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### Italians train with Durham police

Group is studying cold case tactics

BY STANLEY B. CHAMBERS JR. - STAFF WRITER  
 Published: Sat, May. 16, 2009 02:00AM Modified Fri, May. 15, 2009 11:03PM

DURHAM -- Cloaked in plastic from head to toe, the investigators inched their way around the chalk outline, using an ultraviolet flashlight and a camera to record evidence.

This homicide scene wasn't on the streets, though, but inside a conference room, after a chance communication led a group of Italian forensic investigators to the Durham Police Department.

The 12-member-group, part of a team from the International Crime Analysis Association, was conducting the exercise as part of the organization's focus on researching cold cases.

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This past week in Durham will improve group members' ability to process crime scenes long after the crime has been committed, Marco Strano, the association's president, said through a translator. With headquarters in Rome, ICAA is a nonprofit organization that provides research and training in psychology, forensics and criminology.

Strano was participating in forensics training in Youngsville last year when he sent out an e-mail asking to tour nearby police facilities. Durham was one of the few departments that responded.

The encounter led to trips to Italy for Angela Ashby, the Durham Police Department's forensics manager, and Jason Schiess, the department's crime analysis supervisor, to conduct presentations on Durham cases and assist with research.

Strano is leading an international study on closed homicide cases to create a computer profiling system that would be used on new cases. According to the association's Web site, the system is based on an information-gathering system created by Duke University. Someone using the profiling system would enter details to create a profile of a potential suspect.

Learning about such networks, as well as sharing best practices, helps improves the

skills of local investigators, said Ashby, one of the project's researchers.

"It's more about the exchange of information, the exchange of ideas," she said of working with the Italian group.

Strano, whose group was practicing inside the District 5 Substation on Friday, wished he had more time to spend in the Bull City.

"Durham is a really quiet and relaxing place," he said through the translator. "People are really friendly, nice and kind. That's why we're sort of mad we have to leave Durham."

[stan.chambers@newsobserver.com](mailto:stan.chambers@newsobserver.com) or 919-932-2025

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**LaMujerBlanca wrote on May, 16 8:55 AM:**

This is good for both country's, there are things that can help both in these fields. It's a shame more departments don't get into this kind of training with other departments. I hope they keep this up it will be good for the departments to learn from and about different areas of law enforcement.

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