

## **Student Feedback**

My overall experience at NERFI was much more than I had expected. Having the opportunity to focus strictly on training was a luxury I thoroughly enjoyed. In a crime laboratory setting, the DNA trainer's time is spread between casework and training. Therefore, trying to work around a supervisor's/DNA trainer's schedule or performing miscellaneous administrative/laboratory duties can sometimes extend the DNA training to more than a year. Completing such an extensive DNA training at NERFI within four months with a dedicated training staff was challenging and intense, but worth every minute.

The NERFI staff, in no doubt, was the best part of NERFI. Having instructors with casework experience and/or knowledge of the DNA analysis process there specifically for your training was a real treat. Their positive attitudes and welcoming personalities made it comfortable to approach them for any questions or issues I had. Even when troubles with the DNA analysis process did occur, the staff always responded quickly by discussing troubleshooting techniques as a group and with the trainees. It was obvious that they worked hard to provide us with the best training possible. The laboratories facilities were similar to any crime laboratory, including the instruments used and general work area set-up.

*~ Academy 11; San Francisco, CA*

I can't say enough about how great the DNA Academy at NERFI was. Seventeen weeks is really long but it went by fast because I was so busy training. The time allotted was just right. The entire program was organized very well. The instructors were exceptional. The laboratory equipment and kits used were the same or better than what I use in my own lab. Everything didn't always go smoothly but even the issues that occurred in the lab were great trouble shooting experiences and very realistic.

The greatest benefit of this training was being able to focus 100% of my time on training everyday for five months. That is impossible to do while at my own lab. I would have been distracted by screening casework, ordering/receiving supplies, lab chores, putting together discovery packets and other various tasks. Not to mention, someone else would have taken time away from their own work to train me. Being outside my lab with instructors there specifically to train me allows this training to be completed in just seventeen weeks (instead of 2+ years).

Overall, the time and money spent on the DNA Academy at NERFI were well worth it. This training is something every analyst needs to complete to start casework and usually takes much longer than seventeen weeks. There are not many (if any) other programs that offer training like this academy. Another great part of this training is that it was all done using SFPD protocols. This minimizes the adjustments I will need to make when returning to my lab. I highly recommend this training and am glad I had the opportunity to go to NERFI. Having a certificate from NERFI's 16 week DNA Academy at NERFI will be extremely beneficial to me as a young analyst. This DNA Academy solidifies my training experience.

*~ Academy 11; San Francisco, CA*