

The American Society of Questioned Document Examiners will hold its 75th Annual Conference at the Westin San Diego Gaslamp Quarter Hotel from August 28 through September 1, 2017 (early check-in for the meeting is Sunday afternoon, August 27).

The meeting is open to ASQDE members and their invited guests. Guest invitations are non-transferable. To request an invitation, please contact a Regular, Life or Corresponding ASQDE member or the ASQDE Secretary Todd Welch.

The ASQDE's bylaws require that guests of the ASQDE contribute to the technical program of Society conferences at least once every three years in order to continue receiving invitations.

Meeting program

Program Chair Linton Mohammed, in accordance with the theme, "The Pathway to Foundational Validity," is putting together an excellent program. Some engaging and informative workshops are scheduled, including:

NIJ/NIST RESEARCH AND GRANTS WORKSHOP (4 hours) - Presented by: NIJ and NIST Staff
The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) — the research, development and evaluation agency of the US Department of Justice — will present an interactive workshop and forum to share ideas about addressing research gaps, strengthening research grant proposals, involving student researchers, creating research partnerships, and considering research and development that can be integrated into an operational laboratory. There will also be an overview of the NIJ/NIST collaborative Expert Working Group of Human Factors in Handwriting Examination and the subsequent upcoming products that will serve as an additional resource to the community.

PREPARING A DIGITAL SIGNATURE FILE FOR FORENSIC ANALYSIS WORKSHOP (8 hours)

Presented by: William J. Flynn and Kathleen Annunziata Nicolaidis

Attendees will become familiar with preparing various formats of SIG files for data import into an Excel worksheet. If time allows, attendees will also plot the data. Attendees will need to bring a laptop computer installed with Microsoft Word, Excel, and a text editor such as Notepad.

PANEL: CAUSES AND PREVENTIONS OF BIAS

This panel discussion will be conducted by Prof. William Thompson and Dr. Nicola Osborne of the University of California, Irvine, Melissa Taylor, NIST, Lloyd Cunningham, FDE, and Linton Mohammed, FDE.

The discussion will cover the latest research in bias in the forensic sciences and the participants will discuss ways to address these causes of bias.

CHINESE HANDWRITING AND SIGNATURES WORKSHOP: "HANZI" THROUGH THE EYES OF THE FORENSIC DOCUMENT EXAMINER (4 hours)

Presented by: Chiew Yung Yang (CY) and Chin Chin Lim with The Forensic Experts Group (TFEG) in Singapore.

This is a half-day workshop for Forensic Document Examiners who may not be familiar with Chinese handwriting and its examination. Participants will be introduced to the world of Chinese handwriting by catching a glimpse into the historical development of Chinese writing systems and understanding how Chinese characters are constructed, followed by a hands-on session where participants examine Chinese handwriting and signature practice samples.

Trainee Session

Continuing our tradition of providing separate trainee sessions, a half-day workshop is scheduled for trainees with at least six months training and newly minted FDEs (less than two years of experience). More information will be provided to those who have indicated they qualify for this workshop once details are finalized.

Optional Post-Meeting Session

In addition, Foster & Freeman will sponsor a half-day workshop after the close of the ASQDE meeting, set for Friday, September 1 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. for a separate registration fee of \$50 (can be added to the meeting registration form). This workshop is titled VSC and ESDA Technology: Explaining What You Are Seeing to the Layperson.” Places are limited to 30 with priority given to ASQDE members who register by June 1. Guests who are practicing FDEs and trainees may indicate their interest to be placed on the waiting list when they register for the meeting. After the June 1 deadline has passed, those on the waiting list will be contacted and offered priority to register for any available seats at that time.

Meeting Registration

The early registration deadline of July 9 offers the lowest rates to all categories of attendees. Rates will increase as the meeting date approaches. Register through the online form with a credit card payment (through Paypal) at <http://www.asqde.org/AGM/registration.html> or download, print and mail the PDF form with payment by check. Please note that invited guests will need to provide the name of their sponsor in order to complete their registration.

If you prefer to mail the form in with a check, you may print out the PDF and complete the registration form. NOTE: You may only pay by credit card through Paypal. Please note the deadlines for the meeting registration; the rate increases the later the registration payment is received.

Trainees in full-time training programs and junior examiners with less than two years experience qualify for the trainee session offered and should submit their registration as early as possible as seats for the trainee session are limited to 12. In addition, a packet will be sent to participants six weeks in advance of the meeting containing an assignment to be worked, including a report, and brought to the trainee session at the meeting.

Banquet and Reception

The annual banquet will be held on Thursday, August 31, 2017. One banquet ticket is included with the meeting registration fee. Additional tickets for family members may be purchased (on the registration form) for \$80 each. The banquet entree choices are:

- Seared tenderloin, black currant reduction, scallion mashed potatoes
- Grilled mahi mahi and shrimp, tomato-infused butter, lemongrass rice and grilled asparagus
- Vegetarian plate composed of sides from above (TBD)

All banquet entrees will include salad, dessert and wine, as well as coffee and tea. Please be sure to note any allergies or other dietary restrictions on your registration form so we can ask the hotel to accommodate them.

The President's Reception will be held on Tuesday evening, August 29. Spouses are invited to attend with registered attendees. Be sure to include the spouse's name on the registration form so a nametag may be prepared (required for entrance to the reception).

For planning purposes, the dress code for the daily scientific sessions and receptions is business casual. The Wednesday evening banquet (included in registration price) is the only semi-formal function in which a suit and tie for the gentlemen and cocktail dresses or dressy pantsuits for the ladies are preferred.

Spouse/Family offerings

If you are interested in bringing family members, banquet tickets are available for purchase on the registration form, and we have planned a complimentary Spouses Breakfast and Briefing on Monday, August 28 from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. (while the ASQDE conference is in session). Family members will enjoy a continental breakfast and hear an overview of sightseeing opportunities.

Spouse and family members are also welcome to take advantage of a special rate of \$20 for the Trolley Tour of San Diego (regularly \$32). This is a fully-narrated tour of San Diego, covering 26 miles and over 100 fantastic attractions. The tour includes Old Town, Embarcadero, Seaport Village, Gaslamp Quarter, Coronado, Balboa Park, San Diego Zoo and Little Italy. Be sure to add these tickets to your registration form for spouse/family members only (not available for those registered for the meeting).

Extra banquet tickets and tour tickets may be ordered on the registration form.

Hotel reservations

The location for this year's meeting is the Westin San Diego Gaslamp Quarter Hotel. The reservation deadline is August 4 but we encourage you to reserve early. Please use the link

through the ASQDE website to reserve. The room rates are \$169 for a double or king room, plus state and local taxes. Our rates are available from August 23 to September 3.

To reserve your room, call 1-866-716-8108 and mention the ASQDE 2017 conference or visit our personalized webpage at <https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/ASQDE2017>.

Traveling to San Diego

San Diego International Airport (SAN), also called Lindbergh Field after our favorite aviator Charles Lindbergh, is just 4 miles from the Westin hotel. There are numerous taxi and shuttle services available at the airport, as well as Uber or Lyft.

Most of the Gaslamp district of San Diego is within walking distance of the hotel. If you're venturing outside of the Gaslamp or you just don't feel like schlepping it by foot, public transportation including the city bus or the trolley system is available. Of course, taxis and Uber/Lyft drivers are also plentiful and happy to take you anywhere you may want to go.

When making your travel reservations, please note that we will offer early registration on Sunday, August 27, so you can pick up your registration packet between 3:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. and save time Monday morning when the program begins.

We look forward to seeing you in San Diego!