

Young Forensic Scientists Forum Newsletter

A Letter from the YFSF President

As you are making plans to attend the AAFS Annual Meeting in Chicago, do not forget to take advantage of all the wonderful events AAFS holds each year. Attending the section sessions is a great way to meet people in your field. An additional cost but also a great way to get continuing education is to attend the workshop, special sessions, breakfasts, or luncheons. If you plan to take advantage of any of these wonderful sessions, do not forget AAFS has a continuing education program. With this program you can receive general education credits, as well as continuing education credits, for other organizations to which you may already be a member. Please review all upcoming registration materials carefully ensuring you make the most of your meeting experience.

The 2010 YFSF Special Session planning is well underway. We will be holding our special session on Tuesday, February 22, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. We are also continuing our tradition of the annual YFSF Poster and Slides Sessions to be held on Tuesday, February 22, from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM and Wednesday, February 23, following the AAFS Annual Business Meeting. If you would like to present a poster or a brief slides presentation, please contact the chairs for these sessions with: 1) title; 2) brief abstract; and, 3) CV for your submission. If you are interested in presenting a poster, please contact the YFSF Poster Chair, **Stephanie Crider** at crider_sm@yahoo.com. If you are interested in presenting slides, please contact the Bring Your Own Slides Chair **Martin Overly** at martin.overly@mail.wvu.edu. Finally, we will hold our Breakfast Session on Thursday February 24, from 7:00 AM to 9:30 AM. If you are interested in participating in the YFSF Breakfast Session Resume Review, please contact **Melissa DeBerry** at mdeberry@mcl.state.ms.us. All of these events are included with registration for the YFSF Special Session.

To keep the registration cost of these events low for our target audience (forensic science professionals new in their careers and students), each year we ask for financial contributions to supplement the cost of our events. We hope a low cost to participate in the YFSF Special Session will allow meeting registrants to attend other events at the AAFS annual meeting. If your group or organization is interested in donating to the YFSF, please contact the YFSF Financial Liaison **Jackie Jenkins** at jjenkins71@gmail.com. Finally, if you are a student, please take advantage of the wonderful grant opportunities the Forensic Sciences Foundation has to offer. Each year travel grant funding is offered to students to supplement the cost to attend the meeting. Also, the FSF provides funding for research projects (\$500-\$5000) annually. Please do not hesitate to apply for these grants at any stage of your undergraduate or graduate research. If you would like more information please visit their website at www.forensicsciencesfoundation.org/grants/TravelGrant.htm. If you plan to present your research at the AAFS meeting, you may also want to consider applying for the Emerging Forensic Scientist Award. Your poster or slide presentation will be reviewed by members of the FSF during the meeting and if selected, you will receive an award to cover all expenses to attend the 2012 meeting. For more information please see www.forensicsciencesfoundation.org/downloads/12thEFSAForm.pdf.

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

A Note from the YFSF Secretary

As secretary, I have decided to implement a new question and answer section to the YFSF portion of the newsletter. The Q&A section found within the newsletter will primarily pertain to the upcoming meeting in Chicago. If you have

questions concerning either a career in forensics or the educational path you should take, please refer to the Q&A section posted on the YFSF website www2.aafs.org/yfsf/info_request.html.

In each newsletter between now and February, I will answer a series of questions you have sent me. Here is an overview of the types of question to be addressed in this newsletter and future newsletters:

September 2010 – travel plans, YFSF abstracts

November 2010 – YFSF abstracts continued and conference registration

January 2011– what to pack and what to leave at home

I enjoy reading and answering the questions you send me, so please keep them coming!

Lauren Pharr, MA (Lpharr1@tigers.lsu.edu)
YFSF Secretary

Questions and Answers from the YFSF Secretary

1. How do I join the YFSF?

The only requirement to be a *participant* of YFSF is a willingness to dedicate some of your time and to have less than five years of forensic work experience. You will need to pre-register for the YFSF Special Session when you pre-register to attend the 2011 AAFS meeting. Keep in mind that you cannot register for our session at the AAFS meeting.

If you wish to serve as an YFSF *officer*, you must be a current Student Affiliate, Trainee Affiliate, or Associate Member of the Academy or have an application on file with the AAFS.

2. Can I submit an abstract to present either a YFSF slides presentation or YFSF poster presentation if I am not a member of AAFS?

Yes, we encourage new and young forensic scientists, as well as students, to present at either the YFSF Bring Your Own Slides or YFSF Poster Sessions. You also may present at both sections as long as you do not present the same research twice. Presenting with the YFSF is a fantastic opportunity to practice public speaking and to present to your peers. If you are in the process of completing your master's degree or any other graduate program, this is a wonderful opportunity to present your research.

3. I am a student—plane tickets, transportation, and hotel rooms are expensive. Can you suggest any ways for me to keep my travel costs down if I do not receive a travel award?

Travel costs can be reduced in many ways: 1) Consider volunteering for AAFS as they are always in need of volunteers, and certain volunteer opportunities can result in free meeting registration. However, some restrictions apply so be sure to get more information from the website: <http://aafs.org/sites/default/files/pdf/11VolunteerFormRev7-10-10.pdf>. Volunteering is also a great way to network. 2) Each year AAFS partners with an airline to offer discounted air fare. This year, AAFS has partnered up with

United Airlines. You can either purchase your airline ticket online at www.united.com or contact them at 1-800-521-4041 and give them the promotion code **585WH**. 3) A roommate is another great way to save money. AAFS has partnered with the Hyatt Regency Chicago to be the headquarter hotel for the 2011 Annual Meeting. The Hyatt Regency has a block of rooms available at the conference rate of \$169 per night (plus tax). Reserve your hotel room early because once the block of rooms are filled the reduced hotel rate will not be available. Visit <http://aafs.org/make-your-chicago-2011-hotel-reservations> for more information. 4) Take snacks with you from home and buy bottled water or snacks from a local grocery store or drug store when you arrive. 5) Research the city you are going to and look for inexpensive restaurants. 6) Last but not least, try to carpool, take public transportation, or walk to as many places as you can.

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 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.

If you or your organization is interested in providing support, whether through a financial contribution or donation of materials, for the 2011 YFSF Special Session, please contact **Jackie Jenkins** at j.jenkins71@gmail.com.

Jackie Jenkins, PhD, MSFS
YFSF Financial Liaison

YFSF Breakfast Session – 2011

Greetings from Mississippi!! I hope that everyone has had a pleasant and somewhat relaxing summer. We have lots of exciting things planned for the Young Forensic Scientists Forum. In keeping with the Academy's theme of "Eleven Sections, One Academy," the topic of the 2011 breakfast session will be "*Professionalism 101: WHAT EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW.*"

I am excited to welcome back **Anjali Swienton**, **Susan Ballou**, and **Robin Bowen**. **Lucy A. Davis** will be joining us too. These well-respected forensic scientists have graciously agreed to speak on professionalism in the workplace. Some of the topics they will cover at our Breakfast Session include: 1) how to dress for an interview; 2) how to present yourself in the best light to a potential employer; and, 3) how to speak in front of prominent members of the Academy.

Also, we will have a resume panel at the end of the session. We hope to have members of every section available to review your resume and answer any questions you may have concerning the reviewers' respective jobs, the interview process, or the Academy.

Young Forensic Scientists Forum cont.

I hope you enjoy the rest of your summer, and I look forward to seeing everyone in Chicago!

Melissa DeBerry
YFSF Breakfast Session Chair

YFSF Special Session – 2011

A criminal investigation is like putting together a puzzle without the box top—there are a whole lot of pieces, but you do not know what the final picture is really supposed to be. As the 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 these connections are made through forensic science and analysis. Individual analysts may work with 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 results in 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 YFSF Special Session will focus on how evidence connections are made and interpreted.

The morning will begin with a bloodstain pattern analyst who will show how an effective crime scene reconstruction relies on the report of the pathologist, DNA analysts, and even first responders. A trace chemist will show how the processing of a single item can preserve or destroy the work of multiple sections, and a pathologist will tell us how much work really goes into determining a cause of death. The afternoon brings anthropologists discussing ancient and modern remains, an entomologist establishing time of death, and an odontologist determining identity. The session will come together as a retired district attorney explains how evidence is successfully presented in a court of law.

The schedule for the YFSF Special Session is currently being finalized, so look for speaker information to be introduced in the next YFSF newsletter. Start planning your trip to join us in Chicago in February. Until then, please send any comments or questions to 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 – 2011

It is September—classes have begun, vacations are winding down, and it is time to start thinking about presenting at the 2011 AAFS Meeting in Chicago! Are you a new forensic professional with an interesting case to share? Are you a student with an exciting research project? The YFSF Bring Your Own Slides session is the perfect place to present your work to peers at an international meeting. All disciplines are welcome! Do not miss out on this opportunity. To participate, please submit a one page abstract and your resume or CV by December 15, 2010.

We would love to hear from you. If you are interested in presenting or have any questions, you can contact us at martin.overly@mail.wvu.edu or alison.p.mostrom@usdoj.gov.

Martin Overly, MS
BYOS Chair

Ali Mostrom, MSFS
BYOS Co-Chair

YFSF Poster Session – 2011

Hey ya'll! We continue to accept abstracts for the YFSF Poster Session. The Poster Session provides an excellent opportunity for students to showcase their research and receive feedback from AAFS Members, Diplomats, and colleagues alike. It also is a great opportunity to help build your resume and network while presenting interesting research. The Poster Session is open to all who want to present. If you are interested in presenting your research at the Poster Session, please contact either the Poster Session Co-Chair **Taryn Mead** (taryn.mead@sfgov.org) or myself (crider_sm@yahoo.com) with your abstract and CV. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Both Taryn and I are looking forward to reading your abstracts!

Stephanie M. Crider, MA
YFSF Poster Session Chair

Taryn Mead
YFSF Poster Session Co-Chair