

Young Forensic Scientists Forum *Newsletter*

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FORENSIC SCIENCES

November 2004

Editor: Sheila Estacio Dennis, MS

From The Editor

As I approach the end of my term of service to the YFSF, I look back and see how my focus in the forensic sciences has changed from getting into the field, advanced education, and networking with professionals. Now my shift has changed to the improvement of forensic sciences, both with funding and keeping abreast with new technologies and research.

I received an email from the Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations regarding asking your Congressman and Senator to keep the Senate's mark of \$20 million funding for the Paul Coverdell Act. I urge all of you to do the same.

"Coverdell grants are intended to improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science and medical examiner services, including services provided by laboratories operated by States and those operated by units of local government." (from US Dept. of Justice Grant Announcement Fiscal Year 2004).

This election year is promoting a very "vote conscious" young America with vote campaigns such as "Rock the Vote" and Citizen Change's "Vote or Die," and MTV's "Choose or Lose." I urge you not only to vote this year, but to also call your Congressman and Senator and urge him/her to vote for the continued improvement and funding of the Forensic Sciences. Call CFSO lobbyist Beth Lavach at (703) 622-8752 for more information.

I was sitting in my doctor's office reading an article from *New York* magazine, written by one of our medical examiner's, **Jonathan Hayes**. It was about the television show *CSI: New York*, and how it "works not so much as forensic science, but as forensic science fiction." Our very own YFSF President, **Claire Shepard**, is quoted in this article for her essay regarding *CSI* in the *YFSF Newsletter*, from January 2001! Claire's focus on the show was "Where is the reality in this show?". Kudos to Claire on receiving recognition and to Dr. Hayes for a well written article and for being an avid reader of the *YFSF Newsletter*!

The article may be found in the September 27, 2004 issue of *New York*, pages 36-39.

— Sheila Estacio Dennis, MS
YFSF Secretary
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YFSF Breakfast Session Update

With the AAFS annual meeting less than four months away, I hope you are all getting excited for your trip to "The Big Easy!" This year's YFSF Breakfast Session will be a double feature — a case presentation, followed by a resumé critique and question/answer discussion.

The morning will kick-off bright and early with food, drinks, and some brief YFSF business. **Adam Becnel** of the Louisiana State Police Crime Lab will then present a combination of interesting cases he has worked on as a forensic scientist in the Physical Evidence Unit. We will then move in to the resumé review discussion. I encourage you all to bring your resúmes for submittal at the YFSF Special Session. Your resúmes will then be reviewed and critiqued by several lab directors. The resúmes will be returned to you at the breakfast session, and the reviewers will be available to field questions about your resumé, job hunting, and the forensic science field.

I look forward to spending an interesting and informative morning with you all in New Orleans!

— Amanda Frohwein, BS

YFSF Bring Your Own Slides Session

Still interested in giving a presentation? Good! We still have room for young forensic scientists to give a presentation on any forensic topic ranging from what they do in the laboratory, to forensic science research, to advice on how to get that first forensic job. If you are a student, someone new to the field, or have been in the field for less than five years, please consider giving a presentation. We currently have presenters from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Harris County Medical Examiner's Office, Florida International University, and West Virginia University. If you are interested in giving a presentation please send an email to jeannette.perr@fiu.edu. The YFSF BYOS is a great opportunity to share your knowledge and to learn something new at the same time. If you won't be able to give a presentation, please still plan to attend and participate in the event!

Register for the YFSF Special Session!

Tuesday, February 22, 2005

Everything for the 2005 Young Forensic Scientists Forum Special Session has been finalized. All we are waiting on now is YOU! We hope to see some new faces at this year's session, and look forward to seeing some old ones as well. "Forensic Science Outside the Box" is shaping up to be one of the best YFSF Special Sessions to date. We're busy putting on the finishing touches. However, there are still a few surprises that are in the works.

Here's a breakdown of what we have planned. We've assembled eleven speakers from perhaps the most diverse and interesting backgrounds in forensic science today. A presentation that is a must see of the academic session will be given by Vahid Majidi, the Chief Science Advisor for the United States Department of Justice, who will be discussing the role of science and technology in Homeland Security. Also, at the end of the academic session there will be a panel discussion, entitled "Forensic Science in Louisiana," that you won't want to miss.

Back by popular demand this year will be the 2nd Annual YFSF Poster Session social, which is being held on Tuesday night after the Special Session. Hope to see you in New Orleans!

— Allison Curran, BS
YFSF Programming Chair



Participate in the YFSF Poster Session!

Tuesday, February 22, 2005
6:30-8:00 pm (Tentative)

- Undergraduate/Graduate Students, Emerging Forensic Scientists, and Veterans to the field are welcome
- Introduce your ideas in a comfortable and educational environment
- Present your undergraduate/graduate research or papers
- Share unique or educational cases encountered in the field
- YFSF Poster Session to follow the Annual YFSF Meeting at the AAFS Meeting February 2005, in New Orleans
- All relevant subjects from all forensic disciplines are welcome: DNA/Serology, Forensic Anthropology, Forensic Pathology/Medicine, Forensic Investigation, Forensic Computer Science, Odontology, Case Studies, Forensic Nursing, Forensic Psychiatry/Psychology and the Law, etc.
- Already presenting in another AAFS Session? Present your poster for the YFSF!

Contact Marrah E. Lachowicz BA, MFS, GCCP, to participate or for more information:
Gradpath@aol.com