

Young Forensic Scientists Forum Newsletter

Don't Forget to Register!

The year is almost at its end but there is one more big date to keep in mind, the date to register for the AAFS Annual Meeting. Registration for the AAFS Annual Meeting occurs in mid to late November and at this time you also register for the Young Forensic Scientists Forum Special Session. Each year more young scientists participate in the YFSF Session, which is very exciting, but also means that early registration is recommended to secure your spot. We try every year to avoid turning people away but we have had to do so in the past, so register early! Also, if you were unable to get your abstract in on time to present at AAFS don't forget that you can submit your abstract to us for the YFSF Bring Your Own Slides and Bring Your Own Poster Sessions. So get those abstracts in! As planning continues we look forward to seeing all of you at the upcoming meeting.

Arliss Dudley-Cash
YFSF President

2010 YFSF Financial Support

Every year the YFSF relies on the financial contributions and support of the forensic community to make our Special Session a success. The events held at each meeting include a day-long educational session, a working breakfast session, a poster session, and a "Bring Your Own Slides" presentation. The goal of the YFSF is to assist these scientists in establishing a solid foundation in their field; these sessions are critical in the professional development of our audience.

At previous annual meetings we have received support, both monetary and educational, from the AAFS Sections, various forensic science vendors, and universities. So far, for the 2010 Special

Session, Nikon has provided a generous contribution to help with the luncheon. If you or your group would like to provide support for the 2010 Young Forensic Scientists Forum Special Session at the AAFS Annual Meeting in Seattle, Washington, please contact the Contributor Liaison, Samantha Neal, at Samantha.Neal@mail.wvu.edu for more information.

Samantha H. Neal
YFSF Contributor Liaison

YFSF Breakfast Session

After speaking to others in the forensic field, I have realized there are many of us who have to explain forensic science to the general public. We have all explained that we do have to go to school, we do not carry weapons, and we do not interrogate suspects. I also learned that many of the day-to-day forensic jobs are not even included in the shows. A response from Marianne Senhouse-Wilson, a forensic scientist in Oregon, pointed out that drug chemists are rarely portrayed on the shows, let alone in a factual way. We usually only see DNA analysts, fingerprint examiners, and ballistics technicians working along with a general jack-of-all-trades scientist who seems to answer all of the questions. We don't get a real picture of everyone involved in a case or what that position really has the ability to do. One position often included in forensic shows is a pathologist or medical examiner typically portrayed as a quirky guy who likes to work with dead bodies and has the ability to give all sorts of information to the investigator. But what can a pathologist really tell us and how can they figure it out? **Greg Schmunk**, the Chief Medical Examiner for Polk County in Des Moines, IA, will be answering that question during the YFSF Breakfast Session. He will also share with us how the reality of his job is translated into the forensic television shows that we watch. Dr. Schmunk is in a unique position to answer these questions as

he is also a consultant with the *CSI* and *Bones* TV shows. He will tell us about time of death determination, completion times of standard forensic tests, wound ballistics, and wound pattern interpretation in the real world and in TV land.

Dr. Schmunk's presentation will be followed by **Anjali Swienton**, President of SciLaw Forensics. She will speak about the CSI effect and whether it exists. Are juries really persuaded by technology more than witness testimony? Do people who watch these forensic shows really expect more forensic evidence than a juror who has never seen an episode? Ms. Swienton will review the literature and help us determine how forensic shows are affecting our legal system.

This year's breakfast session should be fun and informative, giving us a better idea of how the fiction of CSI can blend into the reality of our daily lives. Once again, we will be featuring a resume review panel. Look for more information about the panel in the January issue, as this year we will accept resume submissions ahead of the breakfast. Email me at jloakes-smith@slmpd.org to share your stories, ask questions, or if you have any ideas about the breakfast this year.

Jenna Oakes-Smith
YFSF Breakfast Chair

The Future of Forensic Science: Where We Are and Where We Are Going

Greetings all Young Forensic Scientists!!! We are extremely excited about the YFSF Special Session on February 23, 2010 and we know you will be just as excited as we are. Our goal this year is to discover where we have been with forensic science and the wonderful places we are going with it. The speakers this year will teach us how to handle our AAFS membership forms, what not to wear, what mentorships are available, and share their experiences in digital forensics, biometrics, and animal crimes. Our special session speakers are as follows:

Cheryl Hunter: *Membership Procedures*

Carol Henderson: *AAFS Developments*

Anjali Swienton; Lucy Davis; Robin Bowen; and **Susan Ballou;**
Forensic Fashion Faux Pas

Vincent Desiderio, Jr.: *The Reality of Trace Evidence*

Randall Lockwood: *Forensic Ethology and Veterinary Forensics: New Fields Addressing Animal-Related Crimes*

Vernon Geberth: *Thirty Years of Amazing Advances in Forensic Sciences*

Aric Dutelle: *Exporting Basic Forensics*

Richard Vorder Bruegge: *The Intersection of Biometrics and Forensics*

Mark McCoy: *The Future of Digital Forensics*

Christina Malone: *Emerging Forensic Scientist Winner, "A Radiographic Assessment of Pediatric Fracture Healing and Time Since Injury"*

Please remember to pre-register for the Young Forensic Scientist Forum, your registration will include the Special Session on Tuesday, Luncheon on Tuesday, Posters Session on Tuesday night, Bring Your Own Slides Wednesday night, and a fantastic Breakfast on Thursday morning, culminating with a resume

review panel. The Poster Session and Bring Your Own Slides do not require YFSF registration, but if you would like to present please contact the proper Chairperson! We cannot wait to see you all in Seattle in February!!!

Tanisha Henson
YFSF Program Chair

YFSF Bring Your Own Slides

- *Do you have a research project that expands the field of forensic science?*
- *Do you have an interesting case that others would benefit from learning how you handled it?*
- *Would you like to present your research or case at the AAFS Annual Meeting in Seattle?*

If so, the Young Forensic Scientists Forum Bring Your Own Slides Session is looking for you! The time has come to start thinking about presenting at the American Academy of Forensic Sciences meeting in Seattle and the YFSF Bring Your Own Slides Session is currently looking for presenters. This is an excellent opportunity to hone your oratory skills in a more relaxed setting while still gaining exposure for your project. If this sounds like you or if you simply want to know more, please contact **Cassandra Hernandez** at chernandez@nlcl.org or **Dade Chisler** at Dade.Chisler@gmail.com. Your curriculum vitae and an abstract are all that is needed to apply. We are looking forward to your submissions and a great slides session in Seattle!

Dade Chisler and Casandra Hernandez
YFSF Bring Your Own Slides Co-Chairs

YFSF Poster Session

- *Are you currently working on an interesting research project or case?*
- *When an application asks for publication or presentation experience, do you wish you could fill in that space?*
- *As an undergraduate, graduate student, or new forensic professional are you interested in presenting at the 2010 AAFS conference in Seattle?*

If the answers to the above questions are YES!, the YFSF Poster Session is the perfect opportunity! Set on a smaller scale than the larger AAFS poster sessions, it provides a great way to get your feet wet in presenting research to your professional peers. The poster topics can range from research in any of the forensic disciplines to interesting casework - but all research topics are welcome! With 26 posters presented at the last meeting, we are hoping to get even more topics from more institutions at this year's event.

In order to present in the YFSF Poster Session, please submit your curriculum vitae and a 1-2 page abstract by January 1, 2010, to YFSF Poster Chair, Anthony Sutter at yfsfposter@gmail.com. Should you have any questions, feel free to email as well. We're looking forward to a great poster session in Seattle!

Anthony Sutter
YFSF Poster Session Chair

Stephanie Crider
YFSF Poster Session Co-Chair