

2023-2024 Vice President's Report
Business Meeting (March 22, 2024, Submitted March 18, 2024)
93rd Annual Meeting of American Association of Biological Anthropologists
Los Angeles, California
Kristi L. Lewton, Vice President

Introduction

The Vice President chairs the Program Committee and coordinates AABA programming throughout the year. In 2023-2024, this centered on organizing the 93rd Annual Meeting in Los Angeles, California. This is the first time that AABA has held a conference in Los Angeles, and only the fifth time in California. We are very happy to be meeting in Los Angeles after our 2020 Los Angeles meeting was canceled due to the COVID shutdown in Spring 2020.

Tasks related to organizing the annual conference included program committee formation, symposium proposal review, abstract submission review and notification, workshop proposal review, webinar coordination, scheduling the conference events, publication of the annual abstract volume, and publication of the conference program.

The 2024 conference is in-person with select virtual components. Online presenters have the opportunity to present in an asynchronous online format. This change in the online presentation options results from the feedback AABA obtained from Reno conference attendees via the "Feedback on AABA virtual conference events" survey in Spring 2023. The Invited Podium Symposia, Business Meeting, Presidential Panel, and select workshops will be livestreamed and recorded.

Program Committee

A call for program committee volunteers was distributed to AABA members in May 2023 with a deadline to apply by July 1, 2023. Eligible regular members applied by web form. The program committee includes 67 members, a mix of returning and new members. The committee includes members from a range of career stages and international institutions. Amber Jaeger served as the assistant to the Vice President. Program committee roster for 2023-2024:

Donovan Adams	Angela Harden	Sean Prall
Francisca Alves-Cardoso	Amber Heard-Booth	Kathryn Reusch
Benjamin Auerbach	Megan Holmes	Michael Rivera
Shara Bailey	Genevieve Housman	Gwen Robbins Schug
Miriam Belmaker	Kent Johnson	Joshua Robinson
Michele Bleuze	Saige Kelmelis	Caroline Rowe
Vanessa Campanacho	Brittany Kenyon-Flatt	Sarah Schrader
Stephanie Canington	Andrew Kim	Amy Schreier
Janine Chalk-Wilayto	Krystiana Krupa	Maja Šešelj
Carter Clinton	Myra Laird	Michelle Singleton
Siobhán Cooke	Ellis Locke	Katie Starkweather
Maria Ana Correia	Christopher Lynn	Sean Tallman
Miguel Delgado	Heli Maijanen	Christina Torres
Anthony Di Fiore	Hannah Marsh	Nicole Torres-Tamayo
Nathaniel Dominy	Lumila Menéndez	Catalina Villamil
Nicholas Ellwanger	Emily Middleton	Amelia Villaseñor
Kori Filipek	Christina Nicholas	Cara Wall-Scheffler
Rebecca George	Heather Norton	Kerryn Warren
Halszka Glowacka	Robert O'Malley	Julie Wieczkowski
Mark Grabowski	Marin Pilloud	Amanda Williams
Neysa Grider-Potter	Stephanie Poindexter	An-Di Yim
Elaine Guevara	Luca Pozzi	Chi Zhang

Webinars

This year the Vice President recommended that the Executive Committee appoint an Associate Chair of the Program Committee to coordinate the AABA webinar series. Kevin Hatala was appointed to this position and solicited ideas for webinars.

The 2024 webinar series includes:

Towards A Publicly Engaged Biological Anthropology (January 30, 2024)

Organizer: AABA Education Committee

The field of biological anthropology encompasses a range of fascinating but often socially contested concepts and issues such as human origins and evolution, genetics, race and racism, sex, gender and sexuality, and other dimensions of human difference. Some elements of the discipline, including common practices of fieldwork and local collaboration (or lack thereof), continue to reinforce harmful patterns of behavior grounded in colonialism, racism, and Eurocentrism. The US and the world at large face a social climate of growing polarization and distrust of science and scientists, and (in some cases) active political censorship and sanction. Given these challenges, how can biological anthropologists engage with their students and diverse communities about the work of our discipline in ways that are inclusive, equitable, just, and impactful?

This webinar will highlight examples of impactful education and public engagement activities by AABA members as well as voices from beyond our discipline. The session will include an open discussion as well as a breakout session for attendees to share and learn with other members. We will also invite attendees to share resources and reflections on a shared “Miro” board. This webinar is co-organized with the AABA Education Committee.

Panelists:

- Dr. Kathryn (Katie) Ranhorn (she/her), Assistant Professor, School of Human Evolution and Social Change & Research Scientist, Institute of Human Origins, Arizona State University
- Dr. Elaine Guevara (she/her), Lecturer, Department of Evolutionary Anthropology, Duke University
- Dr. Eshe Lewis (she/her), Project Director, Public Scholars Training Fellowship Program, SAPIENS Magazine
- Dr. Rob O’Malley (he/him) (moderator), Public Engagement Associate, Department of Genetics, Harvard Medical School & AABA Education Committee Co-Chair

Open Science in Biological Anthropology (April 10, 2024)

Organizers: Esther Plomp and Bjorn Bartholdy

Our goal is to introduce attendees to the concept of Open Science, particularly Open Access, Open Methods, and the FAIR and CARE principles of data sharing. Participants will discuss the challenges and benefits they have experienced when employing Open Science practices in their research, and provide recommendations on how attendees can apply these practices in their own work, and what aspects should be considered. Further, with this webinar we hope to create more awareness of Open Science in biological anthropology and create a space where Open Science practitioners, both those who are experienced and those eager to learn more, can find each other and share experiences. We also want to explore what more can be done by AABA and the biological anthropology community to encourage more open research in biological anthropology through a Q&A with attendees.

Invited Symposia

Proposals for invited symposia were due on August 15, 2024. The Program Committee received 15 invited symposium proposals, which were reviewed by both the Program Committee and the Executive Committee; 13 proposals were accepted. Accepted proposals include 6 podium, 6 poster, and 1 online only.

Invited Symposia	Organizers	Format
Beyond Bones, Bodies, and Behavior: Shifting the Disciplinary Landscape towards Biocultural Bodies	Andreana S. Cunningham, Isis Dwyer, Delande Justinvil	Podium
Central Asia: at the crossroads of Eurasia	Ainash Childebayeva, Guido Gneccchi-Ruscione, Taylor Hermes	Podium
Terminology, Theory, and Method for the Study of Inequality of Health: Breakthroughs or Barriers?	Heather J.H. Edgar, Lexi O'Donnell	Podium
The growth and development of sub-adult hominins: multidisciplinary approaches	Debra Bolter, Noël Cameron	Podium
Undermining the production of race science	Charles C. Roseman, James H. Jones	Podium
Women have always been here: Working towards a biological anthropology of women	Katharine C. Woollen, Kathleen D. Stansbury	Podium
60 years of studying human evolution: The ongoing contribution of Yoel Rak to Paleoanthropology	Alon Barash, Ella Been	Poster
Bridging Disciplines with Bone Biology	Victoria M Dominguez, Sophia Mavroudas	Poster
Endurance locomotion in humans: Diverse perspectives on long distance advantages	Cara M. Wall-Scheffler, Martin Hora, Michal Struška	Poster
Kaye's Communities: Recognizing the Research, Teaching, and Mentorship of Kaye E. Reed	Amy L. Rector, Irene E. Smail	Poster
Rethinking primate and human origins: A symposium honoring Matt Cartmill	Natalie M. Laudicina, Aaron A Sandel, Erica Cartmill	Poster
William L. Jungers, a giant in the fields of paleoanthropology, size and scaling, and functional morphology: A commemorative tribute	Liza J. Shapiro, Laurie Godfrey, Christine Wall, Roshna Wunderlich	Poster
The Application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Biological Anthropology and Related Subfields	Mario Modesto-Mata, Stephanie Canington	Virtual podium

Abstract Submission and Review

Abstract submission

The abstract submission portal was opened on September 15, 2023. Abstracts for the 2024 annual meeting were due October 15, 2023. A total of 782 abstracts were submitted, which is on par with the abstract submissions for the 2022 and 2023 annual meetings. However, these metrics still fall behind pre-pandemic counts by ~30% (e.g., there were 1121 abstract submissions in 2019).

At the time of abstract submission, authors could choose to present in-person or online only. Venue preferences for contributed abstracts at the time of submission were: in-person 96% and online 4%. Compared to 2023, the interest in online only presentation has decreased from 11% of submissions to 4%.

Abstract review

Abstracts were assigned to two members of the Program Committee for review with a review deadline of October 31, 2023. Abstracts with one or more recommendations to reject received an additional round of review. After this second round of review a total of 8 abstracts had received at least two recommendations to reject, and these were rejected. All but one of these abstracts were rejected on the

basis of a lack of evidence of data analysis or results (one was over the word limit). Authors of rejected abstracts were notified on November 8, 2023.

Authors of accepted abstracts were notified on November 11, 2023. Following the advance team visit to Los Angeles, California on December 8-10, 2023, authors of accepted abstracts were notified of the presentation schedule on January 4, 2024.

Workshop Proposals

We received 21 proposals for workshops by the November 15, 2023 deadline. This is twice as many as were received for the 2023 conference. Workshop proposals were evaluated by the chair of the Program Committee. All workshop proposals were accepted and organizers were notified on December 11, 2023. Two workshops were later withdrawn by the organizers. Two of these events are scheduled to be live streamed to the virtual platform.

Date	Workshop/Panel	Organizers
20-Mar	*NSF Mock Review	Rebecca Ferrell, Marta Alfonso-Durruty, Lauren Schroeder
20-Mar	CSViewer for Analysts – A big data approach to Cayo Santiago Rhesus macaque colony: A workshop on a software application to generate a user-friendly interface and to appropriate data analytical tools	Qian Wang, Martin Zhao
20-Mar	How to use B3GET: simulating your favorite primate in a virtual 2D environment	Kristy Crouse
20-Mar	COD-WIN: Negotiating Change in Professional Settings: A Workshop and Mentoring Opportunity for all Women AABA Attendees	Michelle Bezanson, Anne Stone
20-Mar	Publishing in the American Journal of Biological Anthropology: Advice for Forensic Anthropologists and Bioarchaeologists	Tracy Prowse, Daniel Temple, Trudy Turner
20-Mar	Trauma and thermal damage to skeletal elements: keys to identification and interpretation	Alison Galloway, Chelsey Juarez, Elayne Pope
21-Mar	AABA Art, Culture and Science Engagement Exhibition	Michelle Bezanson, Robert O'Malley
21-Mar	Anthropology Unleashed: Navigating Public Outreach in the World of Insta(ntaneous) Gratification	Sarah Reedy, Kelli Tamvada, Amanda Spriggs
21-Mar	Departmental leadership and data: a discussion about trends in enrollment for current, past, and future departmental chairs	Amy Rector
21-Mar	Improv for Anthropologists: Building Teaching and Outreach Skills with Applied Improv	Amanda L. Ellwanger, Marc Kissel, Natalia Reagan, Kimberly Congdon

21-Mar	Microchimerism and human health: Bridging the gaps between anthropology and medicine	Amy Boddy, Kristine Chua
21-Mar	Postdoc and Academic Job Hunting - Everything you need to know	Anna Ragni
21-Mar	Up Goer Five: Communicating Biological Anthropology Using English's Ten Hundred Most Common Words	C. Kinley Russell, Briana Pobiner
22-Mar	*Evolutionary Mechanisms Beyond the Basics: Envisioning Complex Processes in Hominin Evolution	Andrea Alveshere
22-Mar	Backlash!?! Tools for Managing Trolls in Biological Anthropology	Jonathan Bethard, Michelle A. Rodrigues, Chris Stantis
22-Mar	Considerations for Visualization and Documentation of Human Remains in Bioanthropology	Alexandria Orozco, Joe Kider, Lori Walters, Scott Branting
22-Mar	Deconstructing the 'Race as Biology' Paradigm: The Role of Citations in Shaping Scientific Narratives and Practices	Ulises Espinoza, Agustín Fuentes, Rebecca Sear
22-Mar	Queer & Trans Field Safety	Stephanie Meredith, Ellis Locke
22-Mar	Sharing Your Science: Public Communication	Bridget Alex
*indicates workshop is livestreamed		

Scientific Session Formation and Advance Team Visit

Scientific sessions were assembled by seven subcommittees of the Program Committee (Bioarchaeology, Forensics & Dental, Functional Anatomy, Genetics & Education, Human Behavior & Biology, Primatology, and Paleoanthropology). Each subcommittee had 3-4 members (i.e., 25 members of the Program Committee were on subcommittees). Each subcommittee was tasked with grouping contributed abstracts into podium and poster sessions and assigning chairs to each session. The number of podium sessions per subject area was based on the proportion of abstracts in each subject area:

- Bioarchaeology = 4
- Dental Anthropology = 1
- Education in Biological Anthropology = half session
- Forensic Anthropology = 1
- Functional Anatomy/Tissue Biology = 2
- Genetics and Genomics = 2
- Human Behavior = half session
- Human Biology = 2
- Paleoanthropology = 3
- Primatology = 3

Subcommittees were given a month to complete this task, and all sessions were formed by early December.

The AABA Advance Team visited the conference venue in Los Angeles from December 8-10, 2023. The team included Lori Strong (Burk & Associates), Eduardo Amorim, Steve Leigh, Kristi Lewton, Stephanie Meredith, David Raichlen, and Amy Rector. Because the sessions were formed prior to the advance visit, the team focused on scheduling sessions (assigning sessions to rooms, days, and times) and entering the sessions into the AABA meetings database.

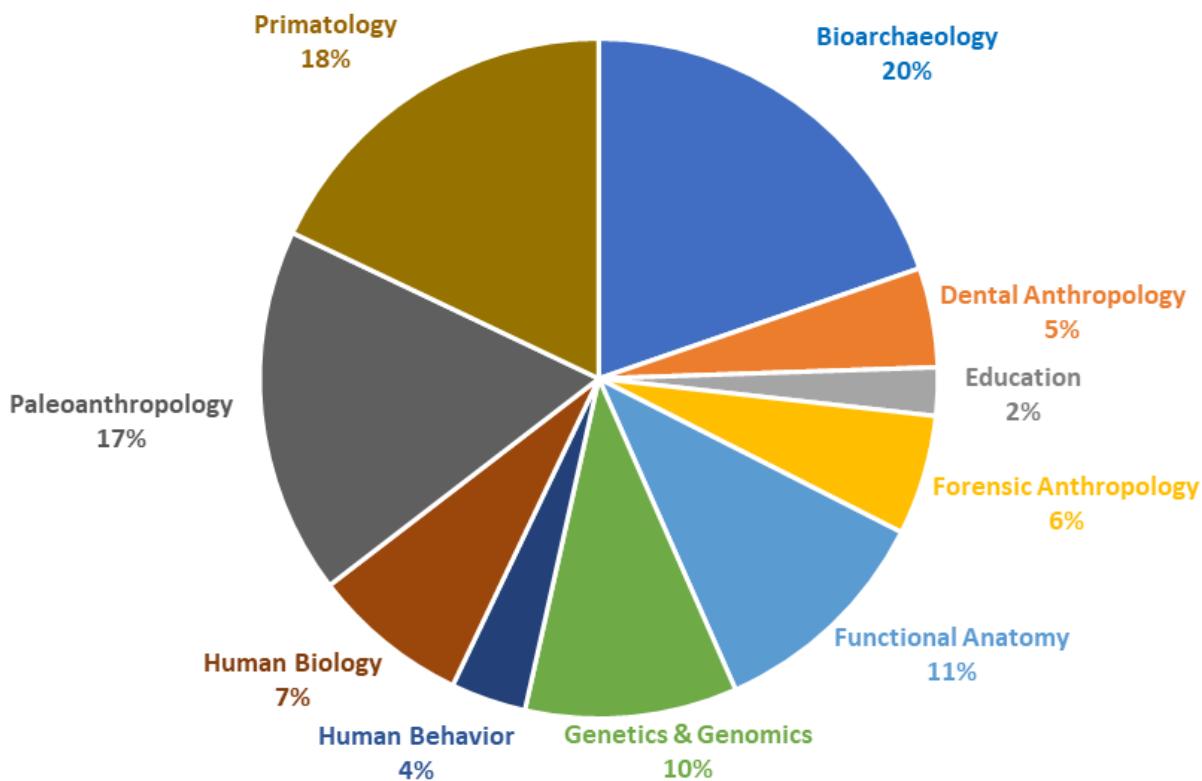
Abstracts

As of March 18, 2024, there are 612 contributed abstracts and 142 invited abstracts for a total of 754 abstracts. The proportion of contributed abstracts by subfield are in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1. Number of contributed abstracts in each of the ten major topic areas.

Bioarchaeology	121	Genetics & Genomics	62
Dental Anthropology	29	Human Behavior	22
Education	14	Human Biology	46
Forensic Anthropology	34	Paleoanthropology	107
Functional Anatomy	67	Primatology	110

Figure 1. Proportions of contributed abstracts in each of the ten major topic areas.



The abstract volume was submitted to Wiley on January 22, 2024. Proofs were approved on March 6, 2024.

Meetings Program, Virtual Platform, and Accessibility

We are continuing to use the X-CD platform for sharing virtual components of the conference, including as a repository for uploaded asynchronous online presentations and recordings of live

streamed sessions. These materials will be viewable through September for registered conference attendees.

The meetings program was finalized on February 21. The first draft of the full meetings program was published on the AABA website on February 21. Updates were published thereafter until the program was sent to the printer on March 6, 2024.

Following up on last year's efforts to increase accessibility of the annual AABA conference, we created a survey that accompanied abstract submission to query attendees on accommodation needs (e.g., oral presentation transcription, single level/no stairs). Of the surveys submitted by the abstract submission deadline, 0.5% requested an accommodation.

All podium presentations use voice-to-text transcription using Powerpoint subtitles and presenters have been reminded to use accessible fonts and color schemes. We have a quiet room with low lighting and reduced sensory stimulation, a Family and Lactation Respite Room, and access to a secure refrigerator for medications. The registration desk also has fidget spinners, eye masks, and ear plugs. All but one presentation room is setup as single-level, without stairs.

Meeting Registration

As of March 18, there are a total of 1,354 individuals registered for the 2024 annual meeting. International registrants from 37 countries make up 17% of meeting registrations, which is on par with meetings back to 2019 (Appendix 3).

Acknowledgements and Thanks

As my time as Vice President winds down, I want to thank all of the association members and leaders who help make this organization a welcoming, vibrant community. I am honored to have served the organization in this capacity and I am very fortunate to be both hosting (as a member of the Local Arrangements Committee) and organizing this year's conference in my home town. This year's program is outstanding and I am immensely grateful to the 67 dedicated members of our Program Committee who conducted and completed symposium and abstract reviews thoughtfully, thoroughly, and expeditiously. Additional thanks go to the 25 members of the Program Committee who took on the task of organizing the contributed sessions.

Many thanks to the Advance Team who met in Los Angeles to set the schedule for the scientific program. Thank you to Eduardo Amorim, Steve Leigh, Stephanie Meredith, David Raichlen, Amy Rector and to student volunteers Katie Beachem, Chloe Coulter, Cassie Croasmun, Alexandria Koedel, and Anamika Nanda. I also want to thank Michelle Bezanson for designing the beautiful AABA 2024 logo!

Of course, none of the program organization would be possible without the immense effort of Ed Hagen, our website and abstract database developer. The Program Assistant Amber Jaeger has been a tremendous help and I am very grateful for her outstanding organizational skills. I also want to thank the AABA Officers and members of the Executive Committee for their year-round hard work that makes our annual meeting possible.

I thank our partners from Burk & Associates, including Annual Meeting Executive Director Lori Strong, Heide Rohland, Mary Lou Scarborough, Brett Burk, Cooky Bysura, Jill Drupa, Amy Sullivan, Sean Sullivan, Raelene Sok, Elizabeth Terry-Humen, and Ruedi Birenheide. This team helped with registrations, organizing student volunteers, sending emails to the membership, producing our printed materials, interfacing with the exhibitors, and coordinating webinars.

Thank you to my fellow local arrangements committee members, Stephanie Meredith and David Raichlen, for helping to make the Los Angeles meeting unique and a success.

Appendix

Appendix 1. 2023-2024 Timelines.

Event/Process	Open Date	Close Date	Reviews Complete	Notification Date
Program Committee Formation	5/25/2023	7/1/2023	NA	7/3/2023
Symposium proposals	7/15/2023	8/15/2023	8/31/2023	9/2/2023
Abstract submission	9/15/2023	10/15/2023 deadline, 10/18/2023 assigned to reviewers	10/31/2023	11/8/2023 (reject), 11/11/2023 (accept)
Workshop proposals	10/15/2023	11/15/2023	12/1/2023	12/11/2023
Presentation schedule				1/4/2024

Appendix 2. 2023-2024 and historical meetings metrics.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	Austin	Cleveland	Los Angeles (canceled)	Baltimore	Denver	Reno	Los Angeles
Registrations	1901	1802	NA	1079	1281	1363	1354
Abstracts submitted	1229	1121	1247	458	785	775	779
Abstracts accepted	1214	1090	1226	457	776	772	771
Symposia (submitted/accepted/presented)	26/26/24	23/22/21	26/25/24	8/8/8?	13/13/13	13/13/13	15/13/13
Podium symposium sessions	8	7	6	NA	6	5	6
Poster symposium sessions	16	14	18	NA	5	6	6
Online symposium sessions	NA	NA	NA	8	2	2	1
Contributed sessions	51	41	46		85	58	46
Podium sessions	22	18	23	NA	18	21	24
Poster sessions	29	23	23	NA	18	20	22
Evening poster sessions	2	1	0	NA	0	0	0
Online sessions	NA	NA	NA		49	16	1
Withdrawn submissions (as of 3/18/2024)	30	16	11	5	17	24	17

Appendix 3. International AABA registrants by country, 2019-2024.

Country	2019	2021	2022	2023	2024
Albania	1			1	1
Argentina	1	5	4	3	
Australia	6	7	7	8	6
Austria	2	4	5	4	8
Belgium	4	2		3	
Brazil	16	6	4	3	1
Canada	74	51	34	53	41
Chile	1	1		2	1
China	23	2	1	3	10
Colombia	2	1		4	
Croatia	3	1		4	
Cyprus	1				
Czech Republic	5	1	2	5	5
Denmark	5	2		2	1
Egypt, Arab Rep.	1				
Estonia	1				
Ethiopia	2				
Finland	4				
France	17	4	1	2	9
Germany	21	14	14	16	14
Ghana					1
Greece	1			5	
Hong Kong SAR, China	1			1	
Hungary				1	
Iceland	1				
India	2	3	2	3	4
Iran, Islamic Rep.	1				
Israel	2	3		5	5
Italy	2	2	2	9	5
Japan	4	4	2	4	4
Kazakhstan					4
Kenya	1				
Korea, Rep.	1	2			2
Lebanon	1			2	
Lithuania					1

Madagascar					2
Malaysia				1	1
Mexico	4	12	4	4	4
Netherlands	3	1	4		4
New Zealand	7	5	1	1	5
Nigeria	2	2	1		
Pakistan	1				
Panama	1	1		1	
Peru	2				
Philippines				1	1
Poland	3	3	4	2	6
Portugal	1			1	3
Qatar					1
Romania					2
Russian Federation	2	3			
Senegal					1
Singapore	1			1	
South Africa	4	18	12	11	8
Spain	11	5	8	15	13
Sweden	1	1	1		
Switzerland	4	8	6	7	11
Tanzania	1				
Thailand				1	1
Turkey					3
Uganda	2				
United Kingdom	60	27	35	31	39
Total count	317	201	154	220	228
% of registrants	18%	19%	12%	16%	17%