

# Young Forensic Scientists Forum Newsletter

## A Letter from the YFSF President

As 2011 begins to wind down and the excitement of the 2012 AAFS Annual Meeting increases, there are two very important deadlines to keep in mind: 1) the January 25, 2012, registration deadline for the AAFS Annual Meeting, which begins mid-November; and, 2) the January 13, 2012, hotel registration deadline for either the Marriott Marquis or the Hilton Atlanta. What's so special about registering so early? You get to pre-register for all the fun and fabulous special sessions, workshops, breakfasts, and luncheons. These events fill up quickly and we want to reach every new and young forensic scientist that attends the AAFS meeting. Unfortunately, if you do not pre-register for these events, you will not be able to register onsite for them. Each year the YFSF Special Session grows, and the YFSF officers try to avoid turning away people or putting them on a waiting list but have had to do so in the past. Another great opportunity to think about is presenting at the YFSF Bring Your Own Slides or Bring Your Own Poster Sessions. If you were unable to get your abstract in on time to present during the main AAFS sessions or if you are a little shy about presenting in front of a large audience, these two sessions offer a fabulous chance to present on a smaller scale. YFSF looks forward to seeing you all in Atlanta!

*Tanisha V. Henson, MFS*  
*YFSF President*  
*tanisha.henson@yahoo.com*

## A Letter from the YFSF Secretary

Do you want to become more involved in the forensic community? Are you interested in sharing your research with other forensic scientists? If you answered yes to either question, and if you have five years experience or less working full-time in a forensic environment, then the YFSF is for you! One of the best ways to become involved and to learn about the various forensic disciplines and career opportunities is to attend the YFSF Special and Breakfast Sessions at the 2012 AAFS Annual Meeting in Atlanta. Please visit [www.aafs.org/aafs-2012-annual-meeting](http://www.aafs.org/aafs-2012-annual-meeting) to register for these events. See page 20 for the 2012 registration form. Select item S-2 "Young Forensic Scientists Forum" in box 3 of the registration form.

Furthermore, if you would like to share either your research or a case study with other young forensic scientists, please consider presenting your data at either the YFSF Poster Session or YFSF Bring Your Own Slides Session. Both sessions provide non-intimidating presentation environments, so do not let a fear of public speaking or a lack of artistic ability keep you from sharing your work. Please contact the officers for the session of interest to learn more. Lastly, please do not hesitate to contact **Lauren Pharr** at [lpharr1@tigers.lsu.edu](mailto:lpharr1@tigers.lsu.edu) with any questions you may have about the YFSF and the benefits the YFSF has to offer.

*Lauren Pharr, MA*  
*YFSF Secretary*

## Financial Liaison for the YFSF

Time is running out! Do not miss your chance to support the YFSF and help us make our Special Session a success! Events held at each meeting include a day-long 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. The YFSF relies on the support and contributions of the forensic community. In the past we have received both monetary and educational support from AAFS Sections, universities with FEPAC accredited programs, and various forensic science vendors. Organizations may contribute in several ways such as a financial donation, donation of materials, or through sponsorship of the YFSF Special Session lunch or breaks. If you or your group is interested in providing support for the 2012 YFSF Special Session, please contact **Jackie Jenkins** at [j.jenkins71@gmail.com](mailto:j.jenkins71@gmail.com).

*Jackie Jenkins, PhD, MSFS*  
*YFSF Financial Liaison*

## YFSF Special Session

The forensic science field is continuously growing and new advancements are being made. New breakthroughs in the field can change the way investigations are performed and how evidence is collected and processed. This year's Young

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## Young Forensic Scientists Forum cont.

Forensic Scientists Forum Special Session, *Contemporary Topics in the Forensic Science Community*, will highlight new advancements and topics in the field and what impacts they are making.

The full-day of speakers will consist of professionals discussing progressions and new topics in a wide range of disciplines, including digital and multimedia, forensic veterinary science, toxicology, forensic psychiatry, and much more. The speakers who have been chosen are knowledgeable in their fields, and are bringing interesting and beneficial information to the session.

The YFSF Special Session schedule is currently being finalized. Be on the lookout for the next YFSF newsletter, which will contain detailed speaker information to help plan your trip to Atlanta. Any questions regarding the session can be sent to **Martin Overly** ([martin.overly@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:martin.overly@mail.wvu.edu)) or **Lindsey Crass** ([lindsey.crass@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:lindsey.crass@mail.wvu.edu)).

*Martin Overly*                      *Lindsey Crass*  
*YFSF Special Session Chair*    *YFSF Special Session Co-Chair*

### YFSF Breakfast Session

Greetings from Mississippi! Summer is over and the fall weather is amazing. Only a few months remain until the Academy meeting in Atlanta, and we are excited to see old friends and meet some new ones. With the school year almost half complete, a lot of students are getting ready to graduate and to look for jobs in the forensics community. As a result, the main questions going through students' minds are often the following: "What will make me stand out from the pack?", "What will make hiring managers take notice of what I have to offer?", "How will my resume play a part in finding a job?"

These questions and more will be answered at the 2012 YFSF Breakfast Session. The speakers scheduled to attend the Breakfast Session have many years of experience working in a crime lab and reviewing resumes. Our first speaker will be **Jenna Oakes-Smith**, a forensic scientist with the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. She will be discussing "lab life" and what it actually means to have a job in a forensics lab. Some people have a misguided view of what a crime lab actually does due to forensic shows on television. Jenna Oakes-Smith will also discuss the differences between public and private labs. This will be very informative for those attendees who are not sure which direction they want to go.

Our second speaker will be **M. Lee Goff**, Director of the Forensics Science Program, Chaminade University of Honolulu. Working in an academic setting, he has had the occasion to review a number of resumes from perspective employees, graduate students, and witnesses. He also has had the opportunity to assist his own students in producing their own resumes. According to him, he has seen what should be done, should not be done, and on occasion, seen a "What the heck is that there for?" Dr. Goff's talk will be quite enlightening.

As always, we will have a resume panel following the speakers.

However, this year the YFSF Breakfast Session will have a representative from every section of the Academy on this panel. The YFSF officers are expecting a large turnout for the 2012 YFSF Breakfast Session. If you have any questions, feel free to email them to **Melissa DeBerry** at [mdeberry@mcl.state.ms.us](mailto:mdeberry@mcl.state.ms.us). I look forward to seeing everyone in Atlanta!

*Melissa DeBerry*  
*YFSF Breakfast Session Chair*

### YFSF Bring Your Own Slides

Hello young forensic scientists! The February meeting is just around the corner, which means abstracts for the YFSF BYOS Session are due soon! We appreciate all those who have expressed interest and have submitted CVs and abstracts. If you are interested in presenting, there is still time to submit and we encourage you to do so. The BYOS event is looking for: 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.

Do not miss this fantastic opportunity to contribute to your field and gain experience in presenting. If you are interested in presenting, please send an abstract and your CV to **Alison Mostrom** at [alison.p.mostrom@usdoj.gov](mailto:alison.p.mostrom@usdoj.gov) or **Amber Neitzel** at [aneitzel@email.arizona.edu](mailto:aneitzel@email.arizona.edu). Abstracts and CVs need to be submitted by December 15, 2011. We look forward to hearing from you!

*Ali Mostrom, MSFS*  
*BYOS Chair*

*Amber Neitzel, BS*  
*BYOS Co-Chair*

### YFSF Poster Session

We would like to encourage both students and young professionals in each section to get involved at this year's AAFS Scientific Meeting by participating in the 2012 Young Forensic Scientists Forum Poster Session. It is not too late—submissions are still being accepted. The YFSF Poster Session is an opportunity to showcase not only a student's research, but also research of young professionals of all ages.

Please note there has been a date change, the poster session is now scheduled for the evening of **Tuesday, February 21, 2012**.

If you are interested in presenting your work at the 2012 YFSF Poster Session, submit a one-page abstract and curriculum vitae before the **Monday, December 19 deadline**. Please review the AAFS abstract policy and general instructions for help with the content of your abstract. Notifications of acceptance will be sent out by January 9, 2012.

Submissions and questions regarding the YFSF Poster Session can be submitted to: [YFSF.PosterSession@gmail.com](mailto:YFSF.PosterSession@gmail.com). We look forward to reviewing your submissions for the 2012 YFSF Poster Session!

*Taryn Mead, BS*  
*YFSF Poster Session Chair*

*Jennifer Malone, PhD*  
*YFSF Poster Session Co-Chair*