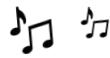


TOXTALK

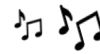
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Chris Heartsill, B.S., D-ABFT-FT
SOFT President



CLOSE YOUR EYES. CLEAR YOUR MIND.
LET THE SOUND OF THE 1971 SONG
CHANGES FILL YOUR HEAD.



David Bowie sings of his own artistic reinvention and encourages others to adapt to change. **"Change is inevitable"** is the term that I have heard all my life. As I sit with that thought for a moment I wonder, can we stay the same or is change truly inevitable. I suppose the latter is closer to the truth based on the mere definition of change: make different;

alter or modify. Staying the same would be near impossible just thinking of how things around us evolve, get modified.... change.

Occasionally I get swept up in the **"well back in my day"** thought process of how things were better when – fill-in-the-blank. But then I look at my surroundings as I am typing this article on a feather-weight computer, sitting in my back yard wirelessly connected to a web of infinite information and I begin to appreciate the changes that I have had the opportunity to experience. Changes in technology, changes in knowledge, changes in understanding, changes in mindset. If we can filter out the noise, today can be significantly better than yesterday or last year or 10 years ago.

Organizations also go through change, sometimes significant change. Step into the way-back machine to 2016. The SOFT Annual Meeting was in Dallas, Texas. The two co-hosts of that meeting were probably the best hosts SOFT has ever seen. This would be a transition year for SOFT as it had just hired an Executive Director, and she would be introduced to the masses at this meeting and things would never be the same. The structure of how meetings would be held, how SOFT would operate, how information would be provided to its membership would change significantly. The Dallas meeting was a tremendous success and the new Executive Director, Beth Olson often remembers this as "the finest

EDITORS

Robert Johnson, Ph.D., F-ABFT
Chris Heartsill, B.S., D-ABFT-FT

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Chris Heartsill, B.S., D-ABFT-FT

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TOXTALK

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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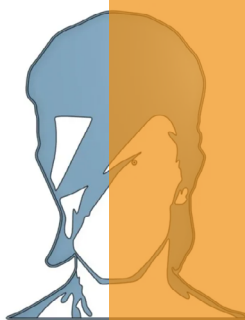
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

meeting I have ever attended". This last part is conjecture on my part, but I feel it is pretty close to accurate. The SOFT Office is now in full swing and has made the operation of the organization much more efficient.

SOFT as an organization, as a family of scientists, researchers, and learners, is a primary driver of change in our understanding of pharmacology, drug discovery and detection, and ultimately public health. The ability and willingness of past and future SOFT leadership to make necessary adjustments, to keep evolving, to listen to the winds of change has positioned our organization as a world leader in understanding the impact that toxicology has on society. As of this reading SOFT will have launched [ToxHub](#), a platform that will once again transition us into a new phase of communication. Ideas and information will be shared, membership will be able to connect like never before. I am looking forward to this new change and I am excited to see where it takes us. If you are one of the many volunteers participating in this by moderating pages/topics for ToxHub, I thank you. We will need you to ensure the platform is operating efficiently and appropriately. Additionally, I encourage all the membership to check it out, get involved, and share ideas and information.

♪ **Ch, Ch, Changes, turn and face the strain...** As I close this message, **I want to encourage everyone to embrace change as it is inevitable, and we can only control how we respond to it.** I can't wait to see everyone in Portland for a great meeting. Sara Short and Amy Miles are putting together a great plan and have an amazing Planning Committee. Perhaps they take the top spot as meeting hosts, we shall see (no pressure guys). And those 2016 meeting hosts, if you have not figured it out, Erin Spargo and me! Finally, this issue contains three references to songs. Two are obvious, the other not as much. *If you know or figure them all out, find me at SOFT and tell me what you think they are.*

Chris Heartsill
SOFT President



CHANGES BY DAVID BOWIE

Still don't know what I was waiting for
And my time was running wild, a million dead-end streets
and
Every time I thought I'd got it made
It seemed the taste was not so sweet
So I turned myself to face me
But I've never caught a glimpse
Of how the others must see the faker
I'm much too fast to take that test
Ch-ch-changes
(Turn and face the strain)
Ch-ch-changes
(Don't want to be a richer man)
Ch-ch-changes
(Turn and face the strain)
Ch-ch-changes
(Just gonna have to be a different man)
Time may change me
But I can't trace time
I watch the ripples change their size
But never leave the stream of warm impermanence and
So the days float through my eyes
But still the days seem the same
And these children that you spit on
As they try to change their worlds
Are immune to your consultations
They're quite aware of what they're going through
Ch-ch-changes
(Turn and face the strain)
Ch-ch-changes
(Don't tell them to grow up and out of it)
Ch-ch-changes
(Turn and face the strain)
Ch-ch-changes
(Where's your shame, you've left us up to our necks in it)
Time may change me
But you can't trace time
Strange fascination, fascinating me
Ah changes are taking the pace I'm going through
Ch-ch-changes
(Turn and face the strain)
Ch-ch-changes
(Oh, look out you rock 'n rollers)
Ch-ch-changes
(Turn and face the strain)
Ch-ch-changes
(Pretty soon now you're gonna get older)
Time may change me
But I can't trace time
I said that time may change me
But I can't trace time

Join SOFT: Membership & Promotions

The Society of Forensic Toxicologists (SOFT) offers several categories of membership to support individuals at all stages of their careers in forensic toxicology. Whether you are a student exploring the field, an experienced professional, or a long-time member transitioning into retirement, there is a membership type tailored to your background and level of involvement.

Each category has specific eligibility requirements, benefits, and sponsorship guidelines. Please review the details below to determine the membership type that best fits your qualifications and professional status. If you are a current member seeking to update your membership category, information about membership promotion is also provided.

Please feel free to reach out to the Membership Committee with any questions or if you need assistance with your Membership Application.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
[Chair: Madeleine Swortwood](#)
Sarah Martin
Justin Grodnitzky
Marissa Finkelstein

Apply Now

How to Apply for SOFT Membership

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

STEP 01

Select your Membership Level

Determine the level you qualify for or wish to promote to. Review the requirements and sponsorship needs.



STEP 02

Contact Your Sponsor

Reach out to your sponsors and request they submit a Sponsorship Form for your application.



STEP 03

Create Your Profile & Pay

Create your Membership Profile & Submit your Application Fee - Applied to first-year dues upon approval.



STEP 04

Submit Your Application

Submit your Membership Application with the following:

- Current CV or Resume
- Completed Sponsorship Form (PDF received via email)





CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Unlock a treasure trove of knowledge with our live and on-demand webinars, designed for forensic toxicologists at every stage of their career. Whether you're a seasoned professional or just starting out, these sessions are crafted to enrich your understanding of cutting-edge topics and industry challenges.

SOF Learning Center Offers:



EXCLUSIVE ACCESS



AFFORDABLE LEARNING



ON-DEMAND FLEXIBILITY



ACCESS THE LEARNING CENTER!



BOARD NOMINATIONS

The SOFT Nominating Committee is responsible for presenting a slate of Officers & Directors to the SOFT membership at least 30 days prior to the Annual Business Meeting.

The President & President-Elect serve one-year terms, while the Secretary & Treasurer each serve two-year terms, expiring in alternate years. Directors are elected for three-year terms.

The 2025 Nominating Committee respectfully submits the following slate for consideration by the SOFT membership. Below, you will find the bios of the nominated Officers & Directors.

SLATE OF OFFICERS



Madeleine Swortwood
President-Elect



Dayong Lee
Secretary



Erin Karschner
Director



Alex Krotulski
Director

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Madeleine Swortwood, Ph.D. is currently a Toxicology Expert at Robson Forensic. Previously, she was a tenured Associate Professor in the Department of Forensic Science at Sam Houston State University. Dr. Swortwood received a Bachelor's degree in Biochemistry from Duquesne University and a Ph.D. in Chemistry from Florida International University (FIU). She completed a postdoctoral fellowship with the National Institute on Drug Abuse under the mentorship of Dr. Marilyn Huestis. During graduate school, Dr. Swortwood served as an intern at the Food and Drug Administration's Forensic Chemistry Center and the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner's Toxicology Laboratory, where she was hired as a full-time forensic toxicologist.

Madeleine is currently Secretary on the Board of Directors for SOFT. She is a member of the SOFT/AAFS Oral Fluid Committee. Previously, she served on the SOFT Publications Committee and the SOFT/AAFS Drugs & Driving Committee. She is past Chair of the AAFS Toxicology Section and serves on the OSAC Toxicology Subcommittee. Her research to date includes novel psychoactive substances, oral fluid drug testing, drug metabolism, in utero drug exposure, and analytical method development. She has authored and co-authored more than forty manuscripts and one book chapter. She mentored dozens of MS and PhD students while at SHSU.

SECRETARY

Dayong Lee, Ph.D., F-ABFT, is the manager of the Toxicology section and the chief toxicologist at the Houston Forensic Science Center (HFSC). Prior to her tenure with HFSC since 2015, she served as an Intramural Research Program fellow at the National Institute of Drug Abuse conducting her graduate research on cannabis and subsequently as a postdoctoral associate of the clinical and forensic toxicology laboratories at the University of Florida. Dr. Lee is certified as a fellow by the American Board of Forensic Toxicology and as a toxicological chemist by the National Registry of Certified Chemists and licensed as a Toxicologist (Interpretive) by the Texas Forensic Science Commission. She serves as a director of the American Board of Forensic Toxicology, the Co-Editor-in-Chief for the Journal of Analytical Toxicology, and a Sentinel Site Director for the National Drug Early Warning System. She is an active member of the Society of Forensic Toxicologists, currently serving as a director of the Board; she previously served as the Chair of the Drugs and Driving Committee, members of the Membership Committee, History Committee, and Awards Committee, as a mentor for the Mentoring Committee, a moderator for the SOFTopics, and as the 2019 Scientific Program Co-Chair. Additionally, she is a fellow of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, currently serving as the Chair of the Toxicology section, as well as members of the International Association of Forensic Toxicologists, the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors, and the National Safety Council – Alcohol, Drugs and Impairment Division. She received several awards including AAFS Irving Sunshine Award, Young Scientist Award from the International Association of Forensic Sciences, NIH Outstanding Graduate Research, and SOFT Education Research Award. Dr. Lee authored 39 peer reviewed articles and 2 book chapters and presented at national and international professional conferences on diverse topics of forensic toxicology including oral fluid cannabinoids, case reports, drug trends and others. She received a Doctor of Philosophy degree in toxicology from the University of Maryland in Baltimore, a Master of Science degree in forensic science from the University of Illinois in Chicago, and a Bachelor of Science in microbiology and cell science from University of Florida. She is currently a candidate for the Master of Liberal Arts (ALM) in Extension Studies, field of Management, Harvard University.

DIRECTOR

Erin L. Karschner, Ph.D., F-ABFT, Dr. Erin L. Karschner received her Ph.D. in Toxicology from the University of Maryland-Baltimore. As part of her predoctoral fellowship, she performed clinical research studies exploring cannabinoid pharmacology at the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). After completing a postdoctoral fellowship at NIDA, Dr. Karschner was hired as a research scientist at Aegis Sciences Corporation where she developed and validated analytical methods for pain management medications, illicit drugs, and novel psychoactive substances. Dr. Karschner is currently a Forensic Toxicologist at the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System's Division of Forensic Toxicology. In addition to her duties as a laboratory certifying official and expert witness, she is an advisor on technical issues related to research initiatives and analytical challenges. She has published 29 peer-reviewed publications and currently serves on the Journal of Toxicology (JAT) and Journal of Forensic Sciences editorial boards.

A founding member of the SOFT Young Forensic Toxicologists Committee (2009-2014), Dr. Karschner expanded her service to the Awards Committee (2018-2021), Professional Mentoring Committee (2020-2022), Publications Committee (2024), and the Drugs and Driving Committee (2019-present). She has served as a SOFTopics moderator (2020-2024), Workshop Program Coordinator (2019), Meeting Co-host (Nashville 2021), and the Special Issue Editor for JAT (2024). Dr. Karschner is also active outside of SOFT, serving on the American Board of Forensic Toxicology's Board of Directors and the National Safety Council's Alcohol, Drugs and Impairment Division as the Cannabis Section Chair. She was the Toxicology Section Program Chair for the 2025 American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) Meeting.

Dr. Karschner has had the honor of receiving the SOFT Educational Research Award, the AAFS Toxicology Section June K. Jones Award, the AAFS Toxicology Section Irving Sunshine Award, the International Association of Forensic Toxicologists Best Bulletin Paper Award, and the SOFT Young Forensic Toxicologist Service Award.

DIRECTOR

Alex J. Krotulski, Ph.D., Dr. Alex J. Krotulski serves as the Director of Toxicology and Chemistry at the Center for Forensic Science Research and Education (CFSRE) where he has worked since 2015. In this role, Alex is the Program Manager for NPS Discovery, the CFSRE's open-access drug early warning system. Alex holds faculty appointment at Thomas Jefferson University and serves as the Program Director for their M.S. degree program in forensic toxicology. Alex is a Senior Associate Editor for the Journal of Analytical Toxicology. Alex is an active member of several professional organizations, including SOFT, TIAFT, and AAFS. Alex actively serves as the vice chair of the SOFT NPS Committee and as a member of the TIAFT NPS Committee. Alex was the 2021 JAT Special Issue Guest Editor, was the 2024 Workshop Chair, and has served on the Nashville planning committee, St. Louis planning committee, and publications committee. Alex has published more than 80 peer-reviewed publications and has given more than 140 presentations at conferences and meetings. In recognition of his accomplishments, Alex was the recipient of the 2021 SOFT Research in Forensic Toxicology Award, the 2022 AAFS Toxicology Section's Irving Sunshine Award for Outstanding Research by a Young Investigator, and the 2025 AAFS Past Presidents Council's Outstanding Early Career Achievement in Forensic Science Award.

ERA & YSMA AWARD RECIPIENTS

AWARDS SESSION
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30
2:00 - 3:00 PM

AWARDS CEREMONY SOFT BUSINESS MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30
3:30 - 5:00 PM

Congratulations to our 2025 ERA and YSMA Recipients! These distinguished awards commend students and young scientists who have demonstrated exceptional contributions to the field of forensic toxicology through their research endeavors. The recipients will have the opportunity to present their findings at SOFT's annual meeting in Portland, OR. Each award comprises complimentary meeting registration along with a \$2,500 stipend intended to defray travel expenses. **We look forward to the enlightening presentations of the awardees at SOFT 2025.**



EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AWARD (ERA) AWARD RECIPIENTS

Award Recipient: Maria Sarkisian

Title: Defining Identification Criteria for Routine LC-QTOF-MS Targeted Analysis

About Maria: Maria Sarkisian is a forensic toxicologist at the San Francisco Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. Her work focuses on the development, validation, and implementation of advanced analytical methods, particularly LC-QTOF-MS, for postmortem and human performance toxicology. She has contributed to improving routine testing workflows and enhancing identification criteria for high-resolution mass spectrometry. Maria is passionate about bridging rigorous science with practical forensic applications and advancing the field through research, mentorship, and collaboration.



What is one challenge you faced while working on your research, and how did you overcome it? One challenge was balancing the need for scientific rigor with the constraints of real-world casework. I overcame it by staying flexible, seeking feedback from peers, and focusing on solutions that were both robust and realistic.

Award Recipient: Seokjin Hwang

Title: Fast & Forensic: Rapid Detection & Quantitation of 30 + e Emerging Novel Psychoactive Substances in Hair

About Seokjin: I have been attending John Jay for 6 years through bachelor's and master's degree. I have graduated bachelor's in 2019 and went to the Korean army for 2 years and came back in 2023. I met my wonderful mentor, Dr. Ana Pego, around 2024 and have been working on NPS with her since. I have graduated John Jay for master's in June 2025 and have been accepted to St. John's University Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD program.



What advice would you give to other students or young scientists interested in forensic toxicology?

My advice to students and young scientists interested in forensic toxicology is to remember that everything may not always go your way, and that's okay. Figuring out what doesn't work is still a valuable result, and there's always something to learn from every step of the process. Stay curious, be patient, and embrace the challenges, because they will help you grow both as a scientist and as a person.

ERA & YSMA AWARD RECIPIENTS

AWARDS SESSION
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30
2:00 - 3:00PM

AWARDS CEREMONY SOFT BUSINESS MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30
3:30 - 5:00 PM

Award Recipient: Marco Ballotari

Title: Analysis of Cannabinoids and Semi-synthetic Cannabinoids in Authentic Breastmilk by Liquid Chromatography-Tandem Mass Spectrometry

About Marco: I received my Doctor of Philosophy degree in Nanoscience and Advanced Technologies-Technologies and Nanotechnology in Forensic Sciences from the University of Verona, Italy in 2023. I currently serve as a Postdoctoral Associate at the Forensic Toxicology Laboratory, Department of Pathology, Immunology and Lab Medicine, University of Florida College of Medicine. My main activities focus on the development and validation of an LC-MS/MS assay for the determination of cannabinoids in various matrices as a part of a study assessing prevalence of medical/non-medical marijuana, and cannabidiol use during pregnancy and postpartum, as well as participation in the process of transferring routine methods from GC to LC systems.

What do you find most exciting about forensic toxicology research?

Certainly, the aspects that make this discipline so dynamic. I've always been fascinated by laboratory research in both clinical and legal investigations, and by the fact that every case or study is unique. For me, forensic toxicology brings all of that together and represents the ideal field where I can keep learning, stay challenged, and be involved in work with meaningful social impact.

YOUNG SCIENTIST MEETING AWARD (YSMA) RECIPIENT

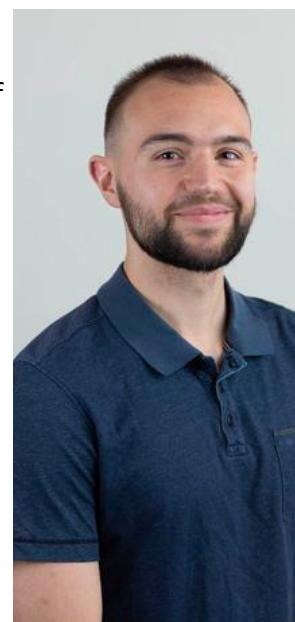
Award Recipient: Nicholas Khorozov

Title: Synthetic Cannabinoid Quantification on Infused Paper from Prisons by Liquid Chromatography Tandem Mass Spectrometry

About Nicholas: Nick is a recent graduate of Thomas Jefferson University's Master of Science in Forensic Toxicology, having previously graduated from Appalachian State University with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry with minors in Criminal Justice and Russian language. He has had internship and work experience in commercial as well as state laboratories, where his passion for toxicology and drug chemistry was fostered. Nick has most recently been employed by the Center for Forensic Science Research & Education (CFSRE) as a graduate assistant, aiding the NPS Discovery program in both chemistry and toxicology workflows.

What does receiving this award mean to you?

This award means that hard work pays off. It is a meaningful recognition of the personal and professional growth I've experienced in recent years. But no great thing is achieved alone. I must recognize the wonderful educators and mentors that I have met and working alongside throughout my academic career, as their hard work has now paid off as well. Special mentions to Appalachian State University Department of Chemistry, NC Department of Justice, and of course the Center for Forensic Science Research & Education for making me the scientist I am today.



ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE - PORTLAND, OR

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Please join us for the Annual SOFT Business Meeting on Thursday, October 30, to meet the slate of officers for 2026. You'll also hear from the SOFT 2025 Board of Directors as they present their annual reports and updates to the membership.

SOFT members in attendance will have the chance to win **free registration** to a future SOFT meeting!

Exciting News!!!! No more standing in line to sign in for the meeting. Bring your phone and use it to register via a QR code. It will link you to a form that you can quickly fill out from your seat! You can practice on this one!



Meeting Minutes

The 2024 Business Meeting minutes were published in [ToxTalk Volume 48, Issue 4](#) so please review them prior to the business meeting so we may vote.



OREGON CONVENTION CENTER
OCTOBER 26 – 31, 2025

PLANNING COMMITTEE



HOST
SARA SHORT



HOST
AMY MILES

Scientific Program Coordinators

Kayla Neuman - WI State Lab of Hygiene
Tyson Baird - Sedgewick Co Regional Forensic Science Center

Workshop Program Coordinators

Mary Lynn Heffington - Arkansas State Crime Lab
Dani Mata - Houston Forensic Science Center

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Brianna Lehr - Oregon State Police Lab
Dawn Sklerov - Washington State Patrol Toxicology Lab

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Denice Teem - Oakland County ME's Office
Delisa Dalgleish - Virginia Dept. of Forensic Science

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Roxane Ritter - Federal Aviation Administration
Sunday Hickerson - Federal Aviation Administration
Tyler Devincenzi - San Francisco OCME
Rusty Lewis - Federal Aviation Administration

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Frank Wallace - Wallace Consulting Solutions

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Elisa Shoff - Miami-Dade ME's Office

JAT Special Issue Editor

Rebecca Wagner - Virginia Dept. of Forensic Science

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Shannon Palladino - Oregon State Police Lab

Exhibitor Liaison

Sarah Riley - St. Louis University School of Medicine

ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE - PORTLAND, OR

GREETINGS FROM THE 2025 SOFT ANNUAL MEETING HOSTS!

We're thrilled to welcome you to Portland, Oregon, a city known for its vibrant culture, lush landscapes, and a spirit of creativity that perfectly complements the energy of our forensic toxicology community. This year's meeting promises to be a dynamic blend of science, wellness, and entertainment. Whether you're here to dive deep into the latest research or to reconnect with colleagues, we've curated a program that offers something for everyone.

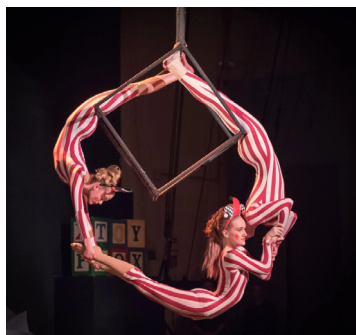
START YOUR DAY WITH SERENITY

Each morning, we invite you to join us for **YOGA SESSIONS** designed to help you center yourself before a full day of learning and networking. These sessions are open to all attendees. Just bring your own mat or towel and enjoy a peaceful start to your day.



SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS & WORKSHOPS

We're excited to report several fantastic submissions for this year's Scientific Sessions! **Kayla Neuman and Tyson Baird** have put in a tremendous amount of work to organize and review the submissions. The enthusiasm and innovation in our field are genuinely inspiring. Be sure to check out the workshops scheduled Monday and Tuesday that **Dani Mata and Mary Lynn Heffington** have curated for attendees. There's a wide range of topics to explore, and they're an excellent opportunity to deepen your expertise.



OFF-SITE NETWORKING EVENT: AERIAL ARTISTRY AT REDD ON SALMON

Wednesday night's off-site event will be held at the stunning [Redd on Salmon Street](#), where we'll be treated to a breathtaking performance by **Aerial Without Limits (AWOL) Artists**. Their gravity-defying artistry is sure to be a highlight of the week, offering a unique and unforgettable experience.

FILL YOUR BELLY!

The F&B crew (**Ann Marie Gordon, Denice Teem, and Delisa Dalgleish**) is ensuring each morsel consumed and beverage you drink is of the highest quality and most excellent quantity! They may run behind the scenes for all of your food and beverage needs, but they are front and center when they interface with all of the caterers. We can't thank them enough for making sure we stay well fed during the conference.



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ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE - PORTLAND, OR

STAY CONNECTED DURING THE MEETING



Roxane Ritter, Sunday Hickerson, Tyler Devincenzi, and Rusty Lewis are starting to ramp up the work for the SOFT app. They have been compiling the information needed to ensure that you can stay connected to all of the events and activities during the SOFT meeting.

FUN RUN: LACE UP AND JOIN IN

Shannon Palladino has been working diligently on the Fun Run, which is shaping up to be a fantastic event! Whether you're a seasoned runner or just looking for a scenic stroll, this is a great way to enjoy Portland's natural beauty and connect with fellow attendees in a relaxed setting.



HELP US OUT



Volunteer Coordinators, **Dawn Sklerov, Chelsea VanDenBurg, and Brianna Lehr** are looking for volunteers to help support the meeting. This is a great way to help out with the conference, get a behind the scenes look at what we do and meet new people. Whether it's checking people in for a workshop, posting along the Fun Run route or keeping track of the food supply, all volunteers are appreciated!

LET'S MAKE IT MEMORABLE

As your hosts, we're genuinely excited to share this experience with you. Portland offers the perfect backdrop for a meeting that's as enriching as it is enjoyable. We can't wait to see you, learn with you, and celebrate the incredible work being done in forensic toxicology.

Here's to a fun, inspiring, and unforgettable SOFT 2025!



WORKSHOP PROGRAM

Program Coordinators: Mary Lynn Heffington & Dani Mata

Dates: Monday, October 27 & Tuesday, October 28

Location: Oregon Convention Center, Portland, OR

Below you will find a concise overview of the Workshop Program. Further details, including abstracts and supplementary workshop information can be found on the [WORKSHOP PROGRAM WEB-PAGE](#).



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MONDAY, OCTOBER 27 | 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

WS01: From Crisis to Calm: Mental Health in Forensic Science Workplaces

Chairs: Kristen Burke, MS, MBA & Sabra Jones, PhD

Audience Knowledge: Basic - suitable for individuals new to the field, requires little prior knowledge to the subject matter

WS02: The Rise of Smoke Shops and Commercial Sales of NPS

Chairs: Kayla N Ellefsen, PhD & Helen Chang, MS

Audience Knowledge: Basic - suitable for individuals new to the field, requires little prior knowledge to the subject matter

WS03: A Closer Look at Pediatric Toxicology: Unraveling the Mysteries of Pediatric Testing

Chairs: Theresa Hippolyte, M.S., D-ABFT-FT & Lindsay Glicksberg, Ph.D.

Audience Knowledge: Basic - suitable for individuals new to the field, requires little prior knowledge to the subject matter

WS04: Method Development: Foundations for the New Toxicologist, Part I

Chairs: Elisa N Shoff, MS, D-ABFT-FT & Wayne Lewallen, BS

Audience Knowledge: Basic - suitable for individuals new to the field, requires little prior knowledge to the subject matter

MONDAY, OCTOBER 27 | 1:30 - 5:30 PM

WS05: Forensic Toxicology Validation: Navigating the Latest ANSI/ASB 036 Revisions: Part II

Chairs: Rebecca Wagner, PhD & Robert Lockwood, PhD

Audience Knowledge: Intermediate - Involves more advanced concepts requiring some technical working knowledge or prior exposure to the subject matter

WS06: The “Postmortem Blood Drug Screen”: Analytical and Managerial Approaches

Chairs: Carl E Wolf, PhD & Justin L Poklis, BS

Audience Knowledge: Intermediate - Involves more advanced concepts requiring some technical working knowledge or prior exposure to the subject matter

WS07: Choosing Wisely: How Alternative Biological Matrices Shape and Support Forensic Interpretation

Chairs: Eduardo de Campos, PhD & Ana Pego, PhD

Audience Knowledge: Intermediate - Involves more advanced concepts requiring some technical working knowledge or prior exposure to the subject matter

WS08: Beyond the Pill Bottle: Prescription Drugs’ Hidden Impacts on Driving, Work, and Life

Chairs: Kristen Burke, MS, MBA & Sabra Jones, PhD

Audience Knowledge: Basic - suitable for individuals new to the field, requires little prior knowledge to the subject matter



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28 | 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

WS09: Stimulants and the Road Ahead

Chairs: Anisha Paul, MS & Vanessa Meneses, MS

Audience Knowledge: Basic - suitable for individuals new to the field, requires little prior knowledge to the subject matter

WS10: Recent Advances in MS-based Forensic Toxicology: Achieving Efficiency, Selectivity, and Sensitivity

Chairs: Tim Fassette & Laura Friederich

Audience Knowledge: Intermediate - Involves more advanced concepts requiring some technical working knowledge or prior exposure to the subject matter

WS11: Data Analysis: Collection, Preparation and Visualization

Chairs: Brigitte Desharnais, PhD & Sue Pearing, MS

Audience Knowledge: Basic - suitable for individuals new to the field, requires little prior knowledge to the subject matter

WS12: Roadside Oral Fluid Testing Device Evaluation and Approval

Chairs: Curt E. Harper, Ph.D. & Mandi Mohr, MS

Audience Knowledge: Intermediate - Involves more advanced concepts requiring some technical working knowledge or prior exposure to the subject matter

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28 | 1:30 PM - 5:30 PM

WS13: "Can I Say That?" Mastering Expert Testimony in Forensic Toxicology

Chairs: Robert Johnson, PhD & Kei Osawa, MFS

Audience Knowledge: Basic - suitable for individuals new to the field, requires little prior knowledge to the subject matter

WS14: Death in Portland, Let Knowledge Service the City. Postmortem Toxicology—How to Complete a Thorough Investigation

Chairs: Craig N Chatterton, PhD & Luke N Rodda, PhD

Audience Knowledge: Basic - suitable for individuals new to the field, requires little prior knowledge to the subject matter

WS15: Uniting Forensic Toxicology and Medical Toxicology to Implement the Drug Overdose Toxicology-Surveillance (DOTS) Reporting Program

Chairs: Alex J Krotulski, PhD & Paul Wax, MD

Audience Knowledge: Intermediate - Involves more advanced concepts requiring some technical working knowledge or prior exposure to the subject matter

WS16: Leveraging Large Language Models to Investigate the Novel Psychoactive Drug Ecosystem: Applications in Structural Prediction, Behavioral Analysis, and Cyber Surveillance

Chairs: Lynn M Wagner, PhD & Erin R Wilfong, PhD

Audience Knowledge: Intermediate - Involves more advanced concepts requiring some technical working knowledge or prior exposure to the subject matter



ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE - PORTLAND, OR

REGISTRATION

Join us for the SOFT 2025 Annual Meeting in beautiful Portland, OR, where the forensic toxicology community gathers to explore the latest innovations, research, and professional connections.

[VIEW THE REGISTRATION WEBPAGE.](#)

REGISTRATION RATES AND INCLUSIONS

Take advantage of Early Bird pricing and plan ahead!

Late Rate: Begins September 12

Onsite Rate: Begins October 9

Registration	Membership	Early Bird (June 25 - Sep 10)	Late (Begins Sept 11)	Onsite (Begins Oct 9)
Meeting Attendee Registration: Access to Scientific Sessions, Exhibit Hall, Networking Events, SOFT Bag & Giveaways, Breakfast, Lunch & Refreshment Breaks on W/TH/F	Member Student Non-Member	\$599 \$299 \$799	\$799 \$499 \$999	\$899 \$699 \$1,099
Workshop Registration: Breakfast & Refreshment Breaks on Workshop Days	Member Student Non-Member	\$150 \$150 \$200	\$175 \$175 \$225	\$200 \$200 \$250
Exhibitor Booth Staff Registration: Exhibit Hall & Booth Access plus Meeting Attendee Registration Inclusions		\$600	\$600	\$600
Guest Package: Access to Exhibit Hall, Networking Events, SOFT Bag & Giveaways, Breakfast, Lunch & Refreshment Breaks on W/TH/F. Guest Packages are for personal guests and can not be used for industry professionals.		\$500	\$500	\$500
Karla Moore Fun Run/Walk Registration: Donation to the American Cancer Society, Includes Lapel Pin & Shirt		\$30	\$30	\$30

Feature/Access	Meeting Attendee	Student	Workshop Only	Exhibitor	Guest
Workshop Access (M/T - Additional Cost)	Optional Add-on	Optional Add-on	✓	Optional Add-on	✗
Breakfast & Refreshment Breaks (M/T)	If Attending Workshop	If Attending Workshop	✓	If Attending Workshop	✗
Breakfast, Lunch & Refreshment Breaks (W/TH/F)	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Exhibit Hall (T/W/TH)	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Scientific Sessions (W/TH/F)	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Networking Events (T/W/TH)	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Program Book & Abstracts	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
SOFT Bag & Giveaways	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓



OREGON CONVENTION CENTER
OCTOBER 26 - 31, 2025

PLANNING COMMITTEE



HOST
SARA SHORT



HOST
AMY MILES

Scientific Program Coordinators
Kayla Neuman - WI State Lab of Hygiene
Tyson Baird - Sedgewick Co Regional Forensic Science Center

Workshop Program Coordinators
Mary Lynn Heffington - Arkansas State Crime Lab
Dani Mata - Houston Forensic Science Center

Volunteer Coordinators
Chelsea VanDenBurg - Oregon State Police Lab
Brianna Lehr - Oregon State Police Lab
Dawn Sklerov - Washington State Patrol Toxicology Lab

Food & Beverage Coordinators
Ann Marie Gordon - Consultant
Denice Teem - Oakland County ME's Office
Delisa Dalgleish - Virginia Dept. of Forensic Science

Mobile Application Coordinators
Roxane Ritter - Federal Aviation Administration
Sunday Hickerson - Federal Aviation Administration
Tyler Devincenzi - San Francisco OCME
Rusty Lewis - Federal Aviation Administration

Audio Visual Coordinator
Frank Wallace - Wallace Consulting Solutions

Young Forensic Toxicologists Chair
Elisa Shoff - Miami-Dade ME's Office

JAT Special Issue Editor
Rebecca Wagner - Virginia Dept. of Forensic Science

Fun Run Coordinator
Shannon Palladino - Oregon State Police Lab

Exhibitor Liaison
Sarah Riley - St. Louis University School of Medicine

ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE - PORTLAND, OR

HOTEL ROOM BLOCKS

Book your room for Portland, OR, with programming taking place at the Oregon Convention Center. We have secured discounted room blocks at two nearby hotels:

HYATT REGENCY PORTLAND

SOFT Room Block Rate: \$229

Distance: 0.2 miles/4 min



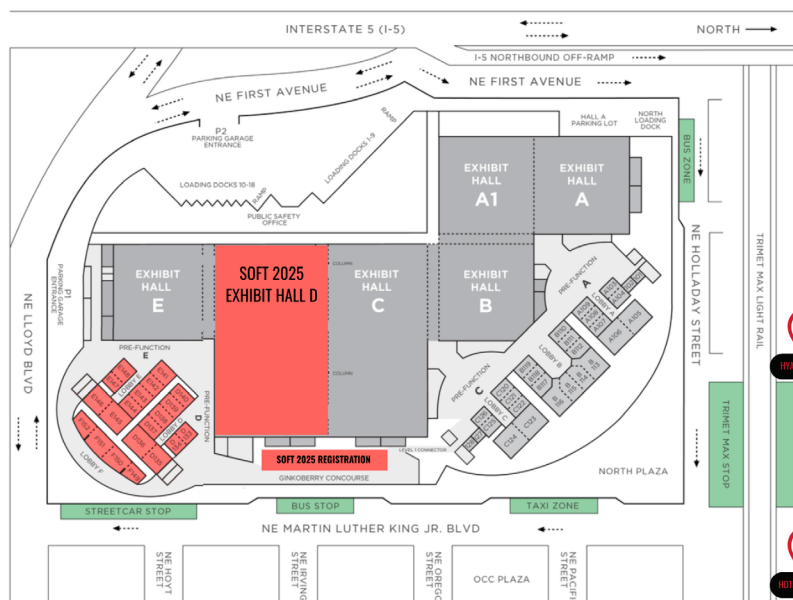
HOTEL EASTLUND

SOFT Room Block Rate: \$209

Distance: 0.2 miles/5 min



OREGON CONVENTION CENTER



OREGON CONVENTION CENTER
OCTOBER 26 – 31, 2025

PLANNING COMMITTEE



HOST
SARA SHORT



HOST
AMY MILES

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Sarah Riley - St. Louis University School of Medicine

ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE - PORTLAND, OR

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

Program Coordinators: Kayla Neuman & Tyson Baird

Program Dates: Wednesday, October 29 - Friday, October 31

Location: Oregon Convention Center, Portland, OR

[SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM WEBPAGE](#)

NEW - "SPECIAL TOPIC" SESSION FOR 2025!

This year the Scientific Program Coordinators have chosen **Kratom** as a Special Topic with interesting case studies, research, or analytical information related to Kratom.

POSTER PRESENTATION GUIDELINES:

Poster presentations will be held in the Exhibit Hall. Presenters should plan to hang their posters during the designated Poster Preparation Period. SOFT will provide thumbtacks and poster number ID tags for your convenience.



Posters should not exceed 48" high X 96" wide (landscape). Presenters are expected to be available during their assigned session for discussion and Q&A and to remove posters during the scheduled tear-down period.

PLATFORM PRESENTATION GUIDELINES:



Platform Presentation guidelines have been updated to enhance the quality of discourse and maximize engagement. Platform presenters will be allocated **12 minutes**:

- **10 minutes** Dedicated to the Presentation
- **2 minutes** for Questions

PROGRAM SCHEDULE:

Wednesday, October 29

Poster Preparation | 7:00 – 11:00 AM

Platform Presentations | 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Poster Session #1 | 12:00 – 2:00 PM

Thursday, October 30

Poster Preparation | 7:00 – 11:00 AM

Platform Presentations | 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Poster Session #2 | 12:00 – 2:00 PM

Friday, October 31

Platform Presentations | 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM



OREGON CONVENTION CENTER
OCTOBER 26 – 31, 2025

PLANNING COMMITTEE



HOST
SARA SHORT



HOST
AMY MILES

Scientific Program Coordinators
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Exhibitor Liaison
Sarah Riley - St. Louis University School of Medicine

2025 EXHIBITORS & SPONSORS

Location: Oregon Convention Center - Exhibit Hall D

Contact: Beth Olson, Executive Director & Sarah Riley, Exhibitor Liaison

Exhibit Hall Hours:

- Tuesday, October 28: 6:30 PM – 10:00 PM (Welcome Reception)
- Wednesday, October 29: 9:30 AM – 3:30 PM
- Thursday, October 30: 9:30 AM – 3:30 PM

THERE IS STILL SPACE AVAILABLE IN THE EXHIBIT HALL!

Don't miss this opportunity to connect with **over 900 attendees** representing the Forensic Toxicology Community from around the world. To **RESERVE YOUR BOOTH** visit the [Exhibition & Sponsorship page](#).



SOFT 2025 EXHIBIT HALL

Oregon Convention Center
Exhibit Hall D | Level 1

EXHIBIT HALL HOURS

Tuesday, October 28 | 6:30-9:30PM

Wednesday, October 29 | 9:30AM-4:00PM

Thursday, October 30 | 9:30AM-3:30PM

SPONSORSHIP

TIER I SPONSOR - \$15,500

TIER II SPONSOR - \$7,500

TIER III SPONSOR - \$3,500

TIER IV SPONSOR - \$1,500

TIER V SPONSOR - \$1,000

FUN RUN/WALK SPONSORSHIP

SPONSORSHIP - \$250



PROCEEDS ARE DONATED TO THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY IN DR. KARLA MOORE'S MEMORY

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29

Poster Preparation

7:00-11:00AM

Poster Session #1

12:00-2:00PM

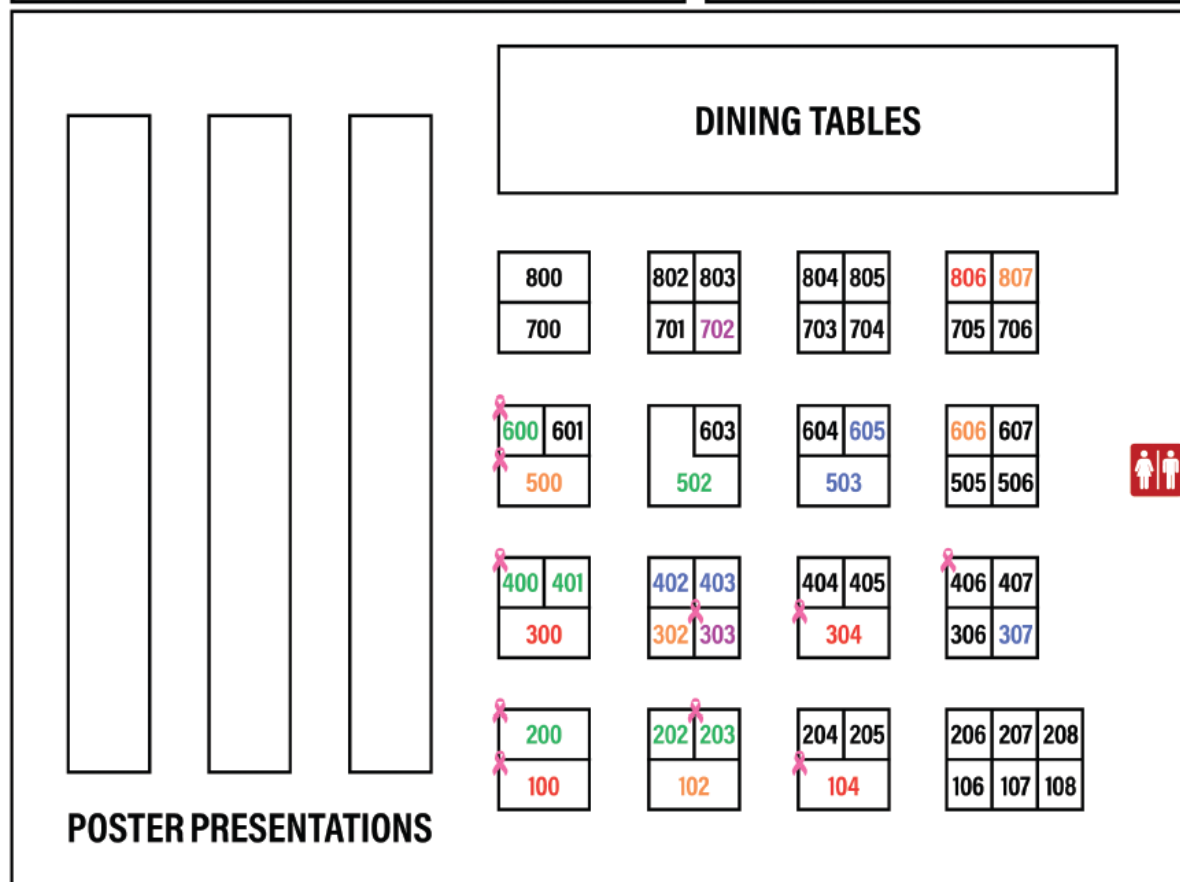
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30

Poster Preparation

7:00-11:00AM

Poster Session #2

12:00-2:00PM



On behalf of the SOFT 2025 Planning Committee, **THANK YOU** for partnering with us as an exhibitor for this year's meeting in Portland. Your participation plays a vital role in creating an engaging and dynamic experience for our attendees. We truly value your commitment to supporting the forensic toxicology community and are excited to see the connections and conversations that will take place. We look forward to welcoming you in October!

2025 EXHIBITORS & SPONSORS

COMPANY/ORGANIZATION	BOOTH #
9-Delta Analytical LLC & Responsibility.org	404
Abbott	302
Absolute Standards, Inc.	805
Agilent Technologies	300
American Solutions for Business	106
ANSI National Accreditation Board	701
ARK Diagnostics, Inc.	307
AXIOM DIAGNOSTICS, Inc.	102
Biotage, LLC	705
Bruker Scientific LLC	204
Campbell Science	203
Cayman Chemical Company	405
Collaborative Testing Services	107
Diamond Diagnostics	607
DPX Technologies, Inc.	306
DrugImpairment.com	205
EquipNet, Inc.	605
Forensic Advantage Systems	703
Golden West	400
IMCS	601
Indigo BioAutomation	402
Innovative Lab Services	803
INTEGRA Biosciences	700
ionBench Corporation	206
JEOL USA, Inc.	303
Kura Biotech	503
LGC Standards	802

COMPANY/ORGANIZATION	BOOTH #
Lin-Zhi International, Inc.	403
LNI Swissgas	604
Medix Biochemica	207
Mercedes Scientific	804
MilliporeSigma	807
Neogen	702
NMS Labs/CFSRE	200 & 202
Peak Scientific	108
Peeke Scientific	406
Phenomenex Inc.	600
Phytronix Technologies Inc.	407
Radox Toxicology	502
Restek	806
SCAT Americas, Inc.	208
SCIEX	500
Shimadzu Scientific Instruments Inc.	304
Siemens Healthineers	505
SOFT-TIAFT 2026 Chicago	603
Tecan	506
Thermo Fisher Scientific	606
UCT	104
UTAK Laboratories, Inc.	401
Validity Diagnostics	704
Versaterm	706
VICI DBS	800
Waters Corporation	100

SOFT 2025 EXHIBITORS & SPONSORS

THANK YOU to our generous sponsors! Your partnership helps us enhance the attendee experience, provide valuable programming, and continue fostering connections within the forensic toxicology community. We truly appreciate your commitment and look forward to showcasing your contributions during the meeting in October.

TIER I SPONSOR - \$15,500



TIER II SPONSOR - \$7,500



TIER III SPONSOR - \$3,500



SOFT 2025 EXHIBITORS & SPONSORS

TIER IV SPONSOR- \$1,500



TIER V SPONSOR- \$1,000



FUN RUN/WALK SPONSOR- \$250



KARLA MOORE MEMORIAL FUN RUN/WALK

Fun Run Coordinator: Shannon Palladino

Date: Thursday, October 30

Time: 6:30 AM – 8:00 AM

Registration/ACS Donation: \$30 (Includes Memorial Shirt & Pin!)

Memorial Donation:

A cherished SOFT tradition, the Karla Moore Memorial Fun Run/Walk honors the legacy of Fun Run founder Dr. Karla Moore and supports the American Cancer Society.

About the Event:

Participants will meet at the starting point outside the Oregon Convention Center and follow the designated route. You may run or walk — the emphasis is on having fun while honoring Karla's memory. Volunteers will be positioned along the way to guide you, and a downloadable digital map will be provided for reference.





PRESIDENT HEARTSILL

INVITES YOU TO THE

RED
ROSE
BALL

A DOSE OF RED:
DINNER, DANCING & DAZZLE!

COCKTAILS OCT BANQUET
6:00 PM 30 7:00 PM



SUGGESTED ATTIRE:

COCKTAIL ATTIRE IS RECOMMENDED:
GUESTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO EMBRACE THE EVENING'S THEME BY
INCORPORATING **RED OR ROSE-INSPIRED ELEMENTS** INTO THEIR LOOK.



A BOLD RED DRESS, A FLORAL TIE, OR EVEN A SIMPLE ROSE
ACCESSORY—SMALL TOUCHES CAN MAKE A BIG IMPRESSION!

YOUNG FORENSIC TOXICOLOGISTS COMMITTEE

The Young Forensic Toxicologists (YFT) committee is entering its busiest time of the year as we put the final touches on our programs for the SOFT annual meeting in Portland, OR! We look forward to seeing everyone at the meeting in just a few short weeks. If you have any questions or comments for the committee, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at the annual meeting (we'll be wearing YFT pins on our badges) or email us at yft@soft-tox.org.

YFT Symposium/Professional Development Fair (PDF): Join us on Sunday, October 26th from 5:00 – 8:00pm for the YFT Symposium and Professional Development Fair! Attendance is limited to toxicologists 41 years or younger and pre-registration will be required. A full schedule of the evening can be found [HERE](#). The festivities begin with a social hour that consists of professional networking as drinks and heavy appetizers are served. During this hour, attendees will also be able to check out the Professional Development Fair where they can meet with representatives from educational programs, professional certifications, and professional organizations about their offerings. If you would like to promote your program as a PDF representative, please complete our [RESERVATION FORM](#) by September 30th!

The symposium will continue with updates from last year's Leo Dal Cortivo platform and poster award recipients, Amanda Pacana and Brianna Stang, as well as an icebreaker with the SOFT Board of Directors. The evening will conclude with a panel discussing the "Future of Toxicology." If you have any questions that you would like answered by our panel, please submit them [HERE](#). The YFT committee would like to thank our panelists for their participation!

Tyler Devincenzi – AI (LIMS)

Maria Sarkisian – AI (QToF)

Luke Rodda – Automation

Kari Midthun – Staying Current with New Drugs

YFT Workshop: The YFT committee is excited to co-host the workshop, Method Development: Foundations for the New Toxicologist, Part I with the Applied Analytical Toxicology committee on Monday, October 27th from 8:00am – 12:00pm. We will discuss the basics of method development by exploring the principles of sample preparation, chromatography, and mass spectrometry. Troubleshooting and the implementation of automated processes will also be addressed. We hope to see you there!

Student Enrichment Program (SEP): The Student Enrichment Program will be held on Monday, October 27th from 9:30am – 1:00pm. The YFT committee has partnered with Portland Public Schools to introduce high school students to forensic toxicology through presentations, virtual laboratory tours, and hands-on activities.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

ELISA SHOFF, CHAIR

WHITNEY BROWN, VICE CHAIR

ERIKA PHUNG, SECRETARY

ERIN STRICKLAND, PAST CHAIR

SARAH TOMA

MAHAGANI THOMAS

AMANDA BROOKING

KIMBERLY KARIN

EDWARD ZUMAETA

LAUREN WOLFE

LINDSAY VOSTERS

LUKE GARCIA

SARA WALTON

ARACELIS VELEZ



Committee Members oversee the planning and coordination of the YFT Symposium, Professional Development Fair, Student Enrichment Program, and the Leo Dal Cortivo Awards at the annual SOFT meeting

YOUNG FORENSIC TOXICOLOGISTS COMMITTEE

Leo Dal Cortivo Award: Abstracts have been submitted! If you marked yourself as eligible for the Leo Dal Cortivo Award and your abstract was accepted, keep an eye on your inbox for an email from the YFT committee to submit your application for the award. Applications are due by Friday, September 19th! Winners receive complimentary meeting registration for the 2026 SOFT-TIAFT annual meeting as well as a \$1,000 travel stipend. The winner for best poster presentation and best oral presentation will be announced at President Chris Heartsill's Red Rose Ball on Thursday evening. Further information about eligibility criteria and a list of previous winners can be found [HERE](#).

Job Board: Have an opening at your lab or looking for a new employment opportunity? Bring copies of any job postings or your resume/CV to put on our job board located by the registration desk!



COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

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WHITNEY BROWN, VICE CHAIR

ERIKA PHUNG, SECRETARY

ERIN STRICKLAND, PAST CHAIR

SARAH TOMA

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AMANDA BROOKING

KIMBERLY KARIN

EDWARD ZUMAETA

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LINDSAY VOSTERS

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SARA WALTON

ARACELIS VELEZ



Committee Members oversee the planning and coordination of the YFT Symposium, Professional Development Fair, Student Enrichment Program, and the Leo Dal Cortivo Awards at the annual SOFT meeting



REGIONAL TOXICOLOGY LIAISONS

SEPTEMBER 2025 UPDATE

During the first few quarters of the year, the Regional Toxicology Liaison (RTL) Program continued its mission to strengthen forensic toxicology across the United States. The RTLs worked collaboratively to support laboratories, law enforcement, judicial systems, and traffic safety offices. Their efforts focused on improving testing standards, enhancing data reporting, and fostering partnerships that advance impaired driving initiatives.

Training and education remain a top priority. The RTLs delivered testimony training to toxicologists in Kentucky, working with the DRE State Coordinator and TSRP to help toxicologists prepare for courtroom presentations. The RTLs also spoke at major conferences, including the International Association of Chemical Testing (IACT), the Arizona Drug Treatment Court Conference, the Midwest Association of Toxicology and Therapeutic Drug Monitoring (MATT), and the AllRise conference, sharing insights on drug trends and toxicology standards.

The RTLs also played a crucial role in educating judges and prosecutors. They are working with the National Traffic Law Center to update the Alcohol Toxicology Monograph and have taken part in webinars hosted by the American Bar Association. These efforts aim to enhance understanding of toxicology in legal settings and to ensure accurate interpretation of forensic evidence.

Support for legislative and traffic safety continued to grow. The RTLs offered expert advice on Michigan's oral fluid bill and collaborated with state highway safety offices and impaired driving task forces across the country. Kristin Burke (Western Region) met with Michigan lawmakers and gave informational testimony, both virtually and in person.

In early July, the RTLs attended the Association of Transportation Safety Information Professionals (ATSIP) Traffic Records Forum (TRF). Traffic safety often overlooks toxicology, and it is important to ensure the field is represented in the state and national data systems. The RTLs are working on a potential pilot project that involves a laboratory and the integration of their result data into a traffic safety data system.

NHTSA has approved hiring another RTL! Be on the lookout for more information very soon. If you are interested in an incredibly fulfilling position, let us know. SOFT will alert the membership of the opening once it is officially open!

Amy Miles

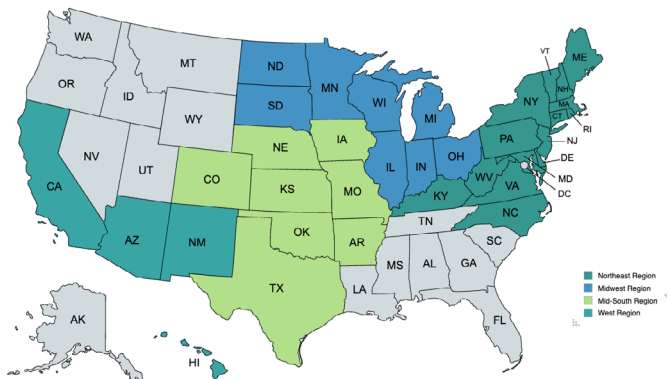
PROJECT MANAGER, MIDWEST: [AMY MILES](#)

NORTHEAST: [SABRA JONES](#)

MID-SOUTH: [CHRIS HEARTSILL](#)

WESTERN: [KRISTEN BURKE](#)

[VISIT THE RTL WEBPAGE](#)



PROFESSIONAL MENTORING PROGRAM

The Professional Mentoring Committee is recruiting mentors and mentees for the upcoming 2026 program (February 2026 - January 2027). All levels of experience are encouraged! Not quite sure what getting involved in the program entails? Check out some roles of the mentor and mentee and some answers to common questions below.

ROLES OF A MENTOR:

- Provide a safe environment for knowledge transfer
 - Leadership/management, data/research, validations, work-life balance, etc.
- Develop and foster future leaders in the field
- Provide one-on-one career advice
- Support the advancement of SOFT and the Toxicology field

ROLES OF A MENTEE:

- Develop interpersonal skills
- Enhance networking opportunities
- Develop technical skills
- Be willing to ask questions and listen to advice

STILL UNDECIDED?!

- Most participants only meet one time per month via phone or zoom
- The Mentoring committee provides webinars and resources throughout the year to assist in the partnership
- As we know life isn't always static, goals for the program can be changed/updated throughout the year as needed

Be on the lookout for the Mentoring Program Application in early November. Please be specific in your application information so we can make the most of your pair based on your needs or skillsets! Have any questions?! Feel free to reach out to anyone on the committee or talk to us at SOFT! We are so excited for another year of mentoring!

PROFESSIONAL MENTORING PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Courtney Wardwell, Chair
Kim Samano, Vice Chair
Dani Mata
Rachel Lieberman
Ashley Ann Johnson
Dawn Sklerov
Kaitlyn Palmquist
Marta Concheiro-Guisan
Melissa Rodriguez
Eduardo de Campos



PROFESSIONAL MENTORING PROGRAM

Whether you are currently involved, taking a break, or are just finding out about this great program, here are some testimonials to show what a valuable experience this has been to past participants.

2024 was my first year participating in the Mentor-Mentee program as a mentee, and the experience was more than I could have asked for. Going into the program, I was nervous about my potential match. The questionnaire asked for my goals, and I listed only networking. Naturally, I'm more of an introvert and keep to myself, so I find it difficult to reach out. However, I was very fortunate to be paired with Corissa. We connected on a personality basis, she helped me network, and we expanded my alcohol knowledge, which was a huge benefit in my professional development. I couldn't meet Corissa in person due to life events, but I got to see her twice a month over Zoom. I would not have traded this experience for anything, and I look forward to developing my relationship with Corissa and continuing with the Mentor-Mentee program.

– Mahagani Thomas

I had just finished my doctoral studies at the beginning of the 2024 mentoring year. My life was in flux - my time as a student had just wrapped up, and I was beginning my journey as a professional. While continuing in an academic research role, which was right at home after years of student life, it was time for me to start considering how I could make a greater impact to my community, both geographic and professional.

My mentor (shoutout to Dr. Sears!) was a fabulous resource - to bounce ideas off of, discuss professional opportunities, and hear about their own academic and professional experiences. After getting to know one another and talk about my vision and aims, we developed some goals that would support my professional growth. We discussed the value of serving on various committees and boards, which ones would be best for my expertise, and which I would likely find fulfilling. My mentor always made sure to check in on my progress, giving me praise when a task was completed, or a nudge if something had fallen off my radar. But in retrospect, what I have come to value most from this year is the cultivation of a new professional connection, good conversations, and knowing I have someone I can reach out to when life decides to throw me my next curveball.

– Alaina Holt

Participating as a mentor for 2024 has truly been a wonderful experience. I have been privileged to work with great mentees in 2023 and 2024. I feel that I learn so much from my mentees, maybe more than they realize. The exchange of ideas truly enriches my life professionally and personally. If you have not volunteered to be a mentor yet, please consider it in the future.

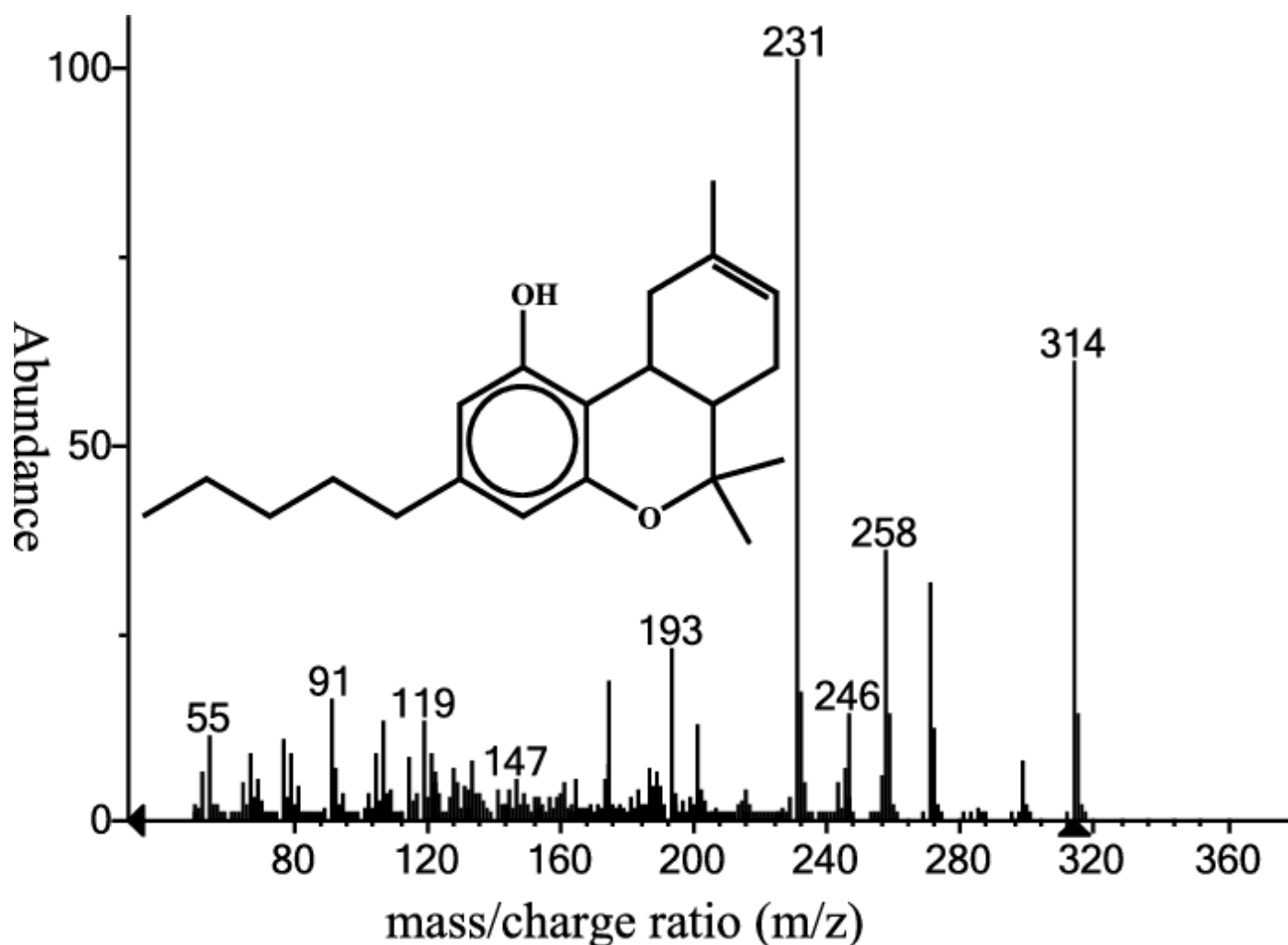
-Lt. Robert M. Sears, Ph.D., F-ABFT

WE ARE SORRY IF WE MISSED YOUR SUBMISSION

We were unable to present any scientific content in this issue of ToxTalk. Due to the transition in the SOFT Office, we may have missed your submission. If that is the case, please contact us and we will get your article in one of the next issues. We apologize for any oversights in your submissions.

Sincerely,

[Robert Johnson](#) and [Chris Heartsill](#)





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TOXTALK

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2025 PUBLISHING SCHEDULE

Issue 4: Due by Nov 14, Published week of Dec 15

SUBMISSION CATEGORIES

- **Organizational Updates:** News from SOFT, Annual Meeting details, Committee Updates, Award Announcements, Continuing Education Opportunities, and other information valuable to members.
- **Scientific Submissions:** Research articles, case reports, and scientific studies related to forensic toxicology. Submissions must include an abstract. Published abstracts will feature direct links to the full articles.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

- [Submit an Article for ToxTalk](#)
- **Review and Acceptance:** All submissions undergo editorial review. The editorial team reserves the right to edit for clarity, grammar, and style. Acceptance notifications will be communicated promptly.

FUTURE MEETINGS



SOFT/TIAFT 2026

Hilton Chicago
Chicago, IL
September 19-24, 2026
Hosts: Luke Rodda & Andre Sukta



SOFT 2027

Rhode Island Convention Center
Providence, RI
September 26-October 1, 2027
Hosts: Sabra Jones & Dani Mata



SOFT 2028

Baird Center
Milwaukee, WI
October 15-20, 2028
Hosts: TBD

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