

Young Forensic Scientists Forum *Newsletter*

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FORENSIC SCIENCES

January 2006

Editor: Jeannette M. Perr, PhD

YFSF Special Session

The 2006 Young Forensic Science Forum Special Session is a must see event for any “young forensic scientist” who will be attending the AAFS meeting in Seattle. “Young forensic scientist” is a title for people who are new to the field of forensic science, not necessarily young people. The YFSF is a good place to start getting to know others in the profession. AAFS membership is not required to participate in the Young Forensic Scientists Forum.

Throughout the years the Young Forensic Scientists Forum has made great efforts to keep in tune with the changing face of forensic science. The program has grown and changed drastically since its establishment in order to provide students, and scientists with five years experience or less, the most quality information possible. Due to the focus by the media on certain careers in forensic science, many aspiring and emerging scientists are not aware of the diversity of careers in the field. This year’s session, “Frontiers in Forensic Science,” will focus on a variety of aspects to forensic science that many people are unaware exist or fall under the discipline of forensic science.

We have assembled twelve presentations from perhaps the most diverse and interesting backgrounds in forensic science today. A new presentation that has been added to the schedule is “The New York County District Attorney’s Cold Case DNA Project” which will be given by Martha Bashford and Melissa Mourges — both Assistant District Attorneys working on the project. Another can’t miss this year will be the 3rd Annual YFSF Poster Session Social, which is being held on Tuesday night after the Special Session. The annual breakfast is shaping up to be the best yet which will include a panel discussion on interviewing skills, a resume review, and a presentation on how to approach writing Knowledge Skills and Agility (KSA) questions. Hope to see you in Seattle!

— Allison Curran, PhD
YFSF President

YFSF Bring Your Own Poster

The Young Forensic Scientists Forum is hosting a poster session to be held at the 58th Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences. This is an excellent chance for students and those new to the field to present their research or work. Also, all levels of education and expertise are welcome to present ongoing research and case studies at the session.

Last year’s poster session featured a forensic text book giveaway for visitors of the poster session. The textbook giveaway is scheduled to occur again at this year’s poster session. Presenters will be able to speak about their work in a comfortable environment while learning about research available at other institutions and meeting other researchers and employers. Students interested in furthering their education in the field of forensics will have the opportunity to learn more about research at several prestigious institutions which participate regularly at the poster session. Members and affiliates from all levels of the Academy participate and view the poster session held by the YFSF.

Last year’s posters covered topics such as forensic chemistry studies in explosives, vehicle paint analysis, congenital heart defects caused by the toxicity in ground water contaminants, and a ballistics study. If you are already presenting at another poster session, this is a great opportunity for you to reach another audience.

Those interested in presenting a poster should contact **Marrah Lachowicz** at Gradpath@aol.com or **Jennifer Mercer** at jwiseman@mix.wvu.edu. We wish everyone a very Happy New Year, and we are looking forward to seeing you in Seattle in February.

— Marrah Lachowicz, MFS
YFSF Program Co-Chair

YFSF Bring Your Own Slides

The YFSF Bring Your Own Slides has some excellent presentations scheduled! Josh Gunn will discuss the selective determination of morphine in the larvae of *Calliphora stygia* using chemiluminescence detection coupled with flow injection analysis and high performance liquid chromatography. Melissa Ely will discuss the utilization of a Pyroprobe Coupled to GC/MS in Drug Analysis and Toxicology. Since many drugs are ingested by inhalation, the goal of this presentation is to illustrate the potential of pyrolysis as a tool for detecting biomarkers of abused drugs. This presentation will discuss the usefulness of a pyroprobe in detecting pyrolytic products of single drugs as well as mixtures of cocaine and methamphetamine. Emilio Nuzzolese, an Italian forensic dentist, will focus on chaos and order in forensic dental identification principles and forms. This presentation will specifically discuss software used in the Tsunami victim identification. Amy Richmond-Aylor will be presenting her findings on analysis of fingerprint residue by Pyrolysis GC-MS. The goal was to simulate the high heat conditions that latent prints may be exposed to in situations such as when a cartridge is fired from a weapon, arson, or other related combustion events. Jennifer Beach explored the stability of forensic test color reagents to determine if reagents degrade over time and if degradation affects the results of a color test. Rebecca Haynes's presentation will cover a micro-fluidic device integrating color and crystal tests and ATR. This presentation discusses the combination of color and crystal tests with IR microscopy via a simple microfluidic device. An indispensable aspect of such application is a searchable database of both crystal morphologies and IR spectra.

Space is still available for more speakers! If you would like to present casework or research please submit a CV and an abstract to **Robin Bowen** (robin.bowen@mail.wvu.edu). Presentations will be held on Wednesday, February 22, 2006, from 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Each presentation should be about 10 minutes or less. We would love to know what our fellow Young Forensic Scientists are doing! If you are interested in sharing your experiences, please contact **Robin Bowen** (robin.bowen@mail.wvu.edu). We look forward to learning from your experiences and can't wait to see you in Seattle!

— Robin Bowen, BS
YFSF Program Co-Chair

YFSF Breakfast Session

Hopefully, everyone is excited to attend the meeting in Seattle in just a few short weeks! The YFSF coordinators have been working hard to provide a session that promises to be one of the best. You are encouraged to get those resumes ready and bring them to the session. Resumes submitted on Tuesday will be reviewed by the breakfast session panel members and will be returned at the breakfast on Thursday morning. This year's panel members come from various disciplines within the Drug Enforcement Administration, the

United States Secret Service, the Washington State Police Crime Lab, and the Oregon State Police Crime Lab. These speakers will offer advice on writing knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) answers, preparing for hiring exams, writing resumes, developing interview skills, and whatever other questions you can throw their way! All of the panel members offer a great deal of knowledge and experience, not to mention they're always looking for some great new young forensic scientists! Come to Seattle prepared for this session and leave Seattle ready to get those jobs!

— Amanda Frohwein
YFSF Program Co-Chair

YFSF Crossword Answers

Were you able to solve the first ever YFSF crossword puzzle? Check out the answers below! Thanks again to Melissa Smith of the NYC OCME Department of Forensic Biology for submitting the crossword.

Across

5. forensic biology
7. soil
8. toxicology
9. SOSC
10. accredited
13. pigeonhole
14. poaching
16. FIU
17. mtDNA

Down

1. AFIS
2. Fraud Investigation
3. IBIS
4. blood alcohol
6. gall bladders
11. FEPAC
12. fossils
15. AAFS

About the YFSF

The YFSF is dedicated to the education, enrichment, and professional development of young forensic scientist. YFSF participants can be non-AAFS-members while organizers must be AAFS members from any section within the AAFS. The Forum provides a medium to educate and network with young forensic scientist to facilitate their establishment within the forensic science community. The YFSF is composed of a Special Session, a Poster Session, a Bring Your Own Slides Session, and a Breakfast Session during the AAFS Annual Meeting. Outside the Academy meeting the YFSF works to further the endeavors of young forensic scientists through the YFSF newsletter and the YFSF website (<http://www.aafs.org/yfsf/index.htm>). YFSF President **Allison Curran** (allison.curran@fiu.edu) and YFSF Secretary **Jeannette Perr** (jeannette.perr@fiu.edu) can answer any questions about the YFSF and are looking to many different levels of young forensic scientist participating next year's session.

The YFSF is looking for a technologically savvy person to help design the new website.

If interested, please contact Jeannette Perr (jeannette.perr@fiu.edu).

Look for the improved website soon!