

## Young Forensic Scientists Forum Newsletter

### **A Letter from the 2011-12 YFSF President**

The AAFS Annual Meeting has come to a close and as always it was absolutely amazing. The YFSF had an extremely successful year and that is in thanks to not only the speakers who took the time out of their busy schedules but also to the attendees. Hopefully, everyone had an opportunity to stop by and check out the YFSF Bring Your Own Posters Session and the Bring Your Own Slides Session. Perhaps after this year's meeting, you are now inspired to get actively involved and to make an impact. If you are nervous or not sure how to get involved, or if you want to present and do not know where to begin, please contact any YFSF committee member and they will help you. This is one of the amazing benefits of becoming an affiliate or member of AAFS; you will have access to amazing mentors and people with years of experience who are willing to guide you.

The special session, breakfast session, poster, and slide sessions take all year to plan and that planning will begin within the next couple of months. This is another opportunity to make an impact and there are still committee positions available; the current YFSF officers would love to see new forensic scientists from every section involved on the committee. YFSF is open to suggestions for speakers or topics of interest you would like to hear in future YFSF sessions. This was my last year with YFSF, and I am looking forward to keeping up-to-date with YFSF and to further promote the YFSF to AAFS. YFSF will be in fabulous hands as **Lindsey Crass** takes over the role of YFSF President. Lindsey was the Program

Co-Chair for this past year's program, and I encourage you to contact her and let her know your thoughts on the program.

We look forward to seeing you all in Washington, DC next February. Be on the lookout for future newsletters from the YFSF.

**Tanisha V. Henson, MFS, 2011-12 YFSF President**  
*tanisha.henson@yahoo.com*



*Young Forensic Scientists Forum attendees Samantha Neal, Lindsey Crass, Robin Bowen, and Tanisha Henson view the Dolphin Exhibit at the Georgia Aquarium.*

### **A Letter from the YFSF Secretary**

The YFSF sessions in Atlanta were a tremendous success. Each event hosted by the YFSF provided participants with the opportunity to: (1) network with experts in his or her field, (2) discuss research with his or her peers, and (3) learn about the most recent advances in the various forensic disciplines.

The success of the YFSF depends on the participants, speakers, YFSF officers, AAFS staff, and the support of the various sections within the Academy. Thank you all for your continued support and for allowing the YFSF to thrive with each passing year.

Last, we would like to acknowledge and thank **Tanisha Henson**, the outgoing YFSF president. Tanisha has had a tremendous impact on the growth and success of the YFSF in recent years; she is a role model, leader, and friend. Although Tanisha will no longer serve as president because she now has more than five years experience working as a full-time forensic scientist, the incoming YFSF President, **Lindsey Crass**, will undoubtedly be an outstanding leader. Lindsey has proven herself to be an exceptional leader by serving as the YFSF Special Session Co-Chair during the past year.

Thank you again to everyone who went above and beyond what was expected in order to make the 2012 YFSF sessions a tremendous success in Atlanta. If you have any questions about the YFSF or wish to participate as either an officer or attendee at the 2013 annual meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Lauren R. Pharr, MA, YFSF Secretary**  
*yfsfsecretary@gmail.com or lpharr1@tigers.lsu.edu*

#### **Financial Liaison for the YFSF**

Thank you to the AAFS sections for allowing a representative from YFSF to speak at each section's business meeting in Atlanta. The YFSF would not be possible without the financial support of the AAFS and our other contributors. We would like to acknowledge the sponsors who donated to the YFSF this past year:

- AAFS Criminalistics Section
- AAFS General Section
- AAFS Pathology/Biology Section
- IUPUI Forensic and Investigative Sciences Program
- Lisa A. Franklin, DDS
- Taylor & Francis/CRC Press

Thank you for helping to make this year's YFSF a huge success!

**Jacquelyn M. Jenkins, PhD, YFSF Financial Liaison**

#### **YFSF Breakfast Session**

Good day to all! The YFSF officers and program committee hopes that everyone had a great meeting in Atlanta. The Young Forensic Scientist Forum's annual Breakfast Session was a great success. In addition to meeting new people from across the country and around the world, the attendees were able to gather valuable information from members of the Academy who work in the field of forensics—both lab oriented and academia oriented. The presentations began with **Jenna Oakes-Smith** with the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. She spoke of "finding your fruit." That may sound a little strange to most people, but the explanations in her presentation were spot on. She also spoke of expectations. Expectations of the potential employer may not

be the same as what the potential employee may have in regards to the job they are applying for.

Following Jenna, **M. Lee Goff** from Chaminade University in Hawaii spoke from the academic viewpoint. He spoke of what to put on the curriculum vitae when applying for graduate school as well as what not to include. He also gave plenty of examples of actual CV's he has received for positions within his university that should have been proof read, rewritten, and revamped.

Once the presentations were complete, the resume review began. The YFSF Breakfast Session had a great turnout from the Academy in member participation with reviewing resumes. We were fortunate to have the following Members and Fellows volunteer their time and morning to review the resumes and answer questions from the attendees: **Roderick Kennedy, Michael Salyards, Syed Ali, Todd Welch, Mitch Holland, Ronald Morris, Richard Merritt, Pierre Margot, Christy Davis, Laura Liptai, and Michele Stauffenberg.** These members represented various professions within the forensic community and many sections within the Academy.

As this was my last year to participate with the Young Forensic Scientists Forum, I would just like to say that I have enjoyed my time with this group and the people that I have met. I look forward to seeing what the future holds for YFSF.

**Melissa DeBerry, BA, YFSF Breakfast Session Chair**

#### **YFSF Special Session**

The 2012 Young Forensic Scientists Forum Special Session was a tremendous success! Once again we had over 100 participants and a waiting list for the session. The theme for this year's session, "*Contemporary Topics in the Forensic Science Community*," allowed participants to learn about current trends in the forensic science field.

We started the day with the welcoming address from President **Douglas Ubelaker** who discussed the importance of enhancing forensic science globally. Participants in the session then heard from Membership Coordinator Cheryl Hunter about how to get involved with AAFS.

**Mary Fran Ernst** discussed the important role the medicolegal death investigator plays in both medical examiner and coroner offices. Afterwards, **Jason Byrd** continued with the theme of investigations relating to animals with his talk on forensic veterinary medicine. Wrapping up the morning, the Emerging Forensic Scientist Award winner, Rolf Bremmer discussed his work on "*Reflectance Spectroscopy of Recognition and Age Determination of Blood Stains.*"

The afternoon began with **Robin Jones** who discussed the White House Subcommittee on Forensic Science. **H. Chip Walls** followed with a discussion on the tools needed to practice forensic science, specifically forensic toxicology in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. **Robin Bowen** talked on professionalism in the forensic science community and gave helpful tips to the participants. The day

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## Young Forensic Scientists Forum cont.

ended with a discussion on audio and visual clarification uses in criminal investigations from **William Folson**.

The Young Forensic Scientist Forum would like to extend a sincere thank you to all of the speakers. Without your support, the YFSF Special Session would not have achieved the success it had this year.

**Martin K. Overly, MSFS, YFSF Special Session Chair**

**Lindsey E. Crass, BS, YFSF Special Session Co-Chair**



*AAFS President Douglas Ubelaker welcomes YFSF attendees Samantha Neal and Lindsey Crass to the President's Reception.*

### **YFSF Bring Your Own Slides**

The annual meeting in Atlanta was a great success and we hope that everyone who had the opportunity to attend found it to be well worth the trip.

The YFSF BYOS Session had five fantastic presentations that highlighted new research and interesting cases from many areas of forensic science. **Jaime Elifritz** and **Cassie Boggs** illustrated how radiologic imaging can complement the postmortem exam. **Laura Graham** presented her research "UV Analysis in the Forensic Identification of Cannabinoids," and Sonya Siu discussed the quantitative analysis of impact velocity and bloodstain patterns. Kate Weinbrecht presented "AFLP Analysis as a DNA Typing Tool for Microbial Forensics." Lastly, Luo Zhou, who came all the way from China, shared results from his retrospective study of sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP) cases. Thank you to all of those who presented, as well as those who showed their support. As a result, we had a very well-rounded and educational session!

We hope that this meeting has inspired you to contribute through research and education to the forensic sciences and look forward to another exciting year!

**Ali Mostrom, MSFS, BYOS Chair**  
*alison.p.mostrom@usdoj.gov*

**Amber Neitzel, BS, BYOS Co-Chair**  
*aneitzel@email.arizona.edu*

### **YFSF Poster Session**

The Young Forensic Scientists Forum Poster Session had much to offer all of the attendees of the AAFS 64th Annual Scientific Meeting. The YFSF Poster Session included 27 poster presentations covering a wide range of topics including bloodstain patterns, DNA, latent prints, physical anthropology, toxicology, and trace. Many Members and Fellows of the Academy attended and showed interest in the presentations by asking the young forensic scientists about their work.

On behalf of the YFSF Program Committee, we would like to thank all authors and presenters of the YFSF Poster Session for sharing their work as well as the professors who continue to support their students' research and encourage them to present at meetings. We would also like to thank the Academy and its members for showing interest and supporting the Young Forensic Scientists Forum. We invite you all to attend next year's YFSF Poster Session!

The Young Forensic Scientists Forum Poster Session is an excellent opportunity for students and young forensic professionals of all ages and disciplines, to participate at the AAFS Scientific Meeting. Students and young forensic professionals who are interested in presenting at the 2013 YFSF Poster Session in Washington, DC, should look for deadline information in upcoming issues of *Academy News* newsletter. It is not too early to start thinking of presenting at next year's YFSF Poster Session!

If you are interested in presenting at the 2013 YFSF Poster Session, please email *yfsf.postersession@gmail.com*.

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

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