

Young Forensic Scientists Forum Newsletter

A Letter from the YFSF President

The AAFS 65th Anniversary Meeting is right around the corner! Over the last year, the Young Forensic Scientists Forum's (YFSF) Program Committee has worked hard to develop a great session. The YFSF Special Session (S2) is a multi-day event geared towards an audience with five years or less professional experience. Online registration for the session is open and seats are still available. The YFSF session tends to fill up quickly, so if you are interested in attending - register today!

Registration for the YFSF Special Session includes:

- **Tuesday Session** (February 19):
A day-long session (morning and afternoon session that includes lunch) of speakers covering a variety of forensic science related topics.
- **Tuesday Evening Session** (February 19):
YFSF Bring Your Own Poster Session
- **Wednesday Evening Session** (February 20):
YFSF Bring Your Own Slide Session
- **Thursday Morning Session** (February 21):
YFSF Breakfast Session that includes breakfast and the resumé review panel.

Once you arrive and check in at registration, you will receive a program guide which lists the times and locations of the meeting events.

Please use this guide as a reference to locate the YFSF session's room and start times for each of the above YFSF events. For your convenience, the program guide includes maps for each level of the meeting facility. During the multi-day YFSF Special Session, please express any interest you may have in serving on the 2013-14 YFSF committee. Participating on the YFSF committee is a great way to get involved in AAFS and to network with your forensic peers. The YFSF committee looks forward to seeing everyone in Washington, DC!

Lindsey E. Saunders, BS
YFSF President
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A Note from the YFSF Secretary

The AAFS 65th Anniversary Meeting is quickly approaching; hopefully, you are planning to attend and your travel arrangements have been made. If not, remember that the AAFS meeting is an international meeting and hotel accommodations become limited the closer we get to the meeting. You should book your room as soon as possible. The Marriott Wardman Park Hotel is the headquarter hotel and is the best location in which to stay. If the Marriott is full, then try to stay in a nearby hotel that is within walking distance to

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the meeting. Not sure where to stay? Look on the AAFS website (www.aafs.org/2013-annual-meeting), click the meeting accommodations button. As additional options become available, information will be posted to this webpage.

Once you arrive, be sure to stop by the AAFS registration desk to pick up your nametag and AAFS tote bag. The latter will contain the book of *Proceedings* (abstracts), the final *Program*, and the program guide which lists the times and the locations of events. Use these items to plan your week or if Apps are your passion, download the free AAFS Guidebook App to easily navigate your way through the meeting. Now regarding meeting's attire, while the Academy does not have an official dress code, try to dress conservatively yet comfortably.

The meeting is a wonderful opportunity to market yourself to future employers and co-workers, so keep this in mind as you attend the receptions and the employment forum. Another good idea is to carry extra copies of your curriculum vita (CV) or business cards, because you never know who you may meet. The AAFS 65th Anniversary Meeting is large meeting with plenty of presentations on a variety of topics to attend, but most importantly, enjoy the experience and have fun!

Lauren Pharr, MA
YFSF Secretary Chair
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Lauren Bryan, PhD
YFSF Secretary Co-Chair
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Financial Liaison

Happy New Year! The holidays are behind us, which means the AAFS 65th Anniversary Meeting in Washington, DC, is fast approaching!

Everyone is hard at work putting slides together, adding the final touches to posters, and wrapping up workshop materials. Although this is a busy time of year, we would like you to take a moment and reflect on what you were either doing or thinking five, ten, or even twenty plus years ago as you prepared for your first Academy Meeting. If you started your involvement with the Academy before 1998, then you would not have had the opportunity to attend a Young Forensic Scientists Forum (YFSF), which aims to help first-time attendees, advanced students, and recently employed forensic scientists adjust to the AAFS meeting environment. Attendance at the YFSF Special Session has

steadily increased since the YFSF's creation in 1998, and this growth would not have been possible without your financial support.

The YFSF provides support to forensic science students and young professionals, but we need your help to continue doing this! If you have not done so already, please consider making a contribution to the YFSF. Contributions from veteran AAFS members allow us to have a Special Session, a Breakfast Session, a Poster Session, and a Slides Session each year. These four events are instrumental in incorporating the next generation of forensic scientists into the forensic science community.

For those of you who have already made a contribution to the YFSF, we would like to thank you! Thank you for giving the YFSF the means to provide assistance and information to young forensic science professionals. We would not be able to do what we do without you!

If you would like to make a contribution to the YFSF or have any questions, please contact us.

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YFSF Breakfast Session

The YFSF Breakfast Session focuses on professional development and aims to help attendees identify the tools necessary to succeed within the forensic science community. Methods of career advancement are very important for our session attendees, which include students and young forensic scientist professionals. This year, the YFSF Breakfast Session will focus on the requirements of expert testimony as a forensic scientist and what it means to be an expert. Specifically, the breakfast session will feature three, twenty minute talks focusing on the following: (1) the importance of knowing what cited sources you used, speaker **Sandra Koch** from the FBI; (2) how to prepare for cross-examination by a defense attorney, speaker Judge **Roderick Kennedy** from New Mexico Court of Appeals; and, (3) the role of a forensic scientist as an expert witness, speaker **Anjali Ranadive** from SciLawForensics.

As in previous years, the YFSF Breakfast Session will include a resumé review session with a distinguished forensic scientist panel following the initial presentations.

The resumé review panel currently consists of AAFS Past President and Gradwohl Laureate **Barry Fisher**, AAFS Past Presidents **Joseph Bono** and **Douglas Ubelaker** as well as **Gregory G. Davis**, **Lucy Davis**, **Vinny Desiderio**, **Robert Gaffney**, Eugene Peters, and **Jenna Oakes-Smith**. This discussion time will specifically address questions such as: “What should be included on your resumé, and is your resumé structured properly?” If the talks on expert testimony and the resumé review panel sound helpful to you, make sure to register for the YFSF Special Session (www.aafs.org/2013-annual-meeting)! The breakfast session is included in the Special Session registration cost. To attend the YFSF Breakfast Session, you must be registered for the full YFSF Special Session (S2). Don’t forget to bring your resumé! If you have any questions, please contact **Jennifer Malone** (jennifer.malone@wyo.gov) or **Ashley Moulton** (amoulton2010@yahoo.com).

Jennifer Malone, PhD
YFSF Breakfast Session Chair

Ashley Moulton, BS
YFSF Breakfast Session Co-Chair

YFSF Special Session

The theme for this year’s day-long YFSF Special Session is *Applications of Education and Research to the Diverse Field of Forensic Science*. The YFSF Special Session Chair **Taryn Mead** and Co-Chair **Jennifer Newton** have planned an exciting session for you on Tuesday, February 19, during the AAFS 65th Anniversary Meeting in Washington, DC. The 2013 YFSF Special Session has invited professionals who will bring a wealth of experience from a wide variety of fields to introduce and expand on ideas of potential opportunities in forensic science.

Attendees will begin the all-day event with AAFS President **Robert Barsley** who will speak about the importance of education and research in the diverse field of forensic science. AAFS Membership Coordinator **Cheryl Hunter** will briefly explain the membership application process and the benefits of membership. **Carla Noziglia**, the Senior Forensic Advisor - Tanzania, will open our eyes to more opportunities than we can imagine. She will share her international work experience in her presentation titled *Does Anyone Have a Zebra Blood Standard?*

The morning will continue with a presentation from forensic psychologist **Katherine Ramsland** who will discuss psychological insights to dangerous offenders with interesting case examples. **Thomas David**, who specializes

in forensic odontology, will introduce us to forensic odontology and discuss forensic science pitfalls.

Christopher Rainwater, a forensic anthropologist at the New York City Office of Chief Medical Examiner, will show us the anthropological perspective of blunt force trauma through his research and interesting case examples.

Carolyn Bayer-Broring from Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) will conclude the morning session by discussing the role of questioned document examinations in the field of forensic science.

In the afternoon, **Dan Anderson** from the Los Angeles County Department of Coroner will share his expertise in forensic toxicology and case examples of celebrity deaths where toxicology played a role. **Ellen Moffatt**, a medical examiner from the San Francisco Medical Examiners Office, will present an interesting case involving a tiger attack on a zoo patron. **Peter Dziacuk**, a firearms, explosives, and microscopy expert, will show the audience how he uses casework-generated research to answer difficult forensic questions.

The afternoon will continue with Josh Hanshaf and Trish McNeill, Assistant District Attorneys from Brooklyn, NY, who will delve into the intricacies of prosecuting a very eccentric, far-reaching case. The 2012 FSF Emerging Forensic Scientist Award winner, **Christine Hay**, will share her research on the elemental analysis of GSR. The session will conclude with Angelique Corthals, a forensic anthropologist, who will immerse us in the world of ancient DNA and will speak about her work that took her to Cairo, Egypt.

The day will be full of interesting presentations and will provide you with an opportunity to meet experienced forensic scientists as well as young professionals just starting out in the field. This is a great opportunity to network, so bring your business cards! Before we close, just one additional piece of advice for all who have never attended a meeting of this scope – dress in comfortable business clothing and wear comfortable shoes!

Be sure to register for the YFSF Special Session (S2) before the **January 23** pre-registration deadline. Registration for the YFSF Special Session includes lunch on Tuesday, the YFSF Poster Session on Tuesday evening, the Bring Your Own Slides Session on Wednesday evening, and the YFSF Breakfast Session on Thursday morning where our expert resumé review panel of forensic scientists will provide invaluable input and advice. Go to the AAFS website (www.aafs.org) to register and to get the most up-to-date meeting information.

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Please email us with any questions you have regarding the Special Session at yfsfss@gmail.com.

Taryn Mead, BS

YFSF Special Session Chair

Jennifer Newton, BS

YFSF Special Session Co-Chair

YFSF Bring Your Own Slides

On Wednesday, February 20, at 6:00 p.m., AAFS meeting attendees are invited to the Young Forensic Scientists Forum – Bring Your Own Slides Session. This is a unique opportunity to see cutting edge research presentations by emerging forensic scientists. All are welcome, and a variety of disciplines will be represented. This session is both informative and fun!

Thank you to all those who submitted abstracts this year—you are doing wonderful research! Feel free to contact us if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing you come out to support young forensic scientists in Washington, DC!

Ali Kidder-Mostrom, MSFS

BYOS Chair

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Lindsay Saylor

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YFSF Poster Session

The 65th Anniversary Meeting is just around the corner and a fantastic array of posters has been selected for the YFSF BYOP session! The YFSF officers encourage you to attend and support the presenters who have dedicated their time and effort to contribute to this session. The YFSF BYOP Session will be held on Tuesday, February 19, from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

If this will be your first time presenting a poster at an annual meeting, then creating your poster may seem like a daunting task. Listed below are a few tips and guidelines to help you design an effective scientific poster:

- *Text:* The type (or font type) should be at a minimum 14 pt font and should be readable from 3 to 4 feet away. Do not incorporate fancy font types - rely on standard styles such as Times New Roman or

Arial. Also, using the fewest number of words to get your point across is best, given that the main focus should be your data and figures.

- *Color and Design:* Color scheme is very important. However, you do not want to distract the reader or take away from the content of your poster by including bright colors or too many colors. A consistent color scheme of two to three colors tends to work well and the use of a dark font on a light background will result in an easy format for the audience to read.
- *Printing:* When printing, check with your university or workplace. They may have discounted options.
- *Paper Type:* Deciding between a glossy or matte poster finish will depend on your personal preference. While glossy poster finishes may be more expensive than matte finishes, images often appear crisper on posters having glossy finishes. One risk of using posters with glossy finishes is that overhead lighting in the room may cause a glare and make your poster difficult to read. Both glossy and matte posters produce a professional look so remember that the choice in printing style will depend on your personal taste and budget.
- *Size and Display:* Poster size is limited to 4' x 5'. Pushpins will be provided.

We encourage you to bring poster reprints and sign-up sheets for attendees who desire additional information. Please keep in mind, whether you are presenting or solely attending sessions, the AAFS meeting is an excellent place to network and meet other forensic scientists. Bring extra business cards or have your contact information written down and ready to hand out to individuals with whom you would like to keep in touch.

See you in Washington, DC!

Amber Neitzel, BS

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Jackie Jenkins, PhD, MSFS

YFSF Poster Session Co-Chair

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