Welcome to the occasional newsletter from the Forensic Chemistry Program at TCNJ. Our goal with this newsletter is not to advertise TCNJ's program (exclusively!), but to provide information for students, teachers, practitioners, and others interested in the field of Forensic Science.

This Newsletter provides some timely information on a few meetings. Meetings are very useful for all of our readers. If you are a high school or college student interested in the field, a teacher looking for ideas for their classes, or perhaps someone who wants to change fields, and would like to pursue a career in Forensic Science, meetings are the place to go. They offer talks from experts on a variety of topics, some have exhibits where manufacturers are present to discuss and show their products (and give away free pens), and meetings are good places for networking - meeting scientists in the field. Some meetings even have an employment service associated with them, where potential employers interview meeting attendees, and attendees can make their resumes available to employers.

Since we are a New Jersey college, we would like to provide some information here on some local meetings that are coming up shortly.

The 35th Annual NEAFS Meeting  
November 4-7, 2009  
Ocean Place Resort and Spa  
Long Branch, NJ

The Annual NEAFS meeting is a great place to appreciate what is happening now in the area of Forensic Science. The schedule for the meeting is listed below:

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Workshop: Microscopical Thinking and Trace Evidence  
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Workshop: Chemical Aspects of Fire Debris Analysis  
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Workshop: LC/MS and LC/MS/MS Redefined  
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Workshop: DNA Literature Review & Mixture Interpretation  
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Workshop: Advanced GC/MS System Optimization  
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM Educator’s Forum  
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Board of Directors Meeting  
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Exhibitors Setup  
8:00 PM - 10:00 PM Beach Bonfire (Weather Permitting)
Thursday, November 5, 2009

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM Scientific Session: Drug Chemistry
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM Scientific Session: Biology, Part I
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM Scientific Session: Criminalistics, Part I
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM ABC Exams
10:00 AM - 6:30 PM Exhibitors
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM Scientific Session: Toxicology
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM Scientific Session: Biology, Part II
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM Scientific Session: Criminalistics, Part II
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM Student’s Forum
5:00 PM – 6:30 PM Poster Session / Welcome Reception
8:00 PM - 10:00 PM Scientific Session: Interesting Cases

Friday, November 6, 2009
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Exhibitors
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM General Session: Notable NJ Cases
12:00 PM - 2:00 PM Luncheon
2:00 PM - 5:00 PM Plenary Session: The Wrongful Conviction of Forensic Science
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM Business Meeting
8:00 PM - 12:00 AM President’s Reception

As you can see, there are sessions of talks representing the important areas of the discipline (Toxicology, Criminalistics, etc.), and social events (a bonfire on the beach!). Also, Exhibitors will be present. There are a number of workshops that will be presented. It promises to be a great meeting. While it is an organization that covers the Northeastern quadrant of the country, this year the meeting is right here in New Jersey!

NEAFS, the Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientists, has a useful website, http://neafs.org/, that includes information such as links to useful websites, employment opportunities, and training opportunities. If you're considering a career in the field, it's always helpful to see who is hiring, and what they are looking for in an applicant. Their Training section lists short courses that can be taken to become familiar in a specific topic. (For example, one training opportunity is a two day workshop entitled "Leadership Assessment: Developing the Next Generation of Leaders". The short course, sponsored by the National Institute of Justice, is designed for Forensic Science managers. The training opportunity is scheduled for January 14-15, 2010.)
The Eastern Analytical Symposium is a meeting dedicated to the field of Analytical Chemistry. Their theme this year is ANALYSIS: BIG & SMALL. In recent years, there have been an increasing number of sessions devoted to Forensic Science and Analysis. This year, there will be sessions (collections of talks) in the following areas:

Vibrational Spectroscopy - Art and Forensic Analysis
Computational Pattern Recognition and Chemometrics in Forensic Science
Forensic Science in the 21st Century
Forensic Microscopy: What is it? Who does it?
Microscopy and Forensic Analysis

and two relevant seminars:

Teaching Forensic Science in High Schoool
Analytical and Forensic Chemistry

In addition, there are sessions on areas such as mass spectrometry, separation sciences, art conservation, NMR Spectrometry and Vibrational Spectroscopy. The EAS also has short courses available on special topics, an employment bureau, and a big Exhibit for manufacturers. If you would like to learn about what's hot in Analytical Chemistry and Forensics, this is the place to be. Visit them at www.eas.org.

Even if you can't attend meetings such as these, you can learn a lot from their web sites, which list topics being discussed at the meetings, potential employers in some cases, and people, who you may be able to contact in your area. We hope that you will attend a local or national meeting at some point, to experience total immersion in a field for a few days.