

Joanne (Jo) Catania

Jo recently retired as the Chief Medical Examiner Investigator at WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine. She began her career in policing as a certified Police Officer in 2000 and has over 23 years of investigative experience. As the Chief Investigator, she developed and administered curriculum for death scene investigators throughout her agency and to community partners such as police officers and emergency professionals.

Catania's passion to provide innovative and affordable standardized training for death scene investigators grew; therefore, she collaborated with the Gift of Life Michigan foundation to acquire a grant that provided her the ability to travel throughout the state and educate hundreds of police officers, emergency professionals, and death investigators. She drew from her 15 years of law enforcement experience where she also specialized as an evidence technician, and 12 years as a death scene investigator to develop trailblazing and engaging curriculum and courseware.

Catania has presented her courses to medical examiner offices, fire departments, police agencies, several police academies, and to the Prosecuting Attorney Association of Michigan. Her expertise was requested in the production of a national child death investigation training video produced by the National Center for Fatality Review and Prevention. She has also participated in the production of a training video for the Michigan Sheriff's Association Victim Services unit. Catania is currently a training subcommittee member of the Governor's Task Force Child Death Protocol Committee. She is also a registered Diplomat with the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators, and the Affiliate President of the Michigan Association of Medical Examiners.

Catania continues to provide education and develop curriculum as a Human Resources Developer with the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards. She is responsible for program evaluation, implementation planning, and curriculum development for police officers throughout Michigan. Additionally, she owns and operates her own training company, Catania Training & Development, LLC, where she continues to provide death investigation education to agencies in Michigan and surrounding states. Catania is an Adjunct Professor at Grand Valley State University for the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Legal Studies where she received her bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and her master's degree in Public Administration.

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