

Young Life Scientists

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The Young Life Scientists (YLS) project aims to give a group of early-career researchers the opportunity to organize a scientific conference on their subject of interest, for their peers. This year's symposia consisted of two different topics. The first, a joint project run with the Physiological Society and the British Pharmacological Society, was based on asthma and its treatments. The second, sponsored by the Biochemical Society only, was based on the role of fatty acids in health and disease, confronting the beneficial and detrimental effects on the human body. Overall, the YLS meetings reached nearly 200 students and young researchers this year; both events were a great success with the organizing committees doing a great job.

This is the report from the organizing committee of 'The Next Generation of Asthma & Allergy Research: Tackling a 21st Century Epidemic', the jointly sponsored YLS meeting held in May 2010 at the Keyworth Centre, London. The event was organized by students from the MRC and Asthma UK Centre for Allergic Mechanisms of Asthma:

"Run for young life scientists, by young life scientists". The ethos of the Young Life Scientists' Symposia, was what really caught our eye.

We submitted a bid to host YLS 2010 as it was a fantastic opportunity to experience organizing a scientific event, and because we wanted to create an event where young scientists like us could present their work in a relaxed environment, meet their peers and have a great day.

We were thrilled to be accepted and somewhat daunted by the task ahead. In the first few weeks we met with the three Societies who got us started, found a fantastic venue and were amazed to get our first-choice keynote speakers: Bart Lambrecht (University Hospital Ghent,



Registration desk at the Joint YLS event

Belgium) and Polly Matzinger (Laboratory of Cellular and Molecular Immunology, NIH, USA). Both very successful scientists, they were nonetheless very happy get involved in an event for young scientists. Then the waiting game, the registrations came in one by one until, with a sudden flurry, we found ourselves full to capacity and with loads of great abstracts.

On 26 May 2010, sunshine filled the atrium of London South Bank University as delegates arrived and pinned up their posters. Third-year students Jakub Nedbal and Ben Causton won oral presentation prizes and the delegates chose Sara Mathie, Ceri Harrop and Amanda Tatler to win poster prizes. Workshops on publishing and science in the media provoked healthy debate and the day closed with Polly Matzinger challenging everyone's preconceptions about the immune system. Organizing YLS2010 was exciting, challenging, fun, a little bit stressful and overall very valuable indeed!"

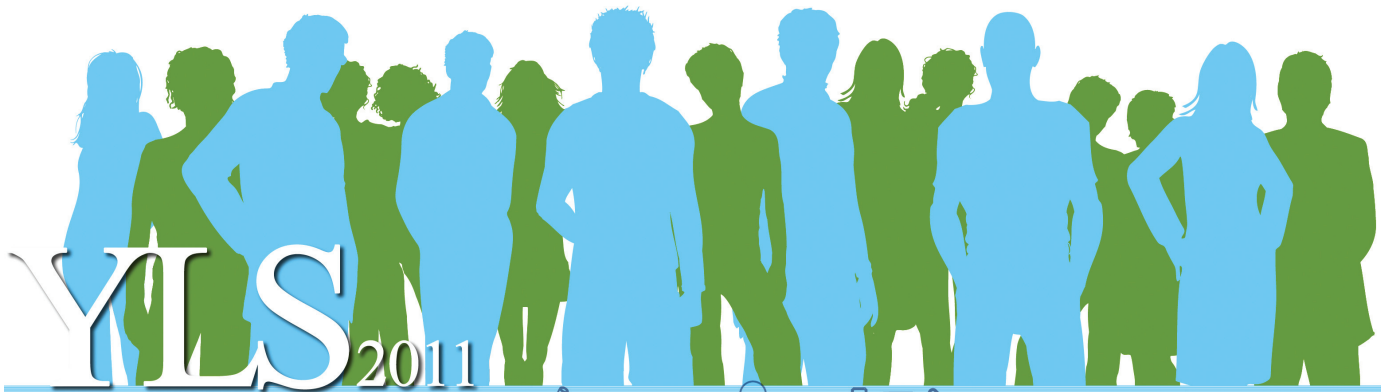
Here is the report from the organizing committee of 'Fatty Acids: Medicine and Menace', held at Charles Darwin House in May 2010. This event was sponsored by the Biochemical Society and run by students from Kings College London, and Harvard University:

Conferences are an important aspect of a scientist's career, as communication of the research is equally as important as the experimental aspect of the scientific discipline. We wanted to get a better understanding of the processes that are carried out behind the scenes of a conference. We also valued the many transferable skills that would be acquired such as marketing and advertising, dealing with budget and sponsorship issues. These attributes will be valuable in our scientific careers, as well as if we decide to pursue a different career path.

The day of the conference we felt prepared and everything went smoothly, thanks especially to the support we received from the Biochemical society staff. The venue was perfect for the day and received very positive feedback. We had a chance to talk to the delegates and were pleased to discover that many had exchanged emails and will keep in touch. Participants who also attended the social events told us that they enjoyed it very much. Overall we received positive feedback for the organization and we have all agreed that we would like to organize a conference again in the future. It feels very rewarding that all of our hard work has paid off, and we are grateful that this opportunity was given to us. ■



YLS committee with prize winners



Young Life Scientists' Symposium



Biochemical Society
Advancing Molecular Bioscience



The Physiological Society



BRITISH PHARMACOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Today's science, tomorrow's medicines

Young Life Scientists' Symposium 2011

Calling all young life scientists . . .

Are you excited by your area of research, but frustrated by the lack of meetings taking place?

Would you like to organize a scientific conference for your peers aimed at promoting the latest research in your area?

Organizing YLS provides the opportunity to work with the Biochemical Society, the British Pharmacological Society and the Physiological Society in providing emerging scientists the opportunity to network and build new contacts.

Other benefits involve:

- Add experience to your CV
- Develop new skills
- Get a head start on a career in research through conference organization

Applicants must be prepared to work in a team to organize a one day themed symposium, from finding a venue and designing the scientific programme, to marketing the conference, assessing abstracts and raising sponsorship.

To give you an idea of what you could achieve, the website for YLS2010 can be viewed at:

<http://www.asthma-allergy.ac.uk/ylss2010/index.html>

Getting involved:

The Societies are looking for a group of four PhD students or Post Docs to be the key organizers of YLS2011. Experienced undergraduates can also apply. Applicants must submit a complete meeting proposal, include a CV for each applicant and a letter of support from supervisors, by 24 September 2010.

To find out more about YLS and further application details, please contact education@biochemistry.org or visit www.biochemistry.org/Education/Events