

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 2018 meeting of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists. This year's meeting is our 87th, and will be held in Austin, Texas. The main conference hotel, the Hyatt Regency Austin, is located on the shores of the Colorado River and is in a perfect location just across the bridge from downtown Austin. Our programming officially begins on Wednesday, April 11th, with the **Committee on Diversity Undergraduate Research Symposium** (open to everyone from 6:00-8:00 pm) and the **Opening Reception** (8:00-11:00 pm). This year we will kick off the main scientific program on Wednesday evening with an invited poster symposium (**IDEAS Alumni Symposium: Creating and Supporting Diverse Communities within the AAPA**, organized by Felicia Gomez, Ripan Malhi, Agustín Fuentes, and Susan Antón) and a contributed poster session (**Education in Anthropology**, chaired by Elizabeth Evangelou and Tessa Somogyi), which describes recent research on best practices in classroom and museum teaching. These poster sessions run from 8:00-11:00 pm, just down the hall from the Opening Reception. All Wednesday events take place at our second conference hotel, Downtown Austin's JW Marriott.

This year's program includes over 1200 scientific papers, which will be presented in podium or poster sessions on Wednesday evening or during one of the three full days of the meeting. The 75 scientific sessions include 8 invited podium symposia, 16 invited poster symposia, 22 contributed podium sessions, and 29 contributed poster sessions. In addition, there are 10 workshop sessions that run in parallel to the scientific program. We made the change this year to hold five simultaneous podium sessions, which increases the overall number of podium slots available in the scientific program and helps accommodate the large number of abstract submissions with podium presentation as their preference. We are extremely pleased that our program is again highly international, with scientists from all over the world including Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Australia!

Due to the size and complexity of our meetings and following similar associations, this year we will require that podium presentations be uploaded onto a central secure server in the Speaker Ready Room no later than a half day before the presentation. This server will then "push" presentations to the appropriate meeting room and will be available for the session. Thank you in advance to all presenters for helping us make this change as painless as possible!

We are pleased to be joined in Austin by the **Paleopathology Association (PPA)**, the **Human Biology Association (HBA)**, the **Paleoanthropology Society (PAS)**, the **American Association for Anthropological Genetics (AAAG)**, and the **Dental Anthropology Association (DAA)**. Due to the size and complexity of our meetings, we will fully use our space allocation at both conference hotels. All PPA, PAS, AAAG, and DAA events will take place in the Hyatt Regency, while HBA events will be in the JW Marriott, which is located just a short walk across the Congress Avenue Bridge from the Hyatt Regency. Speaking of the Congress Avenue Bridge, it is home to the world's largest urban bat colony; at dusk in summer months (including April!), up to 1.5 million migratory Mexican free-tailed bats emerge to feed and this has become a major Austin tourist attraction.

This year's daily session schedule will follow a similar timetable to that started in New Orleans in 2017. This includes morning (8:00 am) and afternoon (2:30 pm) podium sessions, with invited poster symposia starting at the same times. To accommodate the large number of poster presentations, we are hosting two contributed poster sessions per day (each of which includes several of its own sessions). The morning contributed poster session takes place from 7:00 am-1:00 pm (with authors present from 7:00-8:00 am and noon-1 pm; given the early start we will have breakfast available) followed by a poster switchover from 1:00-1:30 pm. The afternoon session begins at 1:30 pm (with authors present from 1:30-2:30 pm) and an end time of 7:00 pm on Thursday, 6:30 pm on Friday, and 6:00 pm on Saturday in

order to accommodate the Auction, Business Meeting, and Closing Reception, respectively (see details below). Poster authors are present for the last hour of the afternoon contributed poster sessions (6:00-7:00 pm on Thursday, 5:30-6:30 pm on Friday, and 5:00-6:00 pm on Saturday). The late start (2:30 pm) of podium presentations and invited poster symposia allows dedicated time for viewing of posters as well as an assortment of lunchtime events and workshops. Given the complexity of our meetings, we are fortunate to again have an **AAPA Meetings App**, developed by Ed Hagen, to help us track times and locations! The app is available for both Android and Apple.

The Wiley Symposium this year is a Thursday morning invited podium session, **The Forgotten Lineage(s): Paleobiology of *Paranthropus***, organized by Paul J. Constantino and Bernard A. Wood. Our joint AAPA-HBA session, which will be held on Friday morning, is the podium session **Health, Disease, and Life History**, chaired by Angela Garcia. The joint AAPA-AAAG session this year will be held on Friday afternoon, and is an invited podium symposium titled **Genomic Diversity in South Asia and Its Implications for the Population History of Modern Humans**. It is organized by Theodore G. Schurr. Finally, the joint AAPA-PPA session, **Going Beyond the "Biocultural Synthesis": Bridging Theory and Practice in Bioarchaeology**, organized by Colleen M. Cheverko, Julia R. Prince-Buitenhuys and Mark Hubbe, will be held on Thursday afternoon.

This year we have planned a number of new activities that occur before and during our annual meeting. Because of space limitations, some of the workshops and events require pre-registration (information is available on our meeting website; pre-registration closes on April 1). These events include three workshops on Wednesday (**3D Morphology with Open-Source Software**; **Science Communication and Engagement with Religious Publics**; and, **Social Network Analysis using R**); two events on Thursday (**Professional Ethics in Biological Anthropology: How to Approach an Ethical Dilemma** [sponsored by the AAPA Ethics Committee] and **AAPA Diversity: Reflections on the 2017 Symposium and Future Directions for Biological Anthropology** [co-sponsored by the AAPA Committee on Diversity]). The Friday lineup includes several events (**Teaching in the 21st Century** [sponsored by the AAPA Committee on Diversity AACT]; **Balanced: A Panel on Family Life and Careers in Academia** [sponsored by AAPA Committee on Diversity-WIN]; and, an **open forum on the development of a formal AAPA mentoring program** [sponsored by the AAPA Executive Committee and the AAPA Committee on Diversity]) and a **Wikipedia editing workshop** (sponsored by the AAPA History and Awards Committee). Our final day, Saturday, includes a lunchtime event, **Families and Fieldwork: Navigating Work-Life Balance**.

On Thursday, we are excited to hold our annual **Auction**, which starts with a longer than ever before silent auction (10:00 am-7:00 pm) and ends with the always entertaining live auction (7:00-8:30 pm), which will again be emceed by auctioneer Jon Bethard. Each year, the auction raises thousands of dollars to support Pollitzer Student Travel Awards. Please participate through donations (contact organizers Myra Laird [U Chicago], Valerie Burke DeLeon [U Florida], or Jon Bethard [USF], if interested) and by bidding on our array of enticing auction items. Students, submit your nominations for **Amazing Advisors** and raffle tickets for **Breakfast with Bigwigs** (formerly Lunches with Luminaries) during the auction (you must be present to win!). Our bigwig pairings this year are: Anne Grauer and Ken Weiss, Lyle Konigsberg and Susan Frankenberg, and Marilyn Norconk and Laura MacLatchy.

This year we are transitioning away from our traditional AAPA Luncheon on Saturday (because of the high cost of the lunch) in favor of returning to holding a Plenary Lecture. This year's **Plenary Lecture** is actually a rescheduling from last year because of the cancellation resulting from the March for Science. It will be given by primatologist and molecular ecologist Anthony Di Fiore and is entitled **In the House of**

**the Piranha: Twenty-Five Years of Field Research in the Ecuadorian Rainforest;** it will be held on Friday from 1:00-2:00 pm in Zilker 4.

Also on Friday—following the conclusion of the scientific sessions—the annual **Business Meeting and Awards Presentation** will run from 6:30-8:30 pm. Student members are encouraged to attend! This meeting will include acknowledgement of this year's IDEAS Scholars, Early Career Grants, and Pollitzer and COD Undergraduate Research travel awards, as well as presentations of the Charles R. Darwin Lifetime Achievement Award and the Gabriel W. Lasker Service Award. Please join us in celebrating this year's winners.

This year's **Presidential Panel (Should the AAPA Change Our Name?)** will be held on Saturday from 12:30-2:15 pm in Zilker 4. It will feature what will almost certainly be a spirited discussion about whether it is time to change the Association's name. Some see it as a way to shake off historical baggage connected to 'Physical Anthropology' and better reflect the modern discipline, while others feel we should retain our name and thus maintain the tradition of the field in much the same way the NAACP has kept its name. Come and debate this issue with senior and junior members of the Association. Our future depends on it! Saturday brings our meetings to a close, with the **Student Awards Ceremony and Closing Reception** from 6:00-9:00 pm. Please join us to learn who won the 2018 Student Presentation Awards!

I am grateful to all those who have helped assemble the 2018 program. Thanks are due to our meetings guru, Lori Strong (from Burk & Associates), as well as Ed Hagen (our webmaster, app developer, and member of the Austin Advance Team). A huge thank you goes to the 39 members of the Program Committee and to the Austin Advance Team. The Advance Team consists of Officers and representatives from Burk, as well as several members of the Program Committee; this group visited Austin in January to arrange the scientific program and to finalize hotel details. The program assistant, Christabelle Drago, has been a tremendous help, as have the Officers and other members of the Executive Committee. Special thanks to Leslie Aiello for stepping in on numerous occasions to help with details. Finally, thanks to the Local Arrangements Committee—the dynamic duo of Anthony Di Fiore and Liza Shapiro. These meetings would not have been possible without all these exemplary individuals, so please join me in thanking them when you see them in Austin!

J. Josh Snodgrass  
AAPA Vice President and Program Chair