

Young Forensic Scientists Forum Newsletter

Planning, Organizing, and Looking to the Future!

The Young Forensic Science Forum is deep into the planning phase. Year around we are looking for ways to improve our already successful sessions. The 2010 AAFS meetings are right around the corner and we are all looking forward to seeing you all in Seattle. Our Special Session promises to be very eye-opening and informative with a look at where we are and where we are going in forensic science. As young forensic scientists, you are the future of forensic science and it will be exciting to see how we can all make contributions to the future of forensic science.

There are many ways for young forensic scientists to be a part of our sessions, including presenting research at the Bring Your Own Slides and Bring Your Own Poster sessions. Also, attending the Breakfast Session, which is much more intimate, and is a great place to get your questions answered.

One of the biggest goals of the Young Forensic Science Forum is to help young forensic scientists learn about all the opportunities available to them. One way of doing this is to visit the American Academy of Forensic Science's new website, at www.aafs.org. Not only is the website a great resource but it also provides information about becoming a new member. Being a member of a professional organization is very important to professional growth, as well as an honor and responsibility. Also, on the AAFS website is a link to the YFSF website. There you can read the newsletter archives

and find out more ways to become involved in our events.

I forgot to introduce myself in the last issue, so I thought I would do it now. My name is **Arliss Dudley-Cash** and I am the current President of the YFSF. I am currently working on my PhD at the University of Iowa, in the Biosciences program. Go Hawkeyes! I attended my first AAFS and YFSF meeting in 2006, at Seattle. I have been hooked ever since and been very impressed by the way we have been able to raise the bar every year! If you have any questions or comments please don't hesitate to contact me at dudleycash@gmail.com.

Arliss I. Dudley-Cash, BA
YFSF President

2010 YFSF Special Session

The theme for the 2010 Young Forensic Scientist Forum Special Sessions has been decided and we are very excited about it. The theme is "Future of Forensics: Where we are and where we are going." We have selected this theme because we are the next generation of forensic scientists and the possibilities are limitless for us. We want to show not only what the field of forensics currently has to offer, but where we are going with forensics. We want to explore new techniques that are emerging and how we can build upon and improve what we currently have. We want all of the participants to be excited about what forensics has to offer and excited about what the future holds. This is a great opportunity to learn more about their

specific area of interest, but to learn about other areas they may not be aware of or may not have a lot of information on. Keep your eyes open for more updates throughout the year and please do not hesitate to contact us with any ideas and suggestions. You can contact **Tanisha Henson** (Tanisha.henson@yahoo.com) or **Rachael Lehr** (Rachael.lehr@gmail.com)

Tanisha Henson
YFSF Program Chair

2010 YFSF Financial Support

Every year the YFSF relies on the support and contributions of the forensic community to make our Special Session a success. The events held at each meeting include a day long scientific session, a working breakfast session, a poster session, and a “Bring Your Own Slides” presentation. The goal of the YFSF is to assist these scientists in establishing a solid foundation in their field; these sessions are critical in the professional development of our audience.

If you, or your group, is interested in supporting the newest generation of forensic scientists by providing support, whether it is financial or materials, for the 2010 YFSF Special Session, please feel free to contact the Financial Support Chair, **Samantha Neal** at Samantha.Neal@mail.wvu.edu.

Samantha H. Neal
YFSF Financial Support Chair

2010 Breakfast Session

It is a new year for the YFSF Breakfast committee and we thought we would introduce ourselves. My name is **Jenna Oakes-Smith** and I am this year’s Breakfast Chair. I am employed as a Criminalist in the DNA section of the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department Crime Lab. I attended my first AAFS meeting and YFSF session two years ago in Washington, D.C. I really enjoyed the presentations at that meeting and when the organizers announced that they needed help planning for the next year I gladly volunteered. I became the Co-Chair for the breakfast event and helped to recruit members for a resume panel. It was an enjoyable experience and gave me the opportunity to network with personnel from other labs and other disciplines. I enjoyed the time so much I am back again this year.

My Co-Chair is **Melissa DeBerry**. Melissa works in the Technical Assistance Section of the Mississippi Crime Laboratory accepting items of evidence from different submitting agencies. She attended her first AAFS meeting in Denver and met a member of the YFSF committee. Our enthusiastic member recruited her to join the YFSF and she volunteered as the breakfast co-chair. I think Melissa is still trying to figure out what she has gotten herself into, but she is looking forward to the breakfast session in Seattle, as am I.

Opportunities to Speak Out

I wanted to take a moment to outline how new forensic scientists (both young and old) can speak out to their peers. YFSF is designed for forensic scientists with 5 years or less in the field to learn more about their new and exciting profession. As such we offer many opportunities to hone the skills that will help you succeed. As you will read in this newsletter, we are looking for scientists interested in sharing their casework, research, and experiences at the 2010 AAFS Annual Meeting. However, there is an opportunity to reach your peers throughout the year of which many may not be aware. If you are a forensic scientist with a great experience to share (such as obtaining an internship, preparing for your first testimony, or landing a great job), please write a short article and submit it for publication in the YFSF Newsletter. Please send all newsletter questions and submissions to jennifer.w.mercer@gmail.com.

Jennifer Mercer
YFSF Secretary