



Program ▾

AAFS 2026

Back to Basics: The Fundamentals of Forensic Science

February 9-14, 2026 – New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center

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FAQ

[#AAFS2025 | TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10](#)

Tuesday Workshops

Workshops are immersive half day or full day scientific sessions that are **available by pre-registration only**. It is recommended to register for these special sessions as soon as possible to ensure you reserve your seat before the workshop is full.

- [View Monday Workshops](#)

W18: Teaching With Care: Understanding Trauma-Informed Pedagogy and Its Application in Forensic Science Education



Pre-Registration Required — \$300

8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Chair:

Paul S. Uribe, MD

Fort Bend County Medical Examiner Office

Richmond, TX

Co-Chair:

Tiffany A. Roy, JD, MSFS

ForensicAid, LLC

Singer Island, FL

Presenters:

George F. Jackson, PhD

Office of the Chief State Medical Examiner

Trenton, NJ

Jeff Kukucka, PhD

Towson University

Towson, MD

Allison Lewis, JD

The Legal Aid Society

New York, NY

William Oliver, MD

East Carolina University

Seymour, TN

Michelle Rippy, EdD

California State University East Bay

Hayward, CA

Jennifer G. Solari, JD

Baker & Hostetler, LLP

Savannah, GA

Program Description: This workshop provides a comprehensive, interdisciplinary exploration of cognitive biases in forensic science and medicolegal investigations. It brings together experts across disciplines – forensic pathologists, toxicologists, DNA and fingerprint analysts, legal professionals, and cognitive scientists – to examine how biases such as confirmation bias, anchoring, and contextual bias affect forensic decision-making and courtroom outcomes.

Key Highlights:

Understanding Bias in Forensics:

- Explores how cognitive biases can distort interpretation, analysis, and testimony.
 - Emphasizes real-world consequences of bias on justice and forensic reliability.

Interdisciplinary Perspectives:

- Forensic pathologists and death investigators: Strategies for maintaining objectivity in autopsies and scene analysis.

Toxicologists and DNA analysts: Methods to reduce subjective interpretation and promote standardization.

Fingerprint analysts: Challenges in pattern recognition and minimizing human error.

- Prosecutors and defense attorneys: Legal perspectives on how biased forensic evidence affects case outcomes.
- Cognitive scientists: Present latest research and evidence-based debiasing tools.
- Interactive and Practical:
 - Includes hands-on exercises to practice bias-mitigation techniques.
 - Uses case-based discussions to highlight bias in real investigations and trials.
 - Aims to equip attendees with practical tools to improve objectivity in their own work.
- Collaborative Goals:

- Fosters interdisciplinary dialogue to strengthen forensic reliability and judicial fairness.
- Ideal for forensic professionals, legal experts, and researchers seeking to enhance accuracy, transparency, and integrity in forensic processes.

Participants will leave with a deeper understanding of how bias infiltrates forensic science, as well as concrete strategies to recognize, reduce, and guard against it – ultimately contributing to more objective and just forensic outcomes.

Learning Objectives: This workshop aims to equip forensic professionals with knowledge of cognitive biases impacting forensic science. Participants will learn to identify the effects of cognitive bias and how it relates to errors in decision-making across multiple forensic disciplines. The program fosters interdisciplinary collaboration to enhance accuracy in medicolegal investigations and death certification.

Impact Statement: By addressing cognitive bias, this workshop will improve the reliability of forensic analyses and strengthen justice system outcomes. It empowers professionals to implement bias-mitigation strategies, fostering greater trust in forensic evidence.

Target Audience: Criminalistics, General, Jurisprudence, Pathology/Biology, Psychiatry & Behavioral Science, Toxicology

Knowledge Level: Intermediate

Program Schedule:

8:00 am - 8:15 am Introduction

Paul Uribe, MD

8:15 am - 9:00 am Cognitive Bias and Error: The Cognitive Scientist Perspective and the OCME Audit

Jeff Kukucka, PhD

9:00 am - 9:45 am Cognitive Bias and Error in DNA Analysis

Tiffany Roy, JD, MFSF

9:45 am - 10:00 am BREAK

10:00 am - 10:45 am Cognitive Bias and Error: A Prosecuting Attorney's Perspective

Jenna Solari, JD

10:45 am - 11:30 am Cognitive Bias and Error: A Defense Attorney's Perspective

Allison Lewis, JD

11:30 am - 12:00 pm Panel Questions

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm BREAK

1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Cognitive Bias and Error in Toxicologic Analysis

George Jackson, PhD

1:45 pm - 2:30 pm Cognitive Bias and Error: A Medicolegal Death Investigation Perspective

Michelle Rippy, EdD

2:30 pm - 2:45 pm BREAK

2:45 pm - 3:30 pm Cognitive Bias and Error: A Forensic Pathologist Perspective

William Oliver, MD

3:30 pm - 3:45 pm Closing Statement

Paul Uribe, MD

3:45 pm - 5:00 pm Complete Panel Q&A

W20: The Case of the Contextual Conundrum: Can We Have Forensic Science Without Context?

+

W21: Forensic Pathology: 101 for Lawyers (and Anyone Else)

+

W22: Ethics in Forensics: Turning Data Into Dialog

+

W23: Forensic Investigation of Sudden Deaths in the Young: Who, When, and How

+

W24: Bringing Them Home: The Application of Fundamental and Frontier Science to Identify United States Service Members From Past Conflicts

+

W25: Testifying Without a Net: Navigating Activity-Level Evaluation Questions Without Formal Evaluation	+
W26: Advancing the Adoption of Artificial Intelligence in Forensic Science: Use Cases, Innovation Pathways, and a Procurement Framework	+
W27: Homicide-Suicide: Back to the Basics	+
W28: Forensic Postmortem Imaging and Medicolegal Death Investigations	+
W29: Yeah . . . We Have a Standard for That!	+
W30: Stronger Together: The Fundamentals of Forensic Teamwork in Mass Disasters and Fatalities	+
W31: Linguistics as a Forensic Science: Methods, Software and Admissibility of Text, Speech, and Handwriting Evidence	+
W32: Culture, Control, and Consequence: Addressing Harmful Norms Impacting LGBTQ+ Rights, Women's Autonomy, and Gender-Based Violence	+
W33: Unlocking Hidden Truths in Audio Evidence: A Hands-On Workshop on Forensic Audio Enhancement Techniques and Real-World Courtroom Case Studies	+
W34: A Skeletal Atlas of Elder Abuse II — Beta-Testing a Revised Digital Diagnostic and Educational Tool	+
W35: The Medicolegal Investigation of Recreational Diving Fatalities	+

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Quick Links ▾

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Daily Events

This provides a general overview of the daily events taking place during the conference. A more detailed schedule will be available closer to the conference.

Bolded events are open to all attendees.

AAFS 2026 Calendar of Events

Sunday, February 8, 2026

AAFS Registration Open 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Off-Site New Orleans Tours 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Monday, February 9, 2026

AAFS Registration Open 6:45 AM - 5:00 PM

[Workshops](#) 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

[Off-Site Crime Lab Tour](#) 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

**Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO)
Legislative Update Annual Report** 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

AAFS Speaker Ready Room 6:45 AM - 4:30 PM

AAFS Registration Open 6:45 AM - 6:00 PM

[Workshops](#) 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Special Session #1: Young Forensic Scientists Forum 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

FEPAC Session: Accreditation of Forensic Science Academic
Programs Through the AAFS 8:30 AM - 12:45 PM

AAFS Student Academy 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

[Off-Site Crime Lab Tour](#) 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Special Session #2: Interdisciplinary Symposium 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

AAFS Welcome Reception 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Employment Forum	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Humanitarian and Human Rights Resource Center (HRRRC) Poster & Networking Session	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Community Connections Forum & Reception	8:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Wednesday, February 11, 2026

AAFS Speaker Ready Room	6:45 AM - 4:30 PM
AAFS Registration Open	6:45 AM - 5:00 PM
AAFS Plenary Session	9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Poster Sessions	11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
The Forensic Exchange (exhibit hall)	11:30 AM - 4:00 PM
Section Luncheons	12:00 PM - 1:30 PM
Section Business Meetings	12:30 PM - 3:15 PM
AAFS ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING	3:45 PM - 5:30 PM
Toxicology Section Poster Session	7:30 PM - 9:00 PM
Bring Your Own Slides (BYOS)	8:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Thursday, February 12, 2026

AAFS Speaker Ready Room	6:45 AM - 4:30 PM
AAFS Registration Open	6:45 AM - 5:00 PM
Scientific Sessions	TBA

Thursday, February 12, 2026

The Forensic Exchange (exhibit hall)	9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Poster Sessions	11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
<u>Luncheon #1: Bloodstains, Injury Patterns, and the Ability to Act: What Can Go Wrong?</u>	12:00 PM - 1:30 PM
<u>Luncheon #2: Disaster Management for the Forensic Laboratory: A Hurricane Katrina Primer and Retrospective</u>	12:00 PM - 1:30 PM
<u>Luncheon #3: Grizzlies, Guns, and Glaciers: Interesting National Park Deaths</u>	12:00 PM - 1:30 PM
University Fair	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
AAFS 78th Forensics After Hours Reception	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Toxicology Open Forum	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Last Word Society	8:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Friday, February 13, 2026

AAFS Speaker Ready Room	6:45 AM - 4:30 PM
AAFS Registration Open	6:45 AM - 4:00 PM
Scientific Sessions	TBA
The Forensic Exchange (exhibit hall)	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Passport to Prizes in The Forensic Exchange (exhibit hall)	11:30 AM - 12:00 PM
Poster Sessions	11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
<u>Luncheon #4: Deriving Forensic Intelligence Using Artificial Intelligence</u>	12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

Friday, February 13, 2026

[Luncheon #5: Failure to do the Fundamentals:
The Forensic Investigation of the Titan Submersible and OceanGate](#)

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

[Luncheon #6: Postmortem Computed Tomography \(PMCT\)
Basics and Beyond: A Game of Jeopardy for Strong Stomachs](#)

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

Questions? We're here to help.

Send us a message and we'll reply as quickly as possible.

First Name

Last Name

You Email Address

How can we help?

Your Message