



The Center For

Law Enforcement Technology, Training, & Research

Provider of the Florida Integrated Network for Data Exchange & Retrieval



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Special Announcement:

Following the August 5th Consortium Meeting, there will be an open house event to showcase the new LETTR office. Refreshments will be served. Make plans to socialize and enjoy!

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LETTR Has a New Home

In order to better serve our law enforcement partners, the Center for Law Enforcement Technology, Training, & Research has moved into our new office. Located in Orlando near the University of Central Florida campus, the new office provides more space for the LETTR team, allowing us to

expand our technology and research efforts. Along with increased office space for housing the Center's administrative staff and development team, the new facility boasts state-of-the-art technology, which will enhance the production of new law enforcement technology-oriented projects. This new



space will also be the location for all future Consortium meetings. The new address is: 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 223, Orlando, Florida, 32826. Visit the website, www.lettr.org, for information and directions.

Meeting LETTR's Board of Directors

When Vice Admiral Al Harms first came to the University of Central Florida, he already had a long and distinguished career in the United States Navy. In over 33 years of active duty service, Admiral Harms' responsibilities included commander of the Naval Education and Training Command, deputy commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, commander of a Carrier Strike Group, deputy director of operations for the U.S. Central Command, commanding officer of the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz, executive officer of the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise, and various other operational and staff assignments. Throughout his naval career, Vice Admiral Harms always had a passion for education and, upon retiring from the Navy, joined the University of Central Florida where he now serves as Vice President for Strategic Planning and Initia-

tives, and Special Assistant to UCF President John Hitt. Upon learning about the Center for Law Enforcement Technology, Training & Research (LETTR), and being asked to serve as a member of its Board of Directors, Harms was enthusiastically supportive and eager to contribute. "Communication is key," said Harms, "and, if we can find better ways to communicate smartly and share critical information, then we are providing a great service, not only to the law enforcement community, but to our citizens as well." Harms feels that the efforts of LETTR, with the utilization of the FINDER system, is an important initiative for helping to knock down barriers that routinely stall law enforcement information sharing and reduce operational effectiveness. Whereas many people blame the lack of information sharing and collaboration on

budget or manning shortfalls, Harms believes it is more often the result of restrictive, legacy policies and procedures driven by an excess of "empires" and "egos". Capabilities like FINDER are helping to break down many traditional barriers by making information sharing accessible and affordable for the law enforcement community. Harms further elaborates that too many people tend to cling to comfortable, established methods of operations and are often reluctant to "change." However, he strongly emphasizes that today's world is too complex, too fast-moving, and too fast-changing to not adopt new methodologies supported by modern technologies and widespread information sharing. Harms feels that information sharing is crucial to success in almost any area, but *(continue on page 2)*



LETTR Board Member: Admiral Harms

especially so in law enforcement where it is a proven "force multiplier" enabling organizations to operate far more efficiently and effectively than in years past. Harms' many career achievements clearly exemplify his own philosophy as illustrated by his long term commitment to technology enhancements supporting operational effectiveness and mission success. From implementation of IT 21 systems supporting information dominance throughout the operational Navy, to a massive restructuring of all

Navy education and training programs and their supporting delivery systems, to his continued participation in exciting new roles in academia, Harms remains committed to enhancing performance at the individual, team, and organizational level. When asked what he thought might be his greatest contribution to LETTR, Harms mentioned his pride in bringing disparate people together and leveraging their individual and team strengths towards accomplishing common goals. He stated, "I find working

together smartly, towards a common cause for the good of the whole, to be both personally and professionally rewarding. How fun and enjoyable to see a group come together and accomplish something that really matters. For me, the LETTR initiative provides that opportunity and I look forward to its continued and growing success in the future." Vice Admiral Harms, with decades of experience and service, is truly a valued member of LETTR's Board of Directors.

"With FINDER, law enforcement can now greatly improve our ability to locate and to arrest criminals, aiding in our ability to protect citizens."

Welcome Our Newest Member Agencies

As our successful reputation continues to expand, we're adding more and more agencies to FINDER, which is currently one of the largest information sharing projects in the nation. Recently, we welcomed the University of Central Florida Police Department, the Stuart Police

Department, the Melbourne Beach Police Department, the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office, and the Volusia County Sheriff's Office as members to the FINDER system. The continued addition of agencies from around the state helps to strengthen the very successful informa-

tion sharing network that we've built together and proves that large scale information sharing, conducted at the local level, can flourish. We welcome these new members to the project and look forward to announcing more new agencies as FINDER continues to grow.

Spotlight Agency: Marion County S.O.



With 215 trained and authorized users, FINDER has been incorporated into the daily business process at the Marion County Sheriff's Office. Lt. Kevin Rowe, the agency's Consortium representative, states, "FINDER is used regularly to identify unknown suspects, to locate unknown suspects, and to recover stolen property." In August 2007, the agency illustrated this point by issuing a press release, which stated that detectives, using FINDER, were able to iden-

tify and arrest two suspects involved in multiple auto burglaries at a local auto shop. Detectives were also able to recover the stolen property from a local pawn shop. According to Rowe, the pawn process is one of FINDER's greatest benefits to the agency. "We were behind the curve on getting pawn tickets entered into our system; we were consistently several thousand tickets behind. Now, we are able to electronically and remotely collect pawn transactions

from our pawn shops. FINDER has allowed a tremendous savings in manpower and ensures that the pawn data is entered with no backlog." Rowe adds that "the ability to share data with other agencies is paramount to being effective in law enforcement. Criminals do not stop at county or city lines and neither should we. With FINDER, law enforcement can now greatly improve our ability to locate and to arrest criminals, aiding in our ability to protect citizens."

The Missing Link: Link Analysis in FINDER

The capabilities of the FINDER system include an analytical tool called "Link Analysis." Link Analysis allows the user to draw associations between a subject and any known associates from all of the data contained in the FINDER system. So, for example, if you have a subject in one report, you may use FINDER's Link Analysis capabilities to see if that person is "linked" to any other person within the system.

Further, the Link Analysis will tell you how, or in what relationship, the subjects are linked. Link Analysis also groups all pawn reports in which the subject is listed, all agency activity reports in which the subject is listed, and all known associates that are listed in the same report(s) as the subject. In order to conduct Link Analysis in FINDER, first run a query on your subject. (Note: Link Analysis uses the date of

birth to generate associations; if the subject of interest has no DOB, a link cannot be made.) In the query results, look to the right hand column; if a link exists, there will be a green hyperlink button labeled "link analysis." Clicking this hyperlink will open a new window for the Link Analysis returns. The results are first grouped by agency and are then sorted by pawn, person, and known associates.



More Successes Using FINDER

As reported in the June edition of the LETTR newsletter, Success Tagging is an important component of FINDER, allowing us to track the successes that our users are having with the FINDER system. Since January, users have logged 218 successes. Some of these successes included Sanford Airport Police Department identi-

fying a vehicle theft suspect and recovering stolen property; Winter Park Police Department providing the Winter Park Emergency Room with identification information for an incapacitated woman from North Carolina; Winter Park Police Department obtaining contact information to alert a victim of credit card theft after the victim's wallet

was found on an arrested offender; and the Titusville Police Department discovering the identity of a mentally ill person when no other database proved helpful. These stories illustrate the over 1,700 tagged successes to date and demonstrate how FINDER successfully aids in cases ranging from murder to missing people.

"These stories...are just a few examples of how FINDER is providing success to overall law enforcement information sharing."

Behind the Scenes: Carlos Martinez

On September 11th, 2001, Carlos Martinez's aunt was on the 78th floor of the World Trade Center; her last phone call was to her mother after the first plane hit. In 2004, as a undergraduate student at the University of Central Florida studying Information Systems Technology, Carlos heard of FINDER and knew that he wanted to be a part of it. "I had heard the reports that 9/11 happened, in part, because information was not being shared; that one of the hijackers was stopped here in Florida and could have been jailed on

an outstanding warrant before the attacks happened. I then heard of the FINDER project and I immediately jumped at the opportunity to join a group that would help to increase information sharing among law enforcement." Carlos has worked with the group for over four years now and has developed various law enforcement technology projects, including the *CrimeNet* application for the both Melbourne Police Department and the Orange County Sheriff's Office; both the *Y-STR DNA* database and the *ID the Missing*

database for the National Center for Forensic Science; and the *CrimeLine Warrants* database for Central Florida. What Carlos most enjoys about working with LETTR is the diversity of projects. "I believe that LETTR has provided law enforcement with resourceful and cost-effective projects. We not only specialize in distributed database architecture but also have experience in other areas as well. I believe that a diversity of services offered by an organization is the key to any success in the IT field."





LETTR

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The Center for Law Enforcement Technology, Training, & Research (LETTR) is a Florida, not-for-profit corporation. LETTR was formed in September 2007 by the University of Central Florida and members of the Florida Law Enforcement Data Sharing Consortium to consolidate the intellectual property and other resources associated with FINDER, the Florida Integrated Network for Data Exchange and Retrieval. FINDER is a set of computer applications that enable automated information sharing between police agencies.



**For comments or story suggestions, please
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