

Young Forensic Scientists Forum Newsletter

A Letter from the YFSF President

Now that the abstract for the 2012 YFSF Session “Contemporary Topics in the Forensic Science Community” has been submitted, the YFSF is looking for ways to help new forensic scientists become a part of the forensic science community. With this goal in mind, the next big deadline coming up for AAFS is October 1, 2011. What is October 1, 2011? This is the deadline to apply for AAFS membership. YFSF encourages all new forensic scientists to consider becoming a member. Information about the different types of membership, information about the 11 sections and how to apply can be found on the AAFS website (www.aafs.org). AAFS is aware of how important new forensic scientists are and how important it is for them to be included in the forensic science community from the beginning. One way to transition into the Academy is through working with and attending the YFSF sessions. Whether you choose to submit a poster at the Bring Your Own Posters or present a case at the Bring Your Own Slides, the options are limitless. YFSF is always looking to raise the bar and we do so with new and creative ideas on how to get new forensic scientists inspired. YFSF is a great way to transition into the AAFS, to get involved in planning events, and to do some serious networking with other planners and with distinguished members of the forensic science field who participate in our sessions. If you are interested in making an impact or you are not sure where to start, please do not hesitate to contact any of the YFSF committee members and we will be happy to help point you in the right direction!

Tanisha V. Henson, MFS, YFSF President
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Defining the Term “Young” in Relation to the Young Forensic Scientists Forum

The Young Forensic Scientist Forum (YFSF) serves as an excellent platform for young forensic scientists to engage with their peers and to discuss their past, present, and future research endeavors. However, the word “young” in the title of the Young Forensic Scientists may have some individuals confusing the YFSF with the Student Academy, thereby resulting in some young forensic scientists passing up on the many benefits of the YFSF simply because they

think they are too old to attend.

First, the Young Forensic Scientist Forum and the Student Academy (SA) are two separate sessions held during the AAFS Annual Meeting. Both the YFSF and the SA are aimed at promoting forensic science; however, the two events are aimed at two separate audiences. The SA Session focuses on high school students and possible careers in forensic science, whereas the YFSF is aimed at educating individuals who have five years experience or less in his or her forensic science career.

Secondly, the word “young” in the title of the Young Forensic Scientist Forum does not refer to one’s age but rather to one’s career experience. I hope this helps resolve any confusion concerning the YFSF’s target audience, and please do not hesitate to contact me at lparr1@tigers.lsu.edu with any questions you may have.

Lauren Pharr, MA, YFSF Secretary
lparr1@tigers.lsu.edu

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.

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.

Jackie Jenkins, PhD, MSFS, YFSF Financial Liaison
continued on page 36

Young Forensic Scientists Forum cont.

YFSF Breakfast Session

Greetings from Mississippi! We hope everyone is surviving the heat and enjoying their summer. As time gets closer to the next Academy meeting, we are excited to see and hear from everyone. This year's YFSF Breakfast Session is going to be a good one. We are pleased to announce that **M. Lee Goff**, Director of Forensic Sciences, Chaminade University of Honolulu, **Michelle Shepherd**, with Applied Biosystems, and **Jenna Oakes-Smith**, St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, will be speaking to the attendees about their resumes.

While students are in school, they ask professors, "Which classes do I need to take?" Meeting the requirements for a degree does not necessarily mean the students have taken all of the classes they will need for a job. When students are contemplating going for an advanced degree, their main question is "Will this benefit me in the long run?" Do they stop at a Bachelor's or go for a Master's or Doctorate degree? Jenna Oakes-Smith will address these questions and more during her presentation.

Have you ever asked a professor to review your resume, been told it was fine, but then apply for a job and be told your resume wasn't good enough? **M. Lee Goff** will speak from a professor's point of view. He has had many instances of "What the heck is that there for?"

Michelle Shepherd, with Applied Biosystems, will speak on the benefits and requirements for the "private" lab/company employees. Are the benefits better? What classes do they require? What makes a private company more appealing?

This year we have had an amazing response from the Members and Fellows within the Academy. Currently, all sections will have a representative present to answer questions following the presentations. If you have any questions concerning this year's breakfast session, feel free to contact me at mdeberry@mcl.state.ms.us.

We look forward to a great meeting in Atlanta!

Melissa DeBerry, BA, *YFSF Breakfast Session Chair*

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 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. Don't miss the November YFSF newsletter, which will contain detailed speaker information and help plan your trip to Atlanta. Any questions regarding the session can be sent to **Martin Overly** (martin.overly@mail.wvu.edu) or **Lindsey Crass** (lindsey.crass@mail.wvu.edu).

Martin Overly, MSFS
YFSF Special Session Chair

Lindsey Crass, BS
YFSF Special Session Co-Chair

YFSF Bring Your Own Slides

Young Forensic Scientists – Have you thought about presenting at the 2012 American Academy of Forensic Sciences meeting in Atlanta? Don't let anything hold you back! Submit an abstract today to the YFSF Bring Your Own Slides (BYOS) session. The YFSF BYOS is the perfect place to showcase your work, hone your presentation skills and connect with peers in the forensic science community. Research projects and interesting cases from all disciplines are welcome!

To be considered for this great opportunity, please submit a one page abstract and your resume or CV by December 15. If you are interested in presenting or have any questions, you can contact us at alison.p.mostrom@usdoj.gov and/or aneitzel@email.arizona.edu. We look forward to reading your abstracts!

Ali Mostrom, MSFS,
BYOS Chair
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Amber Neitzel, BS,
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YFSF Poster Session

The Young Forensic Scientists Forum is currently accepting abstracts for the 2012 YFSF Poster Session to be held on Thursday, February 23, 2012. Undergraduate students, graduate students, and young forensic professionals of all sections are encouraged to take this opportunity to share their research, interesting case studies, and other important topics related to forensic science at the 64th Annual Scientific Meeting in Atlanta, GA.

If you are interested in presenting your work at the 2012 YFSF Poster Session, submit your abstract and curriculum vitae to the YFSF Poster Session (at the email address below) before the **Monday, December 19 deadline**. Please review the AAFS abstract policy and general instructions for content of abstract. The notifications of acceptance will be sent by January 9, 2012.

Poster submissions and any questions regarding the YFSF Poster Session can be submitted to: 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