

Live, Learn and Thrive.

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A Close-up Look at Ancestral Pueblos Over Spring Break

Spring Break offered unique travel and course credit opportunities for anthropology students this year. Dr. Arakawa, an archaeologist with more than 15 years of research in the Four Corners region, led a course entitled “Field Studies of Ancestral Pueblos: Archaeology and Pueblo Culture of the American Southwest.” Taking advantage of the academic break from a classroom setting, Dr. Arakawa arranged a week long camping expedition to explore archaeological sites and contemporary Pueblo communities in the Four Corners region. The hope was to provide hands-on experience that would “give students a firsthand appreciation for the richness and complexity of this ancient culture.”

Leaving from the Breland parking lot at 6 a.m. on Saturday morning, Dr. Arakawa and twelve students loaded up a caravan of vehicles with their camping equipment and headed for Chaco Canyon. The first night spent camping outside of Chaco Canyon was “freakishly cold,” Northern New Mexico was experiencing an early spring cold snap, but according to Kristin Corl they weathered it well and the point of the whole trip was “to get out of your comfort zone.” Navigating a dinner plate in full winter gear, complete with gloved hands maneuvering forks, surely achieved the step out of the comfort zone.

The first day was spent in Chaco Canyon National Historical Park hiking the Pueblo Alto Trail, which provided spectacular overviews of Pueblo Bonito in the canyon below before ascending to the Pueblo Alto on the mesa above.

Each student was expected to pick a site along the trip route in order to present the known archaeological context while visiting the sites. “Most sites had a student presenter and a professional presenter as well. [Dr. Arakawa] has an extensive network [in the Four Corners region] and many of the archaeologists knowledgeable with visited sites would meet us along the way.” The students would present first, with the archaeologist often following in order to expand upon the information or to present their research.

By the third day, the group had traveled as far as Mesa Verde National Park just outside of Cortez, Colorado, home to Crow Canyon Archaeological Center. Dr. Arakawa had arranged for a guided private tour that allowed the students to visit a remote site not open to daily tourist traffic. Kristin Corl, an anthropology student with extensive archaeological experience was impressed with the uniqueness of the site, there was a “pit house with a partially intact roof...you could actually still see plaster and paint in the houses.” (Continued on Page 6)



Dr. Arakawa and the first field trip class at Mesa Verde National Park.

Undergrad Spotlight



This year the prestigious honor of Outstanding Graduating Senior for the College of Arts and Sciences was awarded to our own Ashley Remy, a bioarchaeologist with a focus in dental anthropology. Ashley was previously featured in this newsletter for her research into the dental wear patterns of recovered remains from a bioarchaeological field school

in Peru. Since returning from the highlands of northern Peru, Ashley has completed her senior honor's thesis in the dental analysis of individuals recovered during field school and graduated from NMSU's Anthropology program this May with distinction.

Beginning in the fall of 2013, Ashley will begin her graduate studies under the tutelage of bioarchaeologist Dr. Schmidt at the University of Indianapolis. As a bioarchaeologist with a research interest in dental anthropology, Dr. Schmidt provides the specialized experience for Ashley to pursue her professional goals in dental analysis. She intends to continue Latin American bioarchaeological research, a vastly understudied region, with the assistance of the global population sample in the department's Forensic Lab.

Pursuant to her doctoral degree, she hopes to develop a universal methodology in dental anthropology that isn't reliant on contemporary technology in places where modern conveniences make extensive laboratories a financial impossibility. Instead, the value of research here is highest in untold history: "Bioarchaeology has a lot to offer the field of anthropology; [skeletal analysis is finding] the story of uncovered bones that you are seeing for the first time in hundreds of years and sharing that story with the world."



As a recent graduate from NMSU's anthropology baccalaureate program, Stacia Fine feels compelled to share her personal tips for a successful academic experience to the current student body. Her previous field experience has included excavations in Belize, restoration of Phillip's Chapel, a historic church in downtown Las Cruces, and an internship. Her recommendation to aspiring professionals is a blend of practical work experience in tandem with course education.

She provides three easy to follow steps.

1. First, and foremost, be a good student. "It's partly the grades, but it's also professional etiquette, i.e. being prepared for class, punctuality and being an active participant in your educational process."

2. Engage with your professors. "Communicate by taking advantage of their office hours, class room time, and express your interests. Professors share information with the students they have professional trust in, establish trust."

3. Apply to what you are interested in. "Collect letters of reference with professors and employers you have established a professional relationship with, these are invaluable in demonstrating your commitment and reliability." This also includes applying for scholarships, especially when your financial resources are limited.

Following these steps provided Stacia with a scholarship award that offset travel costs, multiple publications regarding her field research, a recent award in preservation efforts, and established networking relationships that extend into career pursuits.

Phillips Chapel Preservation Award

May is Heritage Preservation Month across the nation and the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division held its 41st annual Heritage Preservation Awards ceremony May 10, in Santa Fe. The Phillips Chapel Preservation Group of Las Cruces, led by Dr. O'Leary, was one of among 25 individuals and organizations who were recognized with an award for exceptional preservation achievements.



The Phillips Chapel crew was recognized for the nearly completed restoration effort, begun in 2009, to preserve the first African-American church built in Las Cruces.

Phillips Chapel, C.M.E. was built by the grandparents of NMSU Professor Emeritus of history Clarence Fielder, in 1911. Beginning in 1924, the Las Cruces public education system began to segregate its district schools, in response Phillips Chapel served as the local African-American school and continued to hold services on Sundays. Dr. Fielder attended grade school during the week and Methodist services each Sunday. Thanks in large part to Clarence Fielder's experience and memories of the people and events related to the chapel during that period, NMSU alumni Terry Moody, who now works at the State Historic Preservation Office, was able to successfully nominate the chapel to the National Register of Historic Places, a project she began as a graduate student.

Faculty from New Mexico State University and Doña Ana Community College initially offered courses at the chapel in adobe construction and restoration. Numerous people have helped in the restoration effort including many students, past and present, within our department. Dr. O'Leary and undergraduate Stacia Fine accepted the award in Santa Fe on behalf of the Phillips Chapel Preservation Group.

Graduate Student Spotlight



Archaeology graduate student Amanda Hernandez was recently hired for a competitive field archaeology position at Crow Canyon Archaeological Research Center in Cortez, Colorado. The previous summer, Amanda interned at Crow Canyon. Many of the internship duties, i.e. public relations, excavation and survey, provide the foundation for her

current position's responsibilities.

Amanda provides a great example of how hard work and internship experiences translate into employment opportunities. "There is no doubt in my mind that the internship experience really gave me an advantage [over other applicants] but I also think having good references and previous field experience helped as well."

Having completed all of her required coursework at NMSU, Amanda plans to finish her thesis on the non-destructive application of remote sensing techniques in fieldwork from her new home in Colorado, but this isn't exactly where she thought she would find herself starting in archaeology a decade ago.

She advises future anthropologists to keep an open mind to their career opportunities. "I studied classical archaeology as an undergrad and was convinced that I'd be digging somewhere in Greece by now. I took my first job out of college with a CRM firm working in the southwest [thinking] it would be temporary...that was over 5 years ago and here I am finishing my master's in South-western archaeology and CRM!"



During the spring many of our graduate students took advantage of the opportunity to present original research within their discipline.

This year the annual meeting for the Society for Applied Anthropology was held in Denver, Colorado. Richard Wright, Can-

dace Lewis and Julia Holland, all cultural anthropology graduates, displayed their ongoing research, in topics as varied as human sexuality and mapping health disparity using GIS, with poster presentations.

Graduate student archaeologists and conference volunteers, Briana Bianco, Amanda Hernandez and Andrea Einck, were geographically blessed with a tropical Society for American Archaeology conference location in Honolulu, Hawaii. In between snorkeling adventures and drinks with tiny umbrellas, they somehow found time to present their posters and papers.

The American Association of Physical Anthropologists was hosted in Knoxville, Tennessee. Robin Wineinger attended with her poster presentation on work-related skeletal trauma on individuals recovered in Armana, Egypt.



Brianna Maguire is a first year graduate student in the NMSU Anthropology program, but she is already making a name for herself in the field with her co-authored publication *Atlas of Paleopathology: Autopsies in South American Mummies*. *Atlas* is the culmination of forty years of excavation and paleopathological skeletal analysis on South American mummified re-

mains with photographs and descriptive captions. Brianna describes the text as a reader-friendly introduction to Paleopathology; "if anything it's the discipline's version of a coffee table book for paleopath, it's very informative with lots of pictures."

Before shifting her academic focus to forensic anthropology, Brianna's undergraduate course work at Virginia Commonwealth University was pre-med intensive. A unique internship opportunity with Dr. Enrique Gerszten in the Pathology department introduced her to a discipline that blended her passions for skeletal remains and forensics. When Dr. Gerszten was approached by the College of American Pathologists to produce a visually stimulating text for the public about the multidisciplinary research that investigates the history of disease in pre-Colombian civilizations, he requested Brianna's contribution. Assigned the task of intensive photo editing and drafting the text, Brianna earned the title of editor when the book went to press in 2012.

Now a master's student at NMSU, she is focusing her research attention to contemporary skeletal remains and intends to pursue a career in forensic anthropology at the doctoral level. This summer, she will be taking advantage of her academic break from NMSU to study forensic taphonomy at the University of Tennessee's Forensic Anthropology Center.



Professional conferences often serve as a catalyst for academic and professional research, both as a means to showcase work from the previous year and as a think tank for potential research topics for the future. Conferences also provide excellent professional opportunities for students to demonstrate their contributions to their field and network.

A Tropical Primate Behavioral Ecology Vacation in Belize



A howler mother with her infant in the canopy
Photo Credit: Brianna Maguire

It's spring again at NMSU, which means the physical anthropologists are traversing through the Belizean jungle in search of howler and spider monkeys. Led by physical anthropologist Brenda Benefit, students were given a unique opportunity to travel to Central America to experience primates in the wild. Throughout this course, Dr. Benefit takes her students to the El Paso Zoo to study the primates' behavioral and locomotive patterns. Come spring they break out their passports and suitcases and embark on a tropical journey south.

The first stop on the tour is Community Baboon Sanctuary, an ecotourist destination where visitors stay in residential communities and, under the auspice of field guides, tour the sanctuary, established as a protected home for howlers (known as baboons in the local dialect). The students work and stay at the Sanctuary, recording primate behavior in the canopies from the forest floor.

The second location, La Milpa Field Station, doubles as a hotel destination catering to tourists in Belize as well as a research center for primate and archaeological research. Brianna Maguire, a physical anthropology masters student, related their experience, "We worked out of the field station while living in the cabanas and bunk houses set up for tourists and researchers on the reserve. It was a three-mile hike from the bunks to do behavioral analysis on the howlers and spiders [we had come to research]. The spiders live in the upper canopy; they are very fast and hard to see. The howlers are lazy 80% of the time, relaxing in the middle and lower canopy."

They also took advantage of the spring break trip to spend vacation time in the Spanish Cays (pronounced keys), playing on the beach, snorkeling and visiting the local sites at the end of the work-week before returning home.

The class is most excited to review their data from a particularly exciting day in the field when two groups of spiders collided in a massive attack. Brianna notes, "We suspect there was an attempted baby snatch but currently we are unsure. It is something that we know happens in the primate community but there aren't many documented instances. We have to review the footage from film, audio and pictures before we can draw any conclusive inferences."

It's the return home where the hard work begins, throughout the rest of the semester and beyond, the students will compile their data to provide a comprehensive collective of behavioral ecology for analysis. Each student has a different research question, by sharing the data they bolster their individual data collection for thesis research. While the final grades for the semester are reliant on in class presentations, the ultimate goals for most students are completed master's theses on primate behavioral ecology, not a bad trade for a week in Belize.



Dr. Benefit and the 2013 Primate Behavioral Ecology class on the steps of Lamanai's Mayan Great Temple

Archaeology

Rani Alexander
Beth O'Leary
William Walker
Fumi Arakawa

Biological Anthropology

Brenda Benefit
Monte McCrossin

Department of Anthropology

Cultural Anthropology

Miriam Chaiken, Dept. Head
W. Thomas Conelly
Don Pepion
Scott Rushforth
M. Lois Stanford
Mary Alice Scott

Emeritus

Christine Eber
Edward Staski
Wenda Trevathan

Affiliated

Weldon Lamb
Jennifer Robles
Judy Berryman
Debra LeBeau
Silvia Torezani

Staff

Barbara Burrell

Where Are They Now?



Sean Dolan completed his master's degree in Anthropology from NMSU in 2011 with a regional focus in Mimbres Mogollon archaeology. The work he engaged in right after graduation was primarily opportunistic employment with local CRM firms, until the desire to engage in original research superseded the contract chase. "When I graduated I didn't know if I wanted to continue with a PhD but I knew I wanted

to continue with archaeology. I was happy to work in the field, but I wanted to do original research, which you can't do in CRM. [CRM] is good money; good opportunities but I wanted more." It was then that he began researching PhD programs in archaeology.

Sean is now a full time doctoral student at the University of Oklahoma under the instruction of Patricia Gilman, one of the pioneers in Mimbres archaeology. He will be accompanying Dr. Gilman to New Mexico for survey and excavation in the Mimbres River Valley this summer and will be responsible for the associated report and site analysis the following year. He hopes to use this time to cement his dissertation topic and get back in the field.

He is currently employed as a staff archaeologist at the Oklahoma Archaeological Survey. The Survey is responsible for recording Oklahoma archaeology, maintaining a database for all known sites and recommending proper courses of action for archaeological contracts undertaken in the state. His primary duties are conducted in the office recording and digitizing site files, but occasionally he has had the opportunity to do fieldwork on behalf of the office.

Ultimately, he is happy with his life direction, "being a grad student, being surrounded by engaged minds—this is what I wanted."



After completing his masters in Anthropology at NMSU in the winter of 2012, Robert DeBry graduated with the distinction of the Outstanding Graduate Student for the College of Arts and Sciences. He was nominated by the anthropology department in recognition of his exceptional scholarship and natural leadership abilities, evidenced by his dedication to the de-

partment, his grade point average and his role as a crew chief in multiple archaeology field schools. It was previous fieldwork as a crew chief while excavating Kipp Ruin that formed the foundation of his master's thesis, which focused on analysis of the zooarchaeological remains throughout the history of settlement at the site.

Following graduation, Bob began working for a local cultural resource management firm HDR environmental under contract with White Sands Missile Range to survey potential maneuver areas for practice missions. During survey, they have discovered concentrations of Paleo-Indian lithic scatters and a Folsom campsite.

While he has enjoyed his time in the field, he realizes the financial and monetary constraints for research in contract archaeology and hopes to determine a good time to return to the academic environment to pursue his PhD. He finds research "mentally stimulating" and hopes that his research contributions will be "making a positive impact on improving the field from the ground floor." Already he has begun developing research proposals for bone tools he uncovered during his final field school with NMSU for eventual publication and presentation.

New Curriculum Options Offered in the Anth Dept

The Anthropology Department is pleased to introduce two new exciting curricular options, a Graduate Certificate in Cultural Resource Management, and a second Graduate Certificate in Museum Studies. Both of these programs require 18 credit hours in graduate courses in anthropology and related fields. These programs are intended to be an attractive option to graduate students currently taking our MA program (or students in other graduate programs such as History or Art) to develop greater depth of expertise in fields in high demand. This credential will enhance their training and signal to future employers that the candidate has practical as well as academic preparation in these fields.

The faculty in Anthropology worked with their colleagues in Art, Art History, and Public History to develop these innovative curricular offerings. The first class of students in this program will be accepted in fall 2013, and interested individuals can contact the Anthropology Department Head, Miriam Chaiken for more information (office telephone 575-646-2826 or email mchaiken@nmsu).



Archaeology in the field

Photo credit: Dr. Tom Conelly

Ancestral Pueblos Camping Trip over Spring Break, Cont.

Due to climate conditions and natural agents of decay, preservation of archaeological sites is often depleted of its organic elements like thatched roofing, which only continues to diminish over time. The preservation condition of this site is incredible and a valuable experience for the students, which would not have occurred outside of this field course.

The trip itinerary included visiting sites and centers, in addition to Mesa Verde, Crow Canyon, and Chaco Canyon, Hovenweep National Monument, Montezuma Canyon, Sand Island, Navajo National Monument and Acoma. This was the first year Dr. Arakawa has offered the course; however, due to its success, his desire to encourage archaeological research and the necessity for small class size, he hopes to offer this course annually to provide as many students in the department with a chance to experience archaeology in the Southwest firsthand.

Further inquiries should be directed to Dr. Arakawa at farakawa@nmsu.edu or calling his office at (575) 646-4295. Enrollment is limited and at the discretion of Dr. Arakawa and the department.



The first night spent camping at Chaco found the group navigating dinner in full winter gear, the best defense against the cold.

In case your perusal of this newsletter has made you inclined to open your wallet and send some green good wishes our way, we want to let you know that there is now a way for you to make tax deductible donations to "Friends of Anthropology" at NMSU, through the Foundation for NMSU. We have our own account (number 102314 in case you need it) and if you donate through the secure web site the funds will come directly to us...not to the football team, not to paving parking lots, not for buying library books...directly to anthropology!

To make a donation select the following web site: <http://fndforms.nmsu.edu/giving.php> and then click on the option to "Find a giving area or fund." If you then type in "Anthropology" you can select the option it will offer for "Friends of Anthropology". Once you have chosen to be our friend you can follow the directions to make a donation. Whether you are inclined to give \$10.00 or \$1,000.00, please know we are very appreciative, and our long-term goal is to use these funds to support future student learning opportunities. We are truly grateful for your support.

We Want to Hear From You!

What have you done since graduation? Do you have any news or an event you would like to contribute to the Department of Anthropology newsletter? Please fill in the information coupon and attach it to your news story. Send it to: New Mexico State University, Department of Anthropology, MSC 3BV, P.O. Box 30001, Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001 or email your news to mchaiken@NMSU.edu.

Name _____ Degree and Year Graduated _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

My News _____