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Physical Anthro Field School Studies Primates in Belize



Students of the 2011 Physical Anthropology Field School studied howler and spider monkeys in Belize.

Dr. Brenda Benefit held NMSU's second physical anthropology field school examining howler and spider monkeys in Belize from March 18-27, 2011.

Students who participated in the field school include anthropology graduate students Stephanie Lichtenberg, Irisa Arney, and Luis Colon Diaz; anthropology undergraduate students Jessica Simmons, Fiona McCrossin, Marisol Diaz, Robert Diaz, Robin Milne, and Ben Shendo; and biology major Tiffany Kautz.

Research focused the black howler *Alouatta pigra* and the black handed spider monkey *Ateles geoffroyi* at three field sites: the Community Baboon Sanctuary, La Milpa, and Lamanai. The team observed differences in population density and how it affected group

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Dr. Staski Retires After 28 Years at NMSU

After 28 years of working with the NMSU anthropology department, faculty member Dr. Edward Staski retired in May 2011.

Dr. Staski began working as a senior research archaeologist in NMSU's cultural resource management division in 1983 after earning his master's and doctorate's degrees in anthropology from the University of Arizona. He became a full-time faculty member in 1997 and served as director of the University Museum from 1998 to 2007.

Much of his research focused on the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, a long-distance trail established by Europeans in the 16th century that ran from the Mexico City to Santa

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◆ GSO Community Service



Members of the Anthropology Graduate Student Organization continued work on the Phillips Chapel restoration project during the Fall 2011 semester. The 100-year-old chapel is among the top 100 historic preservation projects in the country chosen by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Student Spotlight



Deneve Sam is finishing her thesis/internship project on archaeological work for federal agencies. Over two years, Deneve has held three internship positions with the National Parks Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Forest Service.

Her NPS internship involved surveying the back country of the Bandelier National Monument in Los Alamos, N.M., and recording archaeological sites. For her internship with the Bureau of Land Management, Deneve worked to excavate a prehistoric archaeological site in Dona Ana where the local government wanted to build a police station.

Deneve's current internship is with the U.S. Forest Service in Clifton, Ariz. As part of her internship, Deneve works to ensure federally funded projects in the region comply with laws intended to preserve historic and prehistoric sites.

Deneve says she became involved with federal agencies because she wanted to explore how "federal law applies to preserving [archaeological sites]" and "how agencies are responsible" for such preservation.

Upon graduation in December 2011, Deneve will continue to work with the Forest Service through the Student Career Experience Program, which offers internships that are later parlayed into jobs.

Krysten Aguilar, a cultural anthropology major with a minor in food studies, is completing research on her thesis, which examines conservation of crop biodiversity and culture on the Tesuque Pueblo near Santa Fe, N.M.

Krysten is working to creating a database of crops grown on the pueblo, as well as the corresponding cultural aspects of those crops. She believes such a database could be applied to the study of crops in other areas of the country.

Through participant observation at the pueblo, Krysten studies the traditional agriculture of Tesuque, as well as how and why agricultural techniques have evolved over time.

She says her long-term goals involve creating sustainable, local food economies by creating "a situation that works for farmers and consumers."

This goal is also reflected in her work for La Semilla in Las Cruces where she is researching the creation of a local food hub in Dona Ana and working to "better understand farmers' needs" in the area.

Krysten, who is on track to graduate in May 2012, says she would like to work locally in New Mexico post-grad school or possibly become involved in international agricultural development programs in Africa.



Anthropology graduate students Amanda Catalano and Stephanie Hawkins opened museum exhibit in the fall 2011 semester exploring the Rarámuri, one of the largest indigenous groups north of Mexico City, and Casas Grandes pottery, respectively.

Amanda, who aims to graduate in May 2012, has volunteered at the museum since beginning

grad school at NMSU. Her exhibit, "Dancing Under the Moon: A Portrait of the Rarámuri of the Sierra Tarahumara," was funded by a grant from the Southwest and Borders Culture Institute and features photographs by Richard Speedy, as well as other material objects from Rarámuri culture.

The Rarámuri have lived in northern Mexico since before Spanish colonization and have maintained many traditions despite colonial and religious invasions, the formation of the Mexican nation-state, tourists, drought, and the drug trade.

The SBCI grant allowed the museum to acquire new objects for the exhibit, including children's dolls, a planting stick, bateas, and an olla, or vat, for holding tesguino, or maize beer. The exhibit also featured a Judas effigy, which is burned during the Easter Holy Week, rosaries, and bead necklaces.

Amanda also is working to digitalize the museum's collection and serves as the museum's public programs coordinator.

Stephanie's exhibit, "Through the Eye of the Macaw: Ritual Symbolism of Casas Grandes," examined plumed serpent, macaw, and shaman motifs on Casas Grandes pottery, which is found throughout northern Chihuahua and the American Southwest.

Stephanie said she chose to explore Casas Grandes pottery because the university has a relatively large collection, but there was a lack of contextual information available for the pieces. A grant from SBCI allowed Stephanie to travel to regional museums to examine and compare other collections of Casas Grande pottery, and the exhibit grew from that research.

Stephanie also has completed the art conservation program at NMSU, offered through the art department, and has held internships at the University Museum and Las Cruces City Museum of Natural History, focusing on educational programs.

In the future Stephanie, who graduated in December 2011, hopes to obtain employment in a museum, continuing her work with educational programs or collections care and conservation.



The NMSU Anthropology Department welcomed two new faculty members this semester: Archaeologist Dr. Fumi Arakawa and Medical Anthropologist Dr. Mary Alice Scott.



Dr. Arakawa joins NMSU after working at Crow Canyon Archaeological Center in southwestern Colorado since 2001 as a laboratory researcher and laboratory analysis specialist. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in anthropology from the University of Idaho, before completing his doctoral dissertation at Washington State University in 2006.

Initially, Dr. Arakawa was interested in the humanistic and scientific studies of anthropology. "I decided to be an archaeologist when I got an internship at the Crow Canyon Archaeological Center," he said. Before the internship, Dr. Arakawa said he "couldn't connect the importance of archaeology and contemporary issues -- how archaeology can actually contribute to society." However, his "perspective totally changed" with the internship because as he saw the importance of archaeological research, public education, and Native American involvement in the discipline.

Most of Dr. Arakawa's work has been with Western Native American archaeological sites in Idaho, Washington state, Oregon, and the American Southwest.

His doctoral dissertation -- titled "Lithic Raw Material Procurement and the Social Landscape in the Central Mesa Verde Region, A.D. 600-1300" -- took Dr. Arakawa to major archaeological sites within the Central Mesa Verde region in the Four Corners area. His dissertation analyzed data sets of stone tool technology -- particularly debitage technology, such as projectile points -- to examine how people living in the area from 600 A.D.-1300 A.D. may have developed a sense of territoriality.

Dr. Arakawa plans to continue conducting archaeological research in the American Southwest, while creating opportunities for students to get hands-on work in the field -- perhaps by bringing some archaeological assemblages to NMSU. Also during his time here, Dr. Arakawa hopes to "develop nice laboratory settings where students can actually work and conduct the archaeological research," which could also lead to publishing opportunities for students.

In the undergraduate program, Dr. Arakawa hopes to "provide or stimulate" students with a more "international or global perspective," for example by showing an Asian perspective or approach to archaeological research. He also would like to "emphasize the importance of hands-on experience," which will allow students to better understand important concepts in approaching archaeological study.

Dr. Scott joins the NMSU faculty from the University of Kentucky, where she completed her master and doctorate degrees in anthropology in 2010. Her undergraduate work at Duke University, where she majored in women's studies, laid the foundation for her future anthropological work.

For her senior thesis, Dr. Scott joined a team of researchers aiming to develop a clean water system for residents in Guerrero, Mexico. Many men had left the region for work, and women were predominantly affected by health issues associated with poor water quality.

Her interest in health issues -- particularly women's health issues -- steered her into the medical anthropology program at the University of Kentucky, where she continued to work with marginalized groups of women in Latin America.

"I thought it was important to do the kind of work anthropologists do in terms of understanding the community and doing really in depth work with people to understand the complexity of issues that are happening," she said.

She traces her interest in studying health issues of marginalized populations to watching her father working as a physician treating HIV/AIDS patients in her home state of Arkansas.

Dr. Scott's dissertation, titled "La Mujer Se Va Pa'bajo: Women's Health at the Intersections of Nationality, Class, and Gender," allowed her to continue exploring the health needs of marginalized women. Her research focused on women living in southern Veracruz, where most residents were migrant sugar cane growers or small-scale cattle ranchers.

"My interest really was looking at how [women's] lives were transformed in the context of migration and what effect that has on their health and illness, overall," she said.

Dr. Scott plans to continue working with women in Veracruz, particularly women who have had tubal ligations after being pressured to do so by the medical system or who have had the procedure without giving consent. She also plans to study the continuing migration histories of women in Veracruz.

In addition, Dr. Scott said she is "really interested in thinking about how women's experiences with health systems in Mexico influence how they navigate systems in the United States, and really trying to think a lot more about what kind of programs might be effective for women."

She is hoping her expertise in medical anthropology will help students draw stronger connections between anthropology and the public health sphere. "I also think that for any department having somebody who's new in the field ... can bring a new energy to the department. So I hope I'm able to bring that as well," she said.



Staski, from page 1

Fe, and the Rough and Ready Stage Station along the Butterfield Overland Trail. His curriculum vitae boasts an extensive list of publications related to his archaeological field work.

"One of the things that I like to stress to people is that the trail itself and the sites that were located along it, many of them -- and much of the trail -- are still in pretty good shape, archaeologically speaking. They're preserved to a greater extent, they have greater integrity than a lot of people think they do," particularly between El Paso and Las Cruces, he said.

As director of the University Museum, Dr. Staski focused on re-emphasizing outreach and education activities, while promoting student-led exhibits.

"It was my intention to make [the museum] a learning environment for our majors and our graduate students, so exhibits that we put on were not created, fabricated, put together by professionals, but by students learning to become professionals."

After nearly three decades of teaching at NMSU, Dr. Staski said his favorite class "by far" remains Anthropological Theory.

"It's the most fun; I think, the most interesting. It can be the most controversial or contentious in very a good way, in that a lot of the theory that's been developed and used in anthropology can be applied to current situations around the world. There's an awful lot of class discussion. There's potential for ... a lot of different points of view that people discuss freely, and you can get into a lot of interesting discussions that way," he said.

Dr. Staski said that while he is open to additional teaching and research opportuni-



ties in retirement, he is looking forward to enjoying a slower-paced life in Ruidoso. Retirement will also afford him more time to build furniture, a hobby he has had for many years.

"Building furniture is a lot like doing archaeology in that it requires thought and it requires physical activity. And combining those two -- combining the mental and the physical -- is always something I enjoyed."

Of his time at NMSU, Dr. Staski said, "It's been a good career. I've spent my whole professional life here after getting my Ph.D."

He added, "I enjoyed being in one place and becoming familiar and established in one institution. ... It's been a lot of fun and the archaeology I've done has been rewarding."

Field School, from page 1

composition and territorial behaviors, including frequency and duration of howling.

According to Dr. Benefit, the field school provided most of the students with their first opportunity to conduct field work. "You can imagine what primates are like, but I don't think anything replaces being in their habitats and seeing them moving."

The research and observations resulted in two abstracts that the group has collectively submitted to the American Association of Physical Anthropologists. One of the abstracts examines differences between black howler group size and pattern of vocalization in the different regions. The other involves promiscuity among spider monkeys.

"We saw a couple of things people have never seen before -- and we may never see again," Dr. Benefit said. "All of the students were on the same page and everyone worked very hard. We really got to have some satisfying observation time."

The three sites provided students with an opportunity to observe the primates from different perspectives. For example, at the La Milpa site, students climbed a mound that led to an ancient Mayan temple, which allowed them to be at the same level as primates in the trees.

Students also had to adjust their sleep schedules, staying up all night to hear the howlers vocalize. But the trip wasn't all work. Students were able to unwind at Tobacco Caye, a tropical island off the coast of Belize, before heading back to Las Cruces to analyze their data.

The next field school will be held in March 2013.

Department of Anthropology

Archaeology

Rani Alexander
Beth O'Leary
William Walker
Fumi Arakawa

Biological Anthropology

Brenda Benefit
Monte McCrossin

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
Larry Loendorf

Staff

Barbara Burrell

Where Are They Now?



Paulo Oemig completed his master's degree in cultural anthropology in 2002 with a thesis examining popular Catholicism in northern New Mexico. Upon completion of his degree, Paulo acquired his alternative license to teach in the Las Cruces School District and became a full-time eighth grade science teacher at Zia Middle School in 2005. He was named Las Cruces Public Schools Teacher of the Year for 2012 after being nominated for the honor by a student. He also was one of seven recipients of the 2012 Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Paulo says he continuously uses the skills he learned while studying anthropology at NMSU. "It's funny," he said, "You think you're teaching science, but you're dealing with people, you're dealing with students. And connecting to those students is ... anthropology 100 percent, cultural anthropology." He added, "It also helps that you bring your own kit -- your cultural tool kit -- and you can put it in any setting."

Paulo, who gained his physical science background studying chemistry in Argentina, also has been engaged in a number of other programs aimed at expanding science education. He participates in NASA's Solar System Educator's Program and is a NASA representative for the state of New Mexico. He also traveled to Costa Rica in November as part of an international teacher's program. Currently, Paulo is working toward his doctorate in education, studying Curriculum and Instruction at NMSU.



Deborah Newton graduated from NMSU with a biology degree in 1983 and a master's in physical anthropology in 1985 with a thesis titled, "The Effects of Maternal Smoking on Neonatal Behavior." She also completed a Ph.D in Curriculum and Instruction from NMSU in 2006.

Since leaving NMSU, Deborah has done consulting work in skeletal analysis with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Forest Service, and Office of the Medical Investigator in Albuquerque, and she has worked in various management positions in IT departments. She is currently a professor in Health Sciences at Montana State University.

Deborah says her training in anthropology has provided her with skills that she applies in management and in teaching. Understanding and appreciating differences has given her the ability to interact with diverse populations -- a skill that she says is particularly important in the classroom. In addition, the combination of biology and physical anthropology gave her a broader background, which has led to opportunities that she might not have had otherwise.

Eric O'Connell graduated from NMSU in 1990 with a bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communications and a minor in anthropology.

He completed his master's degree in visual anthropology at the University of Southern California in 2010 with a thesis-film project examining the adopted cowboy subculture in East Germany titled, "Cowboys: East Germany, Rebels of the Vogtland."

At NMSU, Eric credits Dr. Lois Stanford with providing him the flexibility to pursue a visual anthropology track.

"She gave me the opportunity to basically write my own course," he said, which led to a photographic ethnography examining Dia de los Muertos in the village of La Mesa "as it's celebrated in America by Mexican immigrants and also looking at it as it's celebrated in a border town in Juarez."

Eric has worked as a freelance photographer for 20 years and currently is employed as an archive and imaging specialist at Curatorial Assistance in California.

He also worked as a designer and co-editor of the Visual Anthropology section of *Popular Anthropology* magazine, as well as a freelance photographer for a number of other publications, including *People*, *Times*, *Forbes*, and *Bicycling* magazines.

Looking to the future, Eric says he has a few "irons in the fire" for visual anthropological work that he might pursue, such as examining shifting values of Russian immigrants to New York City.

He currently lives in Los Angeles.



Richard Newton graduated with a bachelor's degree in anthropology in 1983 and a master's in anthropology (specializing in archaeology) in 1988. His graduate work analyzed excavations conducted in the south Organ Mountains and resulted in a thesis titled, "Settlement and Subsistence in South-Central New Mexico." In 1985, Richard started working for the U.S. Forest Service as an archaeologist. After 20 years of working in New Mexico and Montana, he moved to Dubois, Idaho, where he is currently the District Ranger on the Dubois Ranger District of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest.



As a manager, anthropological training has helped Richard interact with all forest users and accept different perspectives. Richard believes that anthropologists make some of the best supervisors because their training gives them a broader worldview and allows them to work successfully with individuals from many diverse backgrounds.

Both Deborah and Richard offer current students and future anthropologists this advice: "Never stop learning -- recognize that your college years are just the beginning of your education."

Anthro Students Study Conservation Technology Adoption in Ecuador

Anthropology graduate students Michael Vina and Nancy Benitez and NMSU Anthropology alumnus Maria Tirado conducted research in Costa Rica and Ecuador from November 2010 to September 2011. The project -- title, "International Adoption of Conservation Technologies (IntACT): Towards a New Theory of Transferring Technology in the Face of Conservation Crisis," and funded by the National Science Foundation -- examined cross-cultural adoption of fishing and shrimp-ing technology to reduce the bycatch of sea turtles in the areas.

Michael, who served as field coordinator for the project, had previously worked in coastal Ecuador researching his thesis on the perception and cultural memories of animals among people living in small hunting and foraging groups.

Nancy and Maria joined the IntACT program later as surveyors. Nancy is working on her thesis examining Type 2 diabetes among Hispanics in the U.S.-Mexico border region, while Maria graduated in the summer of 2010 after completing an internship involving political issues facing immigrant women.

The IntACT research team interviewed local fishermen about the recent adoption of turtle excluder devices (TEDs) and circle hooks, which are both used to reduce bycatch of sea turtles.

"We talk a lot about transferring technology and imposing technologies on other people and local communities, but little is said of how this affects them," Michael said.

"So it's not only about improving a technology, but ... introducing

it in a sensible way; in a way that takes into account their cultural practices, community beliefs, or religious beliefs. And that's rarely done -- at least in Ecuador and Costa Rica. ... Local knowledge is rarely taken into account."

The surveys and interactions with the fishermen provided valuable experience in anthropological research techniques for the team. "You need a lot of patience and perseverance because people don't want to talk to you at first," Michael said.

Other challenges the team faced involved the environment where the interviews were conducted. According to Nancy, "Sometimes you had to board the boats and deal with the smells and piles of dead sharks. But you have to move beyond that."

The project was also featured in a science blog on the *New York Times'* website.



Aboard a boat in Ecuador where NMSU anthro students studied responses to new shrimp-ing technology.

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.

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