**Describe your work:**
It is my responsibility to compare bullets and cartridge cases test fired from firearms to the bullets and cartridge cases found at a crime scene or removed from a victim’s body. We use a sophisticated comparison microscope that allows us to look at two items of evidence simultaneously. I also restore obliterated serial numbers on firearms and determine the distance from which victims are shot by examining the pattern of gunpowder residues found on their clothing. I also am on-call on a rotating basis to respond to crime scenes around the state. I’m responsible for documenting the scene with notes, sketches and measurements, performing some on-site testing of the evidence, and the collection and packaging of the evidence for its return to our lab for further testing.

**What is commonly misunderstood about your work?**
Much of the public thinks the field of forensic science is a most glamorous one, thanks to television and the movies. And while the work is very rewarding and can be exciting at times, glamorous is the last word I’d use to describe our work—just check us out after 24 hours at a nasty crime scene! It’s lots of long hours in front of a microscope, lots of note taking, lots of report writing in front of a computer. We don’t carry guns or wear leather skirts and high heels to crime scenes. We also don’t always solve the case in a matter of hours as they appear to on TV. I was testifying in a grand jury hearing once, and in this particular case I was unable to identify all of the bullets recovered from the crime scene as being fired from the suspect’s firearm. One juror had a hard time believing that, and stated, “Well, I’m disappointed in you—they always figure it out on TV!”