

**PIMA COUNTY OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER  
FORENSIC SCIENCE CENTER**

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18 February 2008

Peter Cohen, PhD, Program Manager  
National Institute of Justice  
Office of Science and Technology  
Investigative and Forensic Science Division  
General Forensic R & D Program  
810 7<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington DC, 20531

Dear Dr Cohen:

I strongly support the research proposal "*Project Identification*" as submitted to your office by Kate Spradley, PhD. I have known Dr Spradley since 2005, when she was invited to the Pima County (Arizona) Office of the Medical Examiner (PCOME) to record osteometric data on some of the many skeletons of foreign nationals that our office routinely examines. More than twelve hundred of these migrants have died over the past seven years-- within our jurisdiction alone-- and we attempt to record as much data as possible from each of the decedents. Unfortunately, due to the sheer numbers and busy summer months, I do not personally have the time or resources to record all possible data on all of them. In addition, as soon as these individuals are identified, their waiting families expect our office to provide the remains to mortuaries in a timely fashion. Because of these factors, additional researchers are needed to glean as much information in as little time as possible. Having a researcher here, at the PCOME, in the summer months focusing entirely on osteometric data collection would go a long way in solving this issue.

Because the Hispanic portion of the US population is the largest minority group, and increasing at a steady rate, forensic anthropologists across the country can expect to encounter these individuals as medicolegal cases. Our office takes no small degree of pride in collaborating with our forensic anthropology colleagues on this issue, given the PCOME's current position of being at the point of the spear. *Project Identification* holds the promise that we all can learn more about the skeletal features of this growing component of the US population.

Bruce E Anderson, PhD  
Forensic Anthropologist