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## Human Genome Project-based Applications in Forensic Science, Anthropology, and Individualized Medicine

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Although the first official assembly of the International Society for Applied Biological Sciences (ISABS) was held in 2004, the Society had actually started with its activities in 1997 by organizing the international meeting in forensic and clinical genetics "First European-American Intensive Course in PCR Based Clinical and Forensic Testing." In accordance with the Society's mission, the meeting was organized with an aim to contribute to promoting, improving, and extending all aspects of research, technological developments, and education activities and exchanging information among scientists in applied biological sciences and related fields.

After the first meeting, ISABS conferences have been organized biennially and have gathered more than 1800 participants and 160 lecturers from over 50 countries. Each year they have become more and more successful in presenting cutting-edge research from leading authors in the field and promoting scientific efforts in Croatia and science in general. In 2003, ISABS established collaboration with the Mayo Clinic (Rochester, MN, USA) and the University of Zagreb through the approved program "Mayo Clinic College of Medicine – University of Zagreb International Program in Advanced Medical Education." In 2007, the ISABS name appeared for the first time as the part of the conference title, in order to make it recognizable as the organizer of the meetings.

The conferences are structured through formal presentations, meet-the-professor sessions, day trips, and other social occasions in order to facilitate scientific interactions and exchange and allow close interaction of international faculty and participants. At each Conference, ISABS grants up to 10 Young Investigator Awards for outstanding research by investigators under 40 years of age (Table 1). Young investigators receive the opportunity for a podium presentation, as well as a certificate and financial support as an acknowledgment for their work (Figure 1). Follow-

ing this idea, ISABS has become a rich source of successful young scientists who continue to promote and advance applied biomedical sciences in Croatia and abroad.

**TABLE 1. Recipients of the International Society for Applied Biological Sciences Young Investigator Awards**

Year	Recipient
2001	Lucia Cifuentes Ovalle, Chile; Rima Dada, India; Katja Drobnič, Slovenia; Anna Gareeva, Russia; Nguyen Hoai Giang, Vietnam; Tomasz Kupiec, Poland
2003	Robert J. Shelton, USA; Chiara Magri, Italy
2005	Caroline Round, United Kingdom; Tracy Johnson, USA; Vedrana Montana, USA; Mirela Baus Lončar, Germany
2007	Grzegorz Kaczmarczyk, Poland; Agnieszka Krzyżarska, Poland; Kaye Ballantyne, Australia; Tomislav Domazet-Lošo, Croatia; Coralie Frassati, Switzerland; Taeko Kashima, Japan
2009	Chiara Barbieri, Germany; Fernanda Toledo Gonçalves, Brasil; Pavlo Feliksovich Tatarsky, Ukraine; Antoinette Westen, The Netherlands

From the initiation of the conference series, the focus has been on the application of the advanced analytical methodology in forensic science. However, ISABS has strived to broaden the scope of the topics presented. In accordance with the world trends, since 2007 the area of interest has been broadened by including molecular anthropology that, in a large part, shares the methodology with forensic genetics. Another applied discipline based on the advances in mapping of the human genome – individualized medicine – will be included in the program of the 6th ISABS conference – Conference on Human Genome Project Based Applications in Forensic Science, Anthropology and Individualized Medicine, that will take place in Split in June 2009.

The *Croatian Medical Journal (CMJ)* is ISABS's official journal, publishing selected manuscripts from each con-

Figure 1.



Recipients of the 2007 International Society for Applied Biological Sciences Young Investigator Awards.

ference in a thematic issue. Mostly because of high citation yield to the two such thematic issues published in 2001, the *CMJ*'s impact factor significantly increased in 2003 and reached its highest value in the journal's 12-year history. *CMJ*'s 2007 impact factor reached 1.174, making the *CMJ* the first journal in Croatia ever to reach the impact factor over 1. ISABS is proud that articles from our conferences have contributed to this record and we thank the editors for their strict but very helpful work. In this, seventh, thematic issue, we present the work of 11 prominent research groups, dealing with different subjects such as low copy

number typing, novel DNA extraction and typing procedure for ancient material, new phylogenetic substructure in human Y-chromosome haplogroup tree, validation of human identification kits, DNA profiling of canine biological material, malignant tumors and forensics, and useful population data.

What are ISABS's plans for the future? There is a plan to establish an international master's degree study program in forensic sciences in Croatia, which would be first such program in this part of Europe. This program will offer a great opportunity for students from Croatia and the neighboring countries to learn from the most eminent world experts in the field of forensic biology, chemistry, genetics, and crime site investigation. After a number of short-term schools, workshops, and congresses ISABS has organized in the period of more than 10 years, this is the first time that eminent professors and experts will have a chance to share their knowledge with students in an official university curriculum. We also hope that this program will contribute to achieving our main goal – to reach functional mobility among the students from the different parts of the world. The first steps in this direction were made last year when ISABS organized a scientific study-visit to Croatia for the group of students from the Pennsylvania State University. This year, another group would come to a visit after the conference in Split. Thus, the primary goal of the ISABS is not only to promote the application of biological sciences, but primarily to support young researchers.