DNA Labs International Aids in Solving 2nd Oregon Cold Case Using the ForenSeq® Kintelligence System

NEWS PROVIDED BY
EIN Presswire
Nov 23, 2023, 5:53 PM ET

DNA Labs International Logo

DNA Labs International uses the ForenSeq® Kintelligence System for the identification of almost 20 year old unidentified human remains.

DEERFIELD BEACH, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, November 23, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a significant breakthrough for cold case investigations, DNA Labs International (DLI) has provided crucial assistance in solving a longstanding Oregon mystery. Utilizing the innovative ForenSeq® Kintelligence Kit for forensic investigative genetic genealogy (FIGG), DLI has confirmed the identity of previously unidentified remains as those of Tanice "Tana" Laatch.

In 2005, the body of a woman was discovered in a remote area behind a local community college in Lane County, Oregon. Despite exhaustive efforts by the Lane County Sheriff's Office, the identity of the deceased remained a mystery for years, leaving a cold case in the hands of the Oregon State Police Medical Examiner.

In a turning point for the investigation, Oregon State Police Medical Examiner submitted skeletal remains to DNA Labs International in 2020. With the advancements of new technologies, the ForenSeq® Kintelligence Kit was used in 2023 to sequence targeted regions of DNA, producing a profile suitable for genealogy research. The resulting profile was then uploaded to GEDmatch Pro™, a law enforcement-dedicated portal for DNA comparison and genealogy analysis.

Through the process of building out family trees of genetic associations, DLI determined that the unidentified remains were likely those of Laatch. Subsequent STR testing of a buccal swab from a living relative provided the necessary confirmation, marking a poignant resolution to a case that had remained unsolved for nearly two decades.

This achievement marks the second successful collaboration between DLI and the Oregon State Police Medical Examiner in identifying unidentified human remains using forensic investigative genetic genealogy. The remains of Kenneth W. Heasley lost at sea after a tragic fishing accident in 1988, were recovered in 2020 but remained unidentified. Through the dedicated efforts of the Oregon State Police Medical Examiner, DLI, and advances in forensic genealogy, Heasley's identity was confirmed in 2022.

“Our sincere thanks and appreciation go to DNA Labs International and their team for assisting in the resolution of this challenging case. There is no doubt that the identity of Tana Laatch would still be a mystery without the expertise and skills DNA Labs International brought to Oregon; we are relieved to know Tana is now accounted for. Our thoughts go out to the family of Ms. Laatch, and we are so sorry for their loss. ” Dr. Nici Vance, Human Identification Program Coordinator, Oregon State Medical Examiner’s Office.

“QIAGEN remains dedicated to providing accessible and privacy-conscious forensic investigative genetic genealogy solutions that adhere to the highest forensic quality standards,” said Richard Price, Vice President and head of the HID and Forensics business at QIAGEN. “We are honored to collaborate with partners like DNA Labs International, who expertly leverage our workflow to deliver answers for families.”

About DNA Labs International:
Since 2004, DNA Labs International has been providing clients with exceptional quality service based on open communications, equal attention to the importance of every case, and accurate and reliable results every time. They provide the latest technology available to solve cases, such as Forensic Genetic Genealogy, SpentShellTM , for fired cartridge casings, the M-VAC®, a wet vacuum DNA collection tool, and STRmix®, a software program that can solve previously inconclusive DNA results. DNA Labs International was the first ISO 17025:2017, and FBI QAS accredited forensic laboratory processing Forensic Genetic Genealogy cases from start to finish.

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