

Young Forensic Scientists Forum Newsletter

A Call to Action

The warm weather is here once again and the Young Forensic Scientists Forum (YFSF) Program Committee is hard at work planning events for 2007. Throughout my four years of service to the YFSF I have seen this group of young scientists delve further into the professional arena than ever before. As this will be my last year as president, I would like to challenge the young scientists to enhance their involvement within the forensic community as a whole. I advise students and those new to the field of forensic science to not be satisfied with a social membership in our professional community but rather become an active member of the field. Participation will not only broaden your scope of abilities but also foster lasting relationships with distinguished scientists.

There are multiple venues that can be utilized for involvement in the forensic science community such as internships, membership and attendance at regional associations/meetings, membership with the AAFS, as well as volunteering to be a moderator within your respective section of AAFS during the annual meeting. Various sections of the AAFS welcome interest from those new to the field to assist with the annual meeting. The job of moderator encompasses coordinating with presenters in advance of the session to collect the presentations and also make sure that the session stays on schedule. Each section has its own column here within the *Academy News* where important issues respective to the fields as well as the planning progress for the annual meeting are discussed. Stay informed and get involved in your respective section. The contact information for Section Program Chairs may be found on the AAFS website and I encourage all young members of the AAFS to contact their sections and participate in the 2007 annual meeting.

I receive numerous emails each week from individuals inquiring as to how they can become

more a part of the forensic science community. I know the interest is out there, but the interest needs to transform into action. Planning for the 2007 AAFS meeting will be in full swing by August 1, and I hope that we as a group can get involved in national, as well as regional, associations of forensic science. It will be us, the younger generation, that shapes the future of the profession.

— Allison M. Curran, PhD
YFSF President

2007 YFSF Theme Announced

The theme for the 2007 Young Forensic Scientists Forum has been decided! We have chosen the theme “Forensic Science in an Age of Advancing Technology: Maintaining Scientific Integrity and Ethics,” for the upcoming February 2007 session in San Antonio, TX. The theme selection is twofold: the goal of this theme is to target presentations towards up-and-coming technology in forensics as well as how the emergence of these new advances relates to maintaining ethics and scientific integrity in forensic practices. We are seeking to provide session participants with new and cutting edge advances in various forensic disciplines. However, along with the move from traditional practices to new technologies the sciences always face an aspect of controversy. Therefore, we are seeking to provide some insight on how these new advances correlate to ethical questions as well as the maintenance of scientific and legal integrity. As each discipline in the field of forensic sciences maintains their own standards, we plan to supply a variety of different speakers from several sections of the AAFS, thus providing a large pool of enterprising and progressive new topics that have precedent in the forensic sciences. Along with these presentations, speakers will provide insight in how their respective field addresses ethics,

scientific accuracy, and veracity. If you have any questions regarding the 2007 theme or the YFSF special session please contact **Marrah Lachowicz** (gradpath@aol.com) or this year's program co-chair **Amanda Frohwein** (amanda.k.frohwein@usdoj.gov). We look forward to your participation in the YFSF session this year.

– Marrah E. Lachowicz, MFS
YFSF 2007 Program Chair

YFSF Poster Session

Planning has begun for the YFSF Poster Session to be held at the 59th AAFS Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas. YFSF encourages undergraduate and graduate forensic science students, as well as forensic scientists new to the field (independent of age), to get involved and present information on their schools, laboratories, research, or casework. The poster session is designed to provide an informal avenue for meeting other forensic students and scientists. Last year's poster session was well attended and we hope to make this year just as great. Even if you are not interested in presenting, make sure you stop by to see what's new and interesting in forensic science.

Due to the large number of unregistered posters presented at last year's meeting, all future YFSF Poster Session participants will be required to register with the poster session chair at least one week before the session. Registration consists of e-mailing an abstract and curriculum vitae or resume to the poster chair and receiving a confirmation letter in return. All interested presenters should contact **Jennifer Mercer** at yfsfposter@gmail.com.

Lastly, the YFSF would like to thank last year's poster presenters for all their hard work: JoNell Aarons, Jennifer Beach, Laura Conner, Stephanie Crider, Anthony Dellinger, Arliss Dudley-Cash, Patricia Guerra, Joshua Gunn, Peter Harrington, Casandra Hernandez, Davia Hudson, Michael Macias, Stephanie Migchelsen, Lilliana Moreno, Paola A. Prada, Rachel Schoneman, and Rachel Zygmuntowicz.

– Jennifer Wiseman Mercer
YFSF Poster Session Chair

2007 YFSF Annual Breakfast

Don't mess with Texas! An approach to getting your first job!

You know you're in Texas when...

- You can make sun tea instantly.
- The birds use potholders to pull worms out of the ground.
- The best parking spot is determined by shade not distance.
- Farmers are feeding their chickens crushed ice to keep them from laying boiled eggs.
- You realize that asphalt has a liquid state.

Now that I have your attention I would like to introduce myself. My name is **Erica Blais** and I am your 2007 Young Forensic Scientists Forum Breakfast Session Chair! I am thrilled to have the opportunity to plan the 2007 Breakfast Session in San Antonio, TX. It promises to be an instructive gathering in a comfortable setting. Presently, I am a forensic chemist in the Criminalistics Unit of the Massachusetts State Police Crime Laboratory. I graduated with a Bachelors of Science Degree in Forensic Science from the University of New Haven. I have had the opportunity to attend three past AAFS meetings, including the YFSF. Looking back, I realize how much of an influence the members and attendees of this session were on me and my future in the forensic science community. I hope that each and every one of you will come out of this conference feeling the same way.

Preparation has already begun for the 2007 breakfast session. Resumé review and critique has always been a success, so I have decided to make this the spotlight of the morning. The breakfast session will also focus on the importance of the "internship" and "temporary position" as a way to get your feet through those big laboratory doors. We hope to provide a list of labs that have these programs for students who want or need this experience as a requirement for graduation.

I look forward to meeting all of the next generation of young forensic scientists and to catching up with those members I haven't seen in a while! So, gather your favorite t-shirt and those cowboy boots and join us for what will be an exciting occasion!

Any suggestions or comments about what you may want to see at this year's breakfast session, please feel free to contact me at Erica.blais@pol.state.ma.us.

– Erica Blais, BS
YFSF Breakfast Chair

Young Forensic Scientists Forum Poster Session

**AAFS 59th Annual Meeting
San Antonio, TX
February 19-24, 2007**

Present **YOUR** research, casework, laboratory, or school program to a broad audience including forensic students, scientists, administrators, and faculty!

Meet other students and scientists who are new to the field of forensics!

Get involved with an organization that is all about what you do!

Contact Jen Mercer at yfsfposter@gmail.com

YFSF Bring Your Own Slides

The YFSF Bring Your Own Slides presentations are a wonderful opportunity to inform colleagues of the work being done in your laboratory, school, or agency. The presentations are a brief overview of the work that is being done by fellow young forensic scientists in a less formal manner than general talks. In the past we have had people present research, case studies, and future initiatives. We hope to have a wide variety of topics and presenters at the next meeting so if you would like to present, please contact Robin Bowen at robin.bowen@mail.wvu.edu. There is still plenty of time to decide what you would like to present to your peers!

—Robin Bowin, BS
YFSF Program Co-Chair

Correction

In the May/June 2006 YFSF Newsletter the talk given by **Anita Wonder** and **Michele Yezzo** was referred to as a blood spatter talk. This was incorrect, and with the deepest apologies of the YFSF we would like to make this correction. The evidence as a whole is correctly referred to as Bloodstain Pattern Evidence and blood spatters are a small part of this discipline.

About the YFSF

The YFSF is dedicated to the education, enrichment, and professional development of young forensic scientist. YFSF participants can be non-AAFS-members while organizers must be AAFS members from any section within the AAFS. The Forum provides a medium to educate and network with young forensic scientist to facilitate their establishment within the forensic science community. The YFSF is composed of a Special Session, a Poster Session, a Bring Your Own Slides Session, and a Breakfast Session during the AAFS Annual Meeting. Outside the Academy meeting the YFSF works to further the endeavors of young forensic scientists through the YFSF newsletter and the YFSF website (<http://www.aafs.org/yfsf/index.htm>). YFSF President **Allison Curran** (allison.curran@fiu.edu) and YFSF Secretary **Jeannette Perr** (jeannette.perr@fiu.edu) can answer any questions about the YFSF and are looking to many different levels of young forensic scientist participating next year's session.

—Jeannette Perr, PhD
YFSF Secretary

YFSF Website

The YFSF website is just starting to be revamped under the leadership of **Amy Richmond Aylor** (amyaylor@gmail.com). Amy is looking for help and suggestions so if you are interested in participating, please feel free to email Amy.

—Amy Aylor
YFSF Website Co-Chair



Young Forensic Scientists Forum

Our Website is:



Under Construction

We're looking for:

- links to your websites
- announcements about your research group

What would you like to see?

<http://www.aafs.org/yfsf/index.htm>

Contact Amy Aylor
yfsfwebmaster@gmail.com