

Supplement to the *Academy News*
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Editor: Lauren R. Pharr, MA

Young Forensic Scientists Forum Newsletter

A Letter from the YFSF President

Greetings Young Forensic Scientists! As the fall months fly by and with the holidays rapidly approaching, you should keep one very important date in mind. That date is the registration date for the 2011 AAFS Annual Meeting. Registration begins in mid-to-late November, and the special session registration deadlines are not far behind. Every year, more and more new and young forensic scientists register for the Young Forensic Scientists Forum Special Session, so make sure you register early to ensure your spot; furthermore, *there is no on-site registration for the YFSF Special Session*, so make sure you pre-register by the January 26 deadline.

The YFSF Special Session has been growing in popularity for a number of years; in the past, we have had waiting lists for people to get into the session. We regret having to turn anyone away, but we are limited by the size of the venue where the meeting is held. Check out the articles on session events from the YFSF program chairs and co-chairs, since they have been working hard to put together another amazing year. Also, if you were unable to get your abstract in on time to present at AAFS, or if you are a little shy about presenting in front of a large audience, do not forget that you can submit your abstract to us for the YFSF Bring Your Own Slides and Bring Your Own Poster Sessions. So get those abstracts in! Looking forward to seeing you all in Chicago!

Tanisha Henson, BS (tanisha.henson@yahoo.com)
2011 YFSF President

Questions and Answers from the YFSF Secretary

Greetings everyone—I hope you are having a happy fall season! The previous newsletter's Q&A section was well received, so I have decided to continue with this newly implemented section. If you have any questions that you would like for me to answer in future newsletters, please send your questions to lpharr1@tigers.lsu.edu.

Can I attend the YFSF events at the upcoming meeting in Chicago even if I am neither a member of the YFSF nor AAFS?

ANSWER: Yes, you can attend the upcoming meeting and workshops, but you will need to register for the workshops, special sessions, breakfasts, or lunches you would like to attend and pay the appropriate registration fees. Please visit www.aafs.org/aafs-2011-annual-meeting for additional information. If you plan to attend the YFSF Special Session on Tuesday, February 22, 2011, or any of the other workshops, please pre-register because there is no on-site registration, and we would hate for you to miss out on any opportunity.

Lauren Pharr, MA
YFSF Secretary

Financial Liaison

The YFSF relies on the support and contributions of the forensic community to make our Special Session a success each year. Events held at each meeting include a day-long YFSF Scientific

Session, a working Breakfast Session, a Bring Your Own Slides presentation, and a Poster Session. These sessions are critical in the professional development of young scientists trying to establish a solid foundation in the field of forensic science.

In the past, we have received both monetary and educational support from AAFS sections, universities with FEPAC accredited programs, and various forensic science vendors. We would like to thank our current sponsors who have pledged their support for the 2011 YFSF Special Session:

- ❖ AAFS Criminalistics Section
- ❖ AAFS General Section
- ❖ Laurentian University
- ❖ University of Alabama at Birmingham

It's not too late! If you or your group is interested in providing support for the 2011 YFSF Special Session, whether through a financial contribution or donation of materials, please contact Jackie Jenkins at jjenkins71@gmail.com.

*Jackie Jenkins, PhD, MSFS
YFSF Financial Liaison*

YFSF Breakfast Session

Greetings from Mississippi!! I hope everyone has enjoyed his or her summer. We are getting closer to the meeting in Chicago, and I am anticipating a great breakfast session. Many college students who have graduated or are getting ready to graduate must get use to the idea of dressing in a professional manner. Most students, myself included, were in the habit of getting ready for class by throwing on a pair of blue jeans, a t-shirt, and tennis shoes, putting a hat on and running out the door for class. It did not matter what you wore to class, primarily because you did not have to dress to impress anyone. However, once you graduate, you have to dress a certain way to be taken seriously. Everyone likes to believe that appearances do not matter. Unfortunately, your outward appearance is the first thing that people notice when you walk into a room.

Would you wear jeans to a job interview? Would you wear a cocktail dress to a seminar? Would you wear jeans and a t-shirt to a professional conference? Would you wear a mini skirt and tank top to testify in court? I would hope the answers to those questions would be a huge **NO!!!**

Those who plan to attend the 2011 YFSF Breakfast Session will learn how professional attire, general appearance, and demeanor may affect your credibility and prospect of being hired to work at either a forensic laboratory or company. Our speakers will include **Anjali Swienton**, of SciLawForensics; **Robin Bowen**, West Virginia University Forensic Science Initiative; **Lucy Davis**, Northeast Regional Forensic Institute (NERFI); and **Susan Ballou**, Office of Law Enforcement Standards.

This year's YFSF Breakfast Session will be a lot of fun and informative. The Breakfast Session should give everyone a better idea on how to add characteristics of professionalism to his or her resume. We will also have a resume review panel. The panel will be made up of professionals within the Academy. If you have any questions concerning the Breakfast Session or the resume panel email me at mdeberry@mcl.state.ms.us.

*Melissa DeBerry
YFSF Breakfast Session Chair*

YFSF Special Session

A criminal investigation is like putting together a puzzle without the box top—many pieces exist, but you do not know what the final picture is really supposed to be. As an investigator receives more information, connections are made, links are unveiled, and the picture, while it may never truly be complete, becomes a little clearer.

Large portions of those connections are made through forensic science and analysis. Individual analysts may work different pieces of evidence, or a single analyst may interpret the reports of other examiners to come up with new conclusions. All of the work forms a web of information that a prosecutor can use to create a single theory of a crime that will be presented in court. This year's Young Forensic Scientist Forum (YFSF) Special Session will focus on how evidence connections are made and interpreted.

Before we begin the scientific presentations, AAFS President **Joe Bono** will instruct us on how to keep the science in forensic science, Membership Coordinator Cheryl Hunter, will share with us the procedures for becoming an AAFS member, and **Michael Peat** will outline the dos and don'ts of publishing in the *Journal of Forensic Sciences*. **Paul Kisch** will kick off the scientific presentations by sharing the role that bloodstain pattern analysis can play in a death investigation. Then **Kristine Olsson**, a trace chemist, will show us how multidiscipline evidence should flow through the lab, and **Mary Case** will tell us how pathology is useful in solving crimes. The Emerging Forensic Scientist winner **Jordan Brough** will finish the morning by discussing his method for determining what software was used to print a questioned inkjet document.

During the afternoon, **Steve Ousley** will discuss the holistic nature of anthropology, and **Maria Allaire** and **Robert Barsley** will review interesting death crime scenes. **Richard Vorder Bruegge** returns again this year to share how forensics benefits from biometric modalities. The special session will all come together as retired District Attorney **Rockne Harmon** explains how effective collaboration is needed in the justice systems to ensure appropriate outcomes.

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Young Forensic Scientists Forum cont.

We hope that you will join us for this exciting line up of speakers; however, to participate in the YFSF Special Session you must pre-register. You can register at the AAFS website www.aafs.org/aafs-2011-annual-meeting. Also, as you are planning your trip to Chicago, think about if you would like to share a room with another young forensic scientist. If you need help finding a roommate, feel free to email **Jenna Oakes-Smith** (jloakes-smith@slmpd.org) or **Amanda Kittoe** (akittoe@gmail.com), and we will research roommate options for you. If enough people email us, we may be able to place students in direct contact with others looking for a roommate. As always, if you have any questions or comments, feel free to write Jenna Oakes-Smith (jloakes-smith@slmpd.org) or Amanda Kittoe (akittoe@gmail.com).

Jenna Oakes-Smith
YFSF Special Session Chair

Amanda Kittoe, BA
YFSF Special Session Co-Chair

YFSF Bring Your Own Slides

Hello young forensic scientists! We are drawing even closer to the February meeting. We appreciate all those who have expressed interest in the BYOS event and we are continuing to accept CVs and abstracts. We would like to know if you have: 1) research that contributes to the field of forensic science; or, 2) a case or an important topic from which young and emerging forensic scientists would benefit.

Presentations and publications are an important part of gaining experience, building your CV, and becoming the type of forensic scientist who makes a contribution to the field.

If you are interested in presenting, please send an abstract and your CV to **Martin Overly** at martin.overly@mail.wvu.edu or **Alison Mostrom** at alison.p.mostrom@usdoj.gov. Abstracts and CVs need to be submitted by December 15, 2010.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Martin Overly, MS
BYOS Chair

Ali Mostrom, MSFS
BYOS Co-Chair

YFSF Poster Session

Young Forensic Scientists, ask yourselves the following three questions:

- 1) Have you been working on an interesting research project or forensic case?
- 2) Would you like the chance to build your curriculum vita and get feedback from professionals in your field?
- 3) Are you an undergraduate student, graduate student, or new forensic professional that is interested in presenting at the 2011 AAFS meeting in Chicago?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then the Young Forensic Scientists Forum Poster Session is the place for you!

The 2011 YFSF Poster Section can provide you with the opportunity to present your research and/or interesting cases in a friendly setting to get feedback and experience at the beginning of your career. At last year's YFSF Poster Session in Seattle, 16 posters, by 52 authors were presented to the forensic community. These 16 posters were very well received, and several diplomats visited the YFSF Poster Section to provide constructive comments and feedback.

If you are interested in presenting at the YFSF Poster Session, please submit your curriculum vita and a one to two page abstract by January 1, 2011, to the YFSF Poster Chair, **Stephanie Crider** at crider_sm@yahoo.com.

If you have any questions, feel free to email Stephanie as well. We are looking forward to reading all of your submissions and having an amazing poster session in Chicago!

Stephanie M. Crider, MA
YFSF Poster Session Chair