used to pay for multiple registrations. Make checks payable to MDA.

Registration deadline March 25, 2026. No refunds or cancellations after this date.



Dr. Derek Draft received his D.D.S. degree from the University of Michigan Dental School in 1998 and currently practices as a general dentist in both the US and Canada. Dr. Draft joined the State of Michigan Forensic Dentistry ID Team in 2000 and he joined DMORT Region V in 2001. He was deployed to Joplin, MO with DMORT after the devastating tornado in May 2011. He is a fellow of the AAFS Odontology Section and a diplomate with the American Board of Forensic Odontology where he is the current President. Dr. Draft developed the Draft Age Estimation Quicksheets™ which was presented at the 2016 AAFS meeting in Las Vegas.

Dr. Draft provides forensic odontology services at the Le Laboratoire de sciences judiciaires et de médecine légale du Québec in Montreal and is also a Clinical Associate Professor in the Pathology Department at the Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine as a Forensic Odontology consultant.

Dr. Draft lives in St. Lambert Quebec with his wife Corinne D'Anjou who is also a forensic odontologists. Together they have 5 children, Jasper, Hayden, Alex, Oli, and Anabelle. He enjoys time with his family snow skiing in the winter and playing volleyball in the summer. He also builds and runs 1/8th scale trains with his son, Hayden and father, Tom.

Ages and Stages – Practical Dental Age Assessment in Forensic Casework

The presentation will focus on how dental age assessment is used in day-to-day forensic casework. Beginning with why age estimation matters and where it fits into the identification process, especially in cases involving unidentified remains, missing persons, and mass fatality events. We will review how teeth develop in predictable patterns and how those patterns are used for estimating age. The goal is to give participants a clear understanding of what dental age assessment can and cannot tell us.

The presentation will then walk through age assessment approaches across different age groups, from children and adolescents to adults, using real-world examples to show how these methods are applied. Attention is given to choosing the right method for the right case, understanding sources of error, and explaining results in a clear and defensible way. Practical tips for reporting, working with other forensic disciplines, and using digital tools to improve consistency are included.

Course Objectives:

- Describe where dental age assessment fits into forensic identification and why it is useful in real cases.
- Recognize the differences between age assessment methods used for children, adolescents, and adults.
- Understand why dental age estimates are ranges rather than exact ages and how to explain that clearly.
- Identify common challenges and limitations in dental age assessment.



Dr. Tatiana Bihun is a practicing forensic pathologist. She currently holds titles as the Assistant Medical Examiner for Saint Louis City Medical Examiner's Office, Assistant Professor at Saint Louis University School of Medicine, Forensic Pathologist for Crawford County Coroner's Office and Owner of TMM Forensics. Her personal interests are Australian Cattle Dogs, Herpetology and fighting for a sovereign Ukraine.

Role of the Medical Examiner: Investigation and Identification

The medical examiner plays a crucial role in not only determining the cause and manner of death, but also in the identification of the individual. We will briefly discuss the history of the medical examiner in Missouri, the role of the medical examiner and how medical examiners participate and aid in the identification of individuals. Real life cases will be discussed and reviewed.

Course Objectives:

- Role of the Medical Examiner
- How Medical Examiners participate in Identification Cases