

My name is Officer Stephanie Bourgeois and I work for the Apache Junction Police Department in Arizona. The reason I decided to get into law enforcement was to help those in need and for me that means whether they are alive or dead. The mission of law enforcement is to protect and serve and that means even those who have passed away and especially those that remain without an identity or nameless. If selected for the Why We Serve funding, I would like to donate to the DNA Doe Project.

I have worked for the department for almost 12 years but for the past 7 years I have been volunteering in the Cold Case Unit here at AJPD. Some investigators have that one case that always sticks with them and mine is our 1992 Jane Doe. She was located in the desert here in Apache Junction on August 6, 1992. She was approximately 16-18 years old and to this date, regardless of our efforts to identify her, she remains unnamed.

In 2012, an exhumation order was written for Jane Doe and I was able to exhume her from a Potter's Field in a cemetery in Superior, Arizona. The reason for this was to collect a DNA sample from her to be uploaded into the DNA database and to have a facial reconstruction completed. The FBI was able to complete the facial reconstruction and her DNA was uploaded into the DNA database but she remains unidentified. Her fingerprints were also previously uploaded into the national database but no hits have come from that.

I am always trying to research what is new in technology or what we can try to help identify her and I recently came across an article in Forensic Magazine about "The Buck Skin Girl" out of Ohio. She was a Jane Doe for 37 years until March 29, 2018 when the DNA Doe Project was able to identify her as 21 year old Marcia King. This is how I first learned about the DNA Doe Project.

The DNA Doe Project is a non-profit organization that assists agencies by using DNA sequencing for genealogy comparison to help identify Jane and John Does and bring closure to their families...to give the unnamed their names back.

So I immediately contacted the co-founders of the DNA Doe Project, Dr. Colleen Fitzpatrick and Margaret Press, and discussed AJPD's Jane Doe with them. It is our hope to submit our Jane Doe's DNA to the DNA Doe Project by August of 2018 in hopes of identifying her.

The DNA Doe Project has created Doe Fund Me accounts so anyone that wants to donate to this cause can. Agencies can submit their Jane and John Does to the DNA Doe Project to have a Doe Fund Me account created in hopes that people will donate so that the testing process can be completed to give closure to families of missing persons and their loved ones brought home to rest.

If selected for the Why We Serve funding, I would like to donate to the DNA Doe Project, specifically to the Doe Fund Me accounts so that even if one family gets closure by having a loved one identified... it would be so worth it.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, in 2007 there were 40,000 sets of unidentified remains in Medical Examiner's Offices throughout the country. Today the number would be significantly, significantly higher. The NamUs website states that, "Over 600,000 individuals go missing in the United States every year. Fortunately, many missing children and adults are quickly found, alive and well. However, tens of thousands of individuals remain missing for more than one year - what many agencies consider "cold cases". It is estimated that 4,400 unidentified bodies are recovered each year, with approximately 1,000 of those bodies remaining unidentified after one year."

The DNA Doe Project has recently identified a John Doe out of Gray Harbor, Washington as Lyle Stevik and a John Doe out of Ohio as Joseph Newton Chandler. Currently they are working on a Jane Doe from Ohio and a John Doe from Washington.

Another great aspect of the DNA Doe Project is that they can conduct Y-STR analysis for genealogy comparison. This has helped assist agencies like Phoenix Police Department in locating a suspect in the early 90's "canal killings."

This organization helps all communities with the work they do, they help our community and they help your community. An individual that goes missing from one place, state, city, community could perhaps wind up in anyone's community, city, State and go unidentified for years regardless of the standard DNA and fingerprint analysis...much like our AJPD Jane Doe. The funding offered by the Why We Serve Award would be put towards giving someone back their loved one and their identity and a final resting place.

Thank you for your consideration and your vote for this amazing organization!

A Youtube video has been created for the "Why We Serve" Award and can be view at this link:

<https://youtu.be/6mYv0lV4V0M>