2024-2025 Vice President's Report
Business Meeting (March 13, 2025, Submitted March 11, 2025)
94th Annual Meeting of American Association of Biological Anthropologists
Baltimore, MD
Amy L. Rector, Vice President

Introduction

The Vice President chairs the Program Committee and coordinates AABA programming throughout the year. In 2024-2025, this centered on organizing the 94th Annual Meeting in Baltimore, Maryland. This is the first* time that AABA has held a conference in Baltimore, and the first time the meetings have been on the East Coast in decades.

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

The 2025 conference is in-person with select virtual components. Online presenters have the opportunity to present in an asynchronous online format. The Invited Podium Symposia, Business Meeting, Presidential Plenary, and select workshops will be livestreamed and recorded. New this year in the program are the Presidential Plenary on Thursday morning featuring the President-Elect, Anne Stone, and a Late Breaking Science poster session on Saturday afternoon. The Plenary is scheduled so that the entire membership can attend and enjoy a light breakfast. The Late Breaking Science session was designed to encourage additional submissions closer to the meeting, and submission deadline was in February. The session was limited to 40 posters by authors who were not already first-authors accepted in the first submission round.

Program Committee

A call for program committee volunteers was distributed to AABA members in April 2024 with a deadline to apply by July 1, 2024. Eligible regular members applied by web form. The program committee includes 55 members, a mix of returning and new members. The committee includes members from a range of career stages and international institutions. 24 members of the Program Committee took on the task of organizing the contributed sessions, and 23 reviewers volunteered to review for the Late Breaking Science session. Kate Fish served as the assistant to the Vice President. Program committee roster for 2024-2025:

Francisca Alves-Cardoso	Genevieve Housman	Terry Ritzman
Erin Blankenship-Sefczek	Sue Howell	Josh Robinson
Vanessa Campanacho	Petra Jelinek	Sarah Schrader
Stephanie Canington	Kent Johnson	Amy Schreier
Janine Chalk-Wilayto	Jason Kamilar	Jeremiah Scott
Siobhan Cooke	Saige Kelmelis	Michelle Singleton
Maria Correia	Myra Laird	Irene Smail
Alex Denning	Aja Lans	Nicole Torres Tamayo
Tony Di Fiore	Ellis Locke	Caroline VanSickle
Nicholas Ellwanger	Ellie McNutt	Miguel Vilar
Kori Filipek	Emily Middleton	Catalina Villamil
Christine France	Michael Muehlenbein	Cara Wall-Scheffler
Han Glavan	Amy Non	Qian Wang
Lauren Gonzales	Rob O'Malley	Julie Wieczkowski
David Green	Alejandra Ortiz	Amanda Williams
Neysa Grider-Potter	Stephanie Poindexter	Teresa Wilson
Lauren Halenar-Price	Tom Rein	Amanda Wissler
Meg Holmes	Kathryn Reusch	An-Di Yim

Webinars
With the development of the new AABA website and the transition to X-CD for abstract submission, membership, and conference coordination, it was decided that we would take a hiatus from scheduled webinars. Future plans include short teaching and research video highlights behind the member paywall on the AABA website.

Invited Symposia
Proposals for invited symposia were due on August 15, 2025. The Program Committee received 20 invited symposium proposals, which were reviewed by both the Program Committee and the Executive Committee; 12 proposals were accepted and one organizer declined. Accepted proposals include 6 podium and 5 poster symposia.

Invited Symposia	Organizers	Format
Current Directions in Biological Anthropology: Building on Traditions and Transitions	Rachel Watkins and Sheela Athreya	Podium
Being Extraordinary: Empowering Women in Biological Anthropology by Tackling Challenges and Celebrating Accomplishment	Vanessa C Campanacho	Poster
Fathers and Fatherhood: From Molecules to Modern Families	Eduardo Fernandez-Duque, Lee Gettler, David B. Wood	Podium
From Desert Rat to Monkey Scientist: Honoring the Life and Legacy of Dr. Michelle Bezanson	Erin P. Riley, Robin G. Nelson	Poster
Australopithecus africanus turns 100: Historical perspectives and contemporary research on an iconic fossil hominin	Scott Williams	Podium
An Open Debate on the Analysis of Legacy Data from Human Skeletal Remains	Lumila Menendez	Poster
Beyond the Genome: Intergenerational inheritance through epigenetics and other pathways	Amy Non	Podium
From hominoids to gastropods: recognizing the manifold contributions of Terry Harrison to biological anthropology	Denise F. Su, Chris Robinson	Poster
HBA/AABA Joint Symposium: The evolution of birth difficulties: interdisciplinary approaches to the "obstetrical dilemma"	Nicole Torres-Tamayo, Cédric Cordey	Podium
Balancing public data sharing and data sovereignty: Ethical considerations in biological anthropology	Josh Snodgrass and Trudy Turner	Poster
Little teeth, big picture: contributions of deciduous dentitions across biological anthropology	Emily E Moes and Kathleen S Paul	Podium

Abstract Submission and Review

<u>Abstract submission</u>
The abstract submission portal was opened on September 15, 2024. Abstracts for the 2025 annual meeting were due October 15, 2024. A total of 755 abstracts were submitted during the first round of submissions, which is on par with the abstract submissions for the 2023 and 2024 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 99% and online 1%. Compared to 2023 and 2024, the interest in online only presentation has decreased from 11% of submissions to 4%, to 1%.

<u>Abstract review</u>
Abstracts were assigned to two members of the Program Committee for review with a review deadline of October 31, 2024. Abstracts with one or more recommendations to reject received an additional round of review. After this second round of review a total of 14 abstracts had received at least two recommendations to reject, and these were rejected. All of these abstracts were rejected on the basis of a lack of evidence of data analysis or results.

Authors of accepted abstracts were notified on December 16, 2024, following the advance team visit to Baltimore, MD, on December 6-7, 2024. Presentation schedules were included in this notification. Because of the transition to X-CD, some authors have indicated that they never received their abstract acceptance or rejection notifications. Next year, authors will be notified multiple times.

Workshop Proposals
We received 17 proposals for workshops by the November 15, 2024 deadline. This is fewer than we received for the 2024 meeting. Workshop proposals were evaluated by the chair of the Program Committee and the President. Save one proposal that was not in a workshop format, all workshop proposals were accepted and organizers were notified on January 15, 2025. Organizers for two similar workshops were asked if they would like to combine their programs, and they successfully did for a final total of 15 workshops.

Date	Workshop/Panel	Organizers
12-Mar	Building broader impact	Han Glavan and Mason Hintermeister
12-Mar	COD Workshop: Empowering women leaders in biological anthropology	Stephanie Poindexter and Megan Holmes
12-Mar	CSViewer for Analysts 2.0 - A follow-up workshop on upgraded integrative database and knowledge model for the Cayo Santiago Rhesus Macaques: structure, functionalities, applications, and broader impacts	Qian Wang
12-Mar	What happens to my grant proposal? A peek into the peer review process through mock review!	Lauren Schroeder
13-Mar	Challenges in open science and data sharing in biological anthropology worldwide	Nicole Torres-Tamayo and Lumila Menéndez

13-Mar	COD-AACT: Workshop: Staying HIP: using high impact practices in teaching bioanthropology	Melissa Seaboch, Jessica Westin, Alexa Kelly, Liz Soluri
13-Mar	Biological anthropology is people: an art, culture, and science engagement exhibition	Robert O'Malley
13-Mar	Make learning magical: gamification in college level coursework	Alexandria Orozco
14-Mar	Zombie ideologies in biological anthropology: confronting undead ideas around genetics, behavior, and race	Ulises J. Espinoza and Agustín Fuentes
14-Mar	Disabled and neurodivergent community, perspectives, and identity in biological anthropology	Taormina Lepore
14-Mar	Submitting and reviewing for the AABA Journal	Trudy Turner and Sheela Athreya
14-Mar	Indigenous knowledge and evolutionary science: bridging knowledge systems in biological anthropology	Clark Barrett and Cesar Berreras
15-Mar	Is it rare? Make it F.A.I.R.! Hands-on workshop on cooperative research approaches to the study of ancient rare diseases	Emmanuele Petiti and Julia Gresky
15-Mar	Teaching about race, racism, and human variation: video and related teaching resources	An AABA Education Committee Member and J.C. Faulk
15-Mar	Tracing Forgotten Histories: Identifying Unprovenienced Human Skeletal Remains and Establishing Best Practices for their Ethical Treatment	Alyson Caine, Karen Weinstein, Irene Hochgraf-Cameron

Scientific Session Formation and Advance Team Visit
Scientific sessions were assembled by six subcommittees of the Program Committee (Bioarchaeology, Forensics, Dental & Education, Functional Anatomy & Genetics, Human Behavior & Biology, Primatology, and Paleoanthropology). Each subcommittee had 3-4 members (i.e., 24 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 December 4.

The AABA Advance Team visited the conference venue in Baltimore from December 6-7, 2024. The team included Lori Strong (Burk & Associates), Siobhan Cooke, Kristi Lewton, Stephanie Meredith, Kate Fish, and Amy L. 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 website on X-CD.

Late Breaking Science
A new initiative this year is the Late Breaking Science poster session scheduled for Saturday afternoon with a limited acceptance of 40 abstracts. The call for proposals was made on January 23 with a deadline of February 1, 2025. These abstracts were reviewed using the same procedure as the typical submission cycle by a subset of 23 volunteers of the Program Committee. The total number of abstracts submitted was 42, and 40 of these were accepted. Rejected abstracts were incomplete.
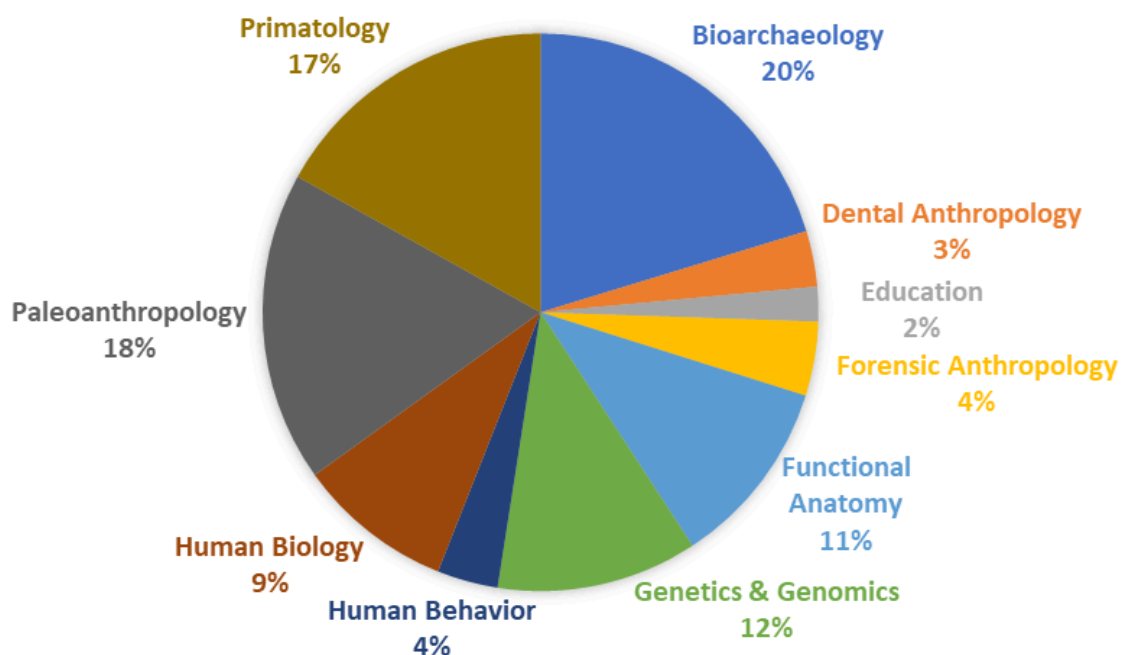
Abstracts
As of March 11, 2025, there are 647 contributed abstracts and 133 invited abstracts for a total of 780 abstracts, including the 40 Late Breaking Science submissions. The proportion of contributed abstracts by subfield are in Table 1 and Figure 1.

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

Bioarchaeology	132	Genetics & Genomics	76
Dental Anthropology	21	Human Behavior	23
Education	13	Human Biology	59
Forensic Anthropology	28	Paleoanthropology	117
Functional Anatomy	63	Primatology	114

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

The abstract volume was submitted to Wiley on March 7, 2025. Downloading the abstracts from X-CD with formatting intact (especially italics) proved to be a challenge and will need to be rectified next year.

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 3, 2025.

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, 0.6% 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 11, there are a total of 1,335 individuals registered for the 2025 annual meeting. International registrants from 46 countries make up 15% of meeting registrations, which is on par with meetings back to 2019 (Appendix 3).

Acknowledgements and Thanks
I would like to thank the other officers and members of the AABA Executive Committee for all of their assistance as we transitioned to two new websites and systems this year. I also want to acknowledge all of our association members who tirelessly make available their wisdom, ideas, and excitement about their science as they share their results, workshops, and symposium proposals. This year's program is inspiring and I am immensely grateful to the 55 dedicated members of our Program Committee who conducted and completed symposium and abstract reviews thoughtfully, thoroughly, and expeditiously. Additional thanks go to the 24 members of the Program Committee who took on the task of organizing the contributed sessions, and to the 23 members who were additionally willing to very quickly and generously review the Late Breaking Science abstract submissions.

Many thanks to the Advance Team who met in Baltimore to set the schedule for the scientific program. Thank you to Lori Strong, Siobhan Cooke, Kristi Lewton, Stephanie Meredith, and Kate Fish for the time and effort spent brainstorming new ideas and opportunities for members.

Of course, none of the program organization in our new X-CD system would be possible without the immense efforts of Ed Hagen and Kristi L. Lewton, our website and abstract database developers. The Program Assistant Kate Fish has been a tremendous help and I am very grateful for her attention to detail and flexibility. 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.

Appendix

Appendix 1. 2024-2025 Timelines.

Event/Process	Open Date	Close Date	Reviews Complete	Notification Date
Program Committee Formation	4/17/2024	7/1/2024	NA	7/3/2024
Symposium proposals	7/15/2024	9/06/2024	9/15/2024	10/13/2024
Abstract submission	9/15/2024	10/15/2023 deadline, 10/18/2024 assigned to reviewers	10/31/2024	12/16/2024
Workshop proposals	10/15/2024	11/15/2024	12/1/2024	1/15/2025
Presentation schedule				12/6/2024

Appendix 2. 2024-2025 and historical meetings metrics.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	Cleveland	Los Angeles (canceled)	Virtual (Baltimore)	Denver	Reno	Los Angeles	Baltimore
Registrations	1802	NA	1079	1281	1363	1354	1335
Abstracts submitted	1121	1247	458	785	775	779	744 (+42 LB)
Abstracts accepted	1090	1226	457	776	772	771	780
Symposia (submitted/accepted/presented)	23/22/21	26/25/24	8/8/8?	13/13/13	13/13/13	15/13/13	20/12/11
Podium symposium sessions	7	6	NA	6	5	6	6
Poster symposium sessions	14	18	NA	5	6	6	5
Online symposium sessions	NA	NA	8	2	2	1	0
Contributed sessions	41	46		85	58	46	51
Podium sessions	18	23	NA	18	21	24	21
Poster sessions	23	23	NA	18	20	22	29
Evening poster sessions	1	0	NA	0	0	0	0
Online sessions	NA	NA		49	16	1	1
Withdrawn submissions (as of 3/12/25)	16	11	5	17	24	17	2 (many shifted to online)

Appendix 3. International AABA registrants by country, 2019-2025.

Country	2019	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Albania	1			1	1	1
Argentina	1	5	4	3		2
Australia	6	7	7	8	6	5
Austria	2	4	5	4	8	8
Belgium	4	2		3		4
Brazil	16	6	4	3	1	1
Canada	74	51	34	53	41	39
Chile	1	1		2	1	1
China	23	2	1	3	10	4
Colombia	2	1		4		
Costa Rica						2
Côte d'Ivoire						1
Croatia	3	1		4		1
Cyprus	1					
Czech Republic	5	1	2	5	5	2
Denmark	5	2		2	1	
Ecuador						1
Egypt, Arab Rep.	1					
Estonia	1					
Ethiopia	2					1
Finland	4					1
France	17	4	1	2	9	8
Germany	21	14	14	16	14	14
Ghana					1	
Greece	1			5		3
Haiti						1
Hong Kong SAR, China	1			1		1
Hungary				1		
Iceland	1					
India	2	3	2	3	4	1
Indonesia						1
Iran, Islamic Rep.	1					
Israel	2	3		5	5	
Italy	2	2	2	9	5	11
Japan	4	4	2	4	4	1

Country						
Kazakhstan					4	
Kenya	1					1
Korea, Rep.	1	2			2	
Lebanon	1			2		1
Lithuania					1	1
Madagascar					2	1
Malaysia				1	1	1
Mexico	4	12	4	4	4	3
Netherlands	3	1	4		4	4
New Zealand	7	5	1	1	5	2
Nigeria	2	2	1			1
Pakistan	1					
Panama	1	1		1		
Peru	2					
Philippines				1	1	2
Poland	3	3	4	2	6	6
Portugal	1			1	3	1
Qatar					1	
Romania					2	
Russian Federation	2	3				
Senegal					1	
Singapore	1			1		
South Africa	4	18	12	11	8	11
Spain	11	5	8	15	13	7
Sweden	1	1	1			
Switzerland	4	8	6	7	11	6
Tanzania	1					
Thailand				1	1	1
Turkey					3	
Uganda	2					
United Kingdom	60	27	35	31	39	17
Vietnam						1
Total	317	201	154	220	228	194
% of registrants	18%	19%	12%	16%	17%	15%