

Young Forensic Scientists Forum Newsletter

A Letter from the YFSF President

The 2011 YFSF Committee has already begun planning for the AAFS 63rd Annual Scientific Meeting to be held February 21-26, 2011, in Chicago, IL. The 2011 Special Session promises to be more exciting and even better than the 2010 Special Session. YFSF is continually growing, striving for excellence, and always looking for ways to reach out to young forensic scientists. If you are new or if you know of anyone who is new to the field of forensics, then the Young Forensic Scientist Forum is the place to be! Make sure to register early for the Special Session and present during Bring Your Own Slides, Bring Your Own Posters, or both. I'd like to take a moment and thank those who participated in the 2010 Special Session and Breakfast Session and made it incredibly successful, and also to those who have already volunteered to be a part of the 2011 Special Session and Breakfast Session. If anyone is still interested in participating with the Young Forensic Scientist Forum, please contact me at tanisha.henson@yahoo.com.

Tanisha Henson, BS
YFSF President

The 2011 YFSF Committee members would like to introduce themselves. We are beyond excited to have these amazing committee members on board. If you have any interest in working with YFSF, please do not hesitate to contact any officer for more information.

President:

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Special Session Chair:

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Breakfast Session Chair:

Melissa DeBerry, BA
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Financial Liaison:

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Secretary:

Lauren R. Pharr, MA

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Martin K. Overly, MSFS

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BYOP Chair:

Stephanie M. Crider, BA

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A Note from the YFSF Secretary

Greetings everyone! Writing to you from Baton Rouge, LA, this is Lauren Pharr, the 2010-2011 YFSF Secretary. Let me begin by saying that I am honored to have been appointed Secretary and will strive to be as excellent a secretary as Jennifer Mercer, who skillfully held this office the past five years; Jennifer will be greatly missed. I would also like to express my gratitude to both the YFSF and AAFS program committees for the outstanding conference in Seattle this past February.

For those of you who were unable to attend this year's YFSF special sessions and presentations in Seattle, I encourage you to attend the YFSF events offered at the 2011 meeting in Chicago. The multidisciplinary backgrounds of the YFSF officers and participants offer an exciting array of forensic science information. Not only does the YFSF expose conference attendees to many topics of forensic interest, the YFSF presents these topics in a welcoming, non-intimidating manner. Because we are members of AAFS with five years or less experience in our respective forensic careers, each YFSF officer understands the anxiety and uncertainty associated with the first few years of attending the AAFS annual meeting. Because of this understanding, one goal of the YFSF is to provide an easy transition into becoming active within the AAFS community.

Last but not least, I would like to introduce myself. I was born and raised in Memphis, TN, and I received my BA in Anthropology from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Immediately

following graduation, I moved to Baton Rouge, LA, to begin the master's program in Anthropology at Louisiana State University (LSU). Under the guidance of **Mary Manhein**, Fellow of the Physical Anthropology Section, I completed my master's thesis which documented my investigation of decomposition rates and taphonomic processes associated with child-sized remains within both airtight and unsealed 55-gallon oil drums; postmortem interval estimations were then made using these results. Currently, I am a Geography PhD student with an Anthropology concentration at LSU. My current research interests include crime mapping, geographic profiling, and applying GIS and Remote Sensing techniques to forensic anthropology contexts. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please feel free to contact me at lpharr1@tigers.lsu.edu. I look forward to seeing you in Chicago, and as always, Geaux Tigers!!

Lauren Pharr
YFSF Secretary

Financial Liaison

My name is Jackie Jenkins, and I will be serving as YFSF Financial Liaison for the coming year. Currently, I am completing my MSFS at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and working as an intern at the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences. I attended my first AAFS Annual Meeting and YFSF Special Session this past February in Seattle, and enjoyed the variety of speakers and presentations the meeting had to offer. I am looking forward to becoming more involved in YFSF and planning for a great year! For more information on how you can support or contribute to the YFSF, please contact me at jjjenkins71@gmail.com.

Jackie Jenkins
YFSF Financial Liaison

YFSF Breakfast Session

We all had a great time in Seattle at the 2010 AAFS Conference. For those of you who were not able to attend the meeting, I want to introduce myself. My name is Melissa DeBerry, and I work at the Mississippi Crime Laboratory in the Technical Assistance Section. I handle all the incoming and outgoing evidence for our laboratory. I was first introduced to the YFSF at the 2009 AAFS Annual Meeting in Denver and was then recruited as the Breakfast Session Co-Chair for the 2010 meeting. I honestly had no idea what I was in for, but with the help of the Program Chair and the current President, everything was able to come together for a great YFSF Breakfast Session in Seattle. I am looking forward to the annual meeting in Chicago and can't wait to meet new people coming into YFSF.

Melissa DeBerry
YFSF Breakfast Session Chair

Special Session Co-Chairs

It is the beginning of another year here at the Young Forensic Scientist Forum (YFSF) and exciting things are in the works. I am Jenna Oakes-Smith, Chair of this year's YFSF Special Session. I first became involved in the YFSF a few years ago when I attended a special session in Washington, DC. Since then I have acted as the Breakfast Session Co-Chair and the Breakfast Session

Chair. I am very excited about the opportunity to serve the forum one last time as the Special Session Chair this year. This is my last year of service in the YFSF as I have worked for the last four years as a Criminalist in the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department Crime Lab in the DNA section. At the end of this year, I will have worked in a forensic setting for five years and will become ineligible to participate in the YFSF. I hope to go out on a bang though, and make this year one of the best.

Joining me this year as the Special Session Co-Chair is Amanda Kittoe. Amanda is working on her master's of anthropology at Louisiana State University, specializing in forensic anthropology. Amanda just experienced her first YFSF Special Session this last February and became a member of AAFS shortly thereafter. She chose to become a member of the YFSF planning committee in order to better acclimate herself with the forensic community and to help new members situate themselves within their forensic careers.

In the upcoming months, this newsletter will outline the topics and speakers for next year's special session in Chicago, IL. We are busy planning the event already, but we would love to hear any suggestions or comments that you want to share. Feel free to email me at jloakes-smith@slmpd.org with ideas that will make the special session great. I look forward to creating a great program for you in Chicago next year.

Jenna Oakes-Smith and Amanda Kittoe
YFSF Special Session, Co-Chairs

YFSF Bring Your Own Slides

My name is Martin Overly, and I am the Bring Your Own Slides Chair for the YFSF this year. I work as a Forensic Technician with Forensic Science Initiative at West Virginia University. I had the opportunity to attend my first AAFS and YFSF meetings this year in Seattle, WA. I must say that I am excited to get involved and network with such an exciting and motivated group of people. I also look forward to recruiting speakers to present their material and research at this upcoming meeting in Chicago. If you are interested in presenting, please contact me at martin.overly@mail.wvu.edu for more information.

Martin Overly
YFSF Bring Your Own Slides Chair

YFSF Poster Session

My name is Stephanie Crider and I am the 2011 YFSF Poster Session Chair. I first attended YFSF in 2006 at Seattle. Since then I have continued to be involved with YFSF as an attendee, and last year I was the Co-Chair for the Poster Session. Currently, I am finishing my MA in Anthropology at Louisiana State University; my research focuses on ancestry and the cranial base. I am very excited for the meeting in Chicago (my first time there!) in February and hope that you are as well! If you are interested in presenting your research as a poster, please feel free to contact me scride1@tigers.lsu.edu for more information.

Stephanie Crider
YFSF Poster Session Chair