



S1 Raising the Bar in Forensic Science

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The goals of the 2018 Interdisciplinary Symposium (IDS) are to provide attendees with an overview on how forensic science is viewed inside and outside the forensic arena and to present ideas on what the forensic science community can learn from the broader scientific community regarding transparency, research integrity, and a strong commitment to education.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing attendees with the perspectives of scientists from major scientific organizations inside and outside of forensic science and from attorneys from leading legal associations. Attendees will receive information on how to address strengths and weaknesses in the forensic sciences and should then be able to apply this knowledge in their own research and casework.

The 2018 IDS will comprise several distinguished scientists from within and outside of forensic science. The speakers will address perceived research gaps in the forensic sciences and discuss how to close these gaps.

To complement the 2018 American Academy of Forensic Sciences theme, *Science Matters*, the theme of the 2018 IDS is *Raising the Bar*. This symposium will highlight collaboration with the broader scientific community as a means to strengthen forensic science. Popular television shows have had a generally positive impact (for forensic science) on how the public views forensic science and forensic scientists. Despite the public perception of the near-infallibility of forensic science to detect and solve crimes, there has been criticism of forensic science from the scientific and legal communities. The criticism often notes that there is too much emphasis on the forensic aspect of various disciplines and not enough emphasis on foundational sciences. The National Commission on Forensic Science (NCFS), in which many AAFS members were active, provided a forum for members of the broader scientific community to contribute to recommendations designed to foster the foundational sciences of forensic science and to strengthen the forensic science community. Although the NCFS was not renewed upon the expiration of its charter in the spring of 2017, collaboration with the broader scientific community remains an important objective of AAFS.

At the 2018 IDS, a distinguished panel of researchers and speakers from professional organizations in the broader scientific community will address their perceptions of the strengths and challenges of the forensic science community. The 2018 speakers include the current leaders of the American Chemical Society (ACS), the American Physical Society (APS), the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law (AAPL), the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL), the Criminal Justice Section of the American Bar Association (ABA), and an AAFS past president. These speakers will discuss the efforts of their respective organizations to strengthen forensic science and the importance of “outside” voices in the advancement of forensic science. For example, with the APS, that could involve a discussion of what forensic science can learn from the broader scientific community about transparency, research integrity, and a strong commitment to education.

The keynote speaker is Vernon M. Neppe, MD, Director of the Pacific Neuropsychiatric Institute in Seattle, WA, Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry and Human Behavior, St. Louis University School of Medicine, St. Louis, MO, and former Director, Division of Neuropsychiatry, University of Washington, Seattle, WA. Dr. Neppe has contributed internationally in the specialties of neuropsychiatry and behavioral neurology, psychopharmacology, forensic psychiatry, anomalous psychology, and epileptology. A distinguished psychiatrist, author, playwright, and philosopher, Dr. Neppe’s presentation will highlight the importance of groundbreaking paradigm shifts to the advancement of scientific theory and practice.

Forensic Science, Reliability, Admissibility