



Friday, April 22, 2016

For Immediate Release

## **Local Agencies Unite in Effort to Locate Missing Persons** **[Missing in Harris County Day 2016](#) aims to help bring the missing home**

Local agencies and missing person's advocates will host the second annual [Missing in Harris County Day](#) at the University of Houston-Clear Lake on Saturday, May 14, 2016, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This multi-agency collaboration is a proactive approach to obtain quality information used to locate or identify missing loved ones.

"Through this event, we're able to bring all the elements of the Missing Person's reporting process to the community and offer a comfortable place in which to do that," said Sharon M. Derrick, Ph.D., Forensic Anthropologist, Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences. "Changes in technology and streamlined access to resources allow our agencies to combine our efforts for this important annual event."

Law enforcement agencies from within Harris, Galveston and Brooks counties will be represented and available to take missing persons reports at the event. Missing persons will be entered into National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUS) databases, and *voluntary* familial DNA samples can be submitted.

Last year, DNA submissions from several family members led to six successful identifications.

In addition, the event is an opportunity for advocates of missing persons to gain valuable knowledge about available resources as well as about vulnerable populations and how citizens can play a vital role in supporting missing person's recovery efforts.

Missing in Harris County Day 2016 will feature:

- Local law enforcement agencies accepting missing persons reports and updates from families of the missing
- Trained DNA collection specialists collecting voluntary family reference DNA cheek swabs to upload into the NamUS database
- Bilingual assistance to complete a missing person's report or direct attendees to resources
- Panel discussions on the following topics:

**11:30 a.m. – Missing and Exploited Persons**

**1 p.m. – Missing Children**

- More -

### **2016 Missing in Harris County Day Partners**

Harris County Sheriff's Office, Harris County Community Services, Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences, Galveston County Medical Examiner's Office, Houston Police Department, League City Police Department, South Texas Human Rights Center, Texas Center for the Missing. Other collaborators and in-kind sponsors include: National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) and Texas EquuSearch.

## Missing in Harris County Day | May 14, 2016

- Electronic fingerprinting of children and child ID kits
- Activities for children
- Free refreshments provided by H-E-B

### What to bring:

To report a missing person or update information on an existing case in the national missing person's database, event attendees should bring the following:

- Photos of the missing person with identifying features, such as tattoos or birthmarks, or personal items, such as favorite earrings or shirt
- X-rays, dental or medical records
- Police reports or other identifying documents that can be scanned and placed on file
- Two of the missing person's closely related family members from the mother's side to voluntarily submit DNA samples

### Registration:

Register at: <http://online.centerforthemissing.org/2016-missing-in-harris-county-day>

Registration for the event is encouraged, but not required. Registration ensures a yellow ribbon bearing the name of the missing person is waiting for family members at the Welcome Table.

### **About Missing in Harris County Day 2016**

Missing in Harris County Day will be held on May 14th, 2016, from 10a.m. to 3p.m. at the University of Houston-Clear Lake, Bayou Building Atrium II.

[Map to University of Houston-Clear Lake](#)

[Parking Map](#)

[Location of Bayou Building Atrium II](#)

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