

ANTHROPOLOGY AT ALABAMA

Newsletter of the University of Alabama Department of Anthropology
College of Arts and Sciences

PROFESSORS RECEIVE THREE MAJOR GRANTS

Three anthropology professors have received major funding in support of their research. Not only will these grants advance their research agendas, they also will support students in our graduate and undergraduate programs.

Dr. Lisa LeCount received a three-year National Science Foundation award for the project “Households and the Institutionalization of Ancient Maya Kingship at Actuncan, Belize.” Her new excavations will begin next summer at the site of Actuncan, where she has conducted two previous seasons of excavations in residential mounds. The research focuses on the rise of hereditary kingship during the Preclassic to Classic transition (400 B.C. to A.D. 600) from the perspective of households whose members were the building blocks of political factions that contested or supported leadership. Excavations of domestic structures and a Maya palace will document changing residential layout and size, domestic activities, and access to utilitarian and luxury goods. Dr. LeCount proposes that elite families had the most to lose in the transition to kingship, while commoners had the most to gain.

(continued on page 2)

CONTENTS

- 1 *Major Research Grants*
- 2 *Student Award Recipients*
- 3 *New PhD Graduates*
Welcome to Jenny Carballo
- 4 *LeCount, Blitz Serve as SAA Program Chairs*
Updates on Graduates
- 5 *Opportunities for Giving*

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PROFS RECEIVE GRANTS

(continued from page 1)

Dr. John Blitz received funding from the Arts & Sciences College Academy for Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity to support a project entitled “Magnetometer Survey at Moundville Archaeological Park.” The magnetometer survey will locate and map buried archaeological features such as the remains of houses, middens, fortifications and other evidence of residential use that are no longer visible on the ground surface. The project will produce for the first time digital maps of these buried features across the entire site with a high degree of accuracy.

Dr. David Carballo received an NSF award for the project “The Evolution of Community Ritual and Effects of State Expansion in Central Mexico at La Laguna, Tlaxcala.” Investigations began during the summer of 2009. The project focuses on the ceremonial center of this pre-Hispanic town, which was occupied from approximately 700 B.C. – A.D. 100. Excavations have uncovered a precursor of the I-shaped ball courts known from the Aztecs and other later Mesoamerican cultures. Investigations are also focused in the central plaza and main temple of the site, where ritual activities are being documented through the excavation of altars and offerings, as well as through the chemical study of absorbed residues in floors.



Lisa LeCount



John Blitz



David Carballo

CONGRATULATIONS TO AWARD RECIPIENTS

Katy Groves, a doctoral student in our program, has continued our department’s highly accomplished record by receiving the Arts and Sciences Outstanding Thesis Award for her Masters Thesis, “Graduating with a Mrs. Degree: Differences in Disordered Eating Behavior between Sorority and Non-sorority Women.”

Dr. Toni Copeland (PhD 2008) has received the Arts and Sciences Outstanding Dissertation Award for her Doctoral Dissertation, “Poverty and Sickness Among Women in Nairobi, Kenya: Cultural Models of Managing HIV/AIDS in the Absence of Biomedical Treatment.” She is also a nominee for the university-wide award.

Thomas Potter, an undergraduate anthropology major, has been named a McNair Scholar. McNair Scholars participate in a year-long research experience under the mentorship of a faculty member.



Katy Groves



Toni Copeland



Thomas Potter

NEW PhD GRADUATES

We are delighted not only at the increase in the ranks of our successful doctoral graduates, but also in their success in finding employment in their fields.

Cameron Lacquement and **Meredith Jackson** successfully defended their doctoral dissertations and graduated in August and December 2009, respectively.



Cameron Lacquement at his defense with his dissertation committee. Left to right: Jim Knight, Keith Jacobi, Bill Dressler, Cameron Lacquement, John Blitz

Cameron's dissertation is entitled "Landscape Modification at Moundville: An Energetics Assessment of a Mississippian Polity." Cameron uses novel techniques to measure the amount of human energy that went into building the monumental landscape of the Moundville site. Cameron is now an Instructor for the University of Alabama Early College and the Department of Anthropology.



Meredith Jackson receiving her doctoral hood from advisor Kathy Oths

Jalisco, Mexico." Meredith's research with pregnant women, midwives and obstetric caregivers examined traditional and biomedical components of the cultural model of a good pregnancy in Jalisco. Meredith is currently working as a consulting ethnographer for Smart Revenue, an ethnographic marketing research firm, and is preparing to begin work on health-related projects in Mexico for agencies contracted through the Agency for International Development.

Meredith's dissertation is entitled "Cultural Models, Stress, and Pregnancy: Examining Intra-cultural Variation in Southern

WELCOME TO JENNY CARBALLO



Jennifer Carballo has been joined the department as instructor for our four field introductory course, ANT 100. Jenny is a doctoral candidate at the University of Michigan in archaeology. Welcome, Jenny, to our growing family!

LECOUNT, BLITZ SERVE AS SAA PROGRAM CHAIRS



Drs. Lisa LeCount and John Blitz are serving as co-Program Committee Chairss of the Society for American Archaeology 75th Anniversary Meeting to be held April 14-18, 2010, in St. Louis. This meeting will have hundreds of sessions and nearly 2,000 presentations, with perhaps the largest attendance in SAA history. Dr. David Carballo is a Program Committee member and Jessica Temple of our department's office staff has also worked hard to help with this effort.

UPDATES ON OUR GRADUATES

Toni Copeland (PhD 2008) began a tenure-track position as Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Mississippi State University.

Ashley Dumas (PhD 2007) has received a promotion to a tenure-track position as Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Assistant Director of the Black Belt Museum at the University of West Alabama.

Katherine Richter Mauter (BA 2006) is now Executive Director of the Tuscaloosa Preservation Society.

David Morgan (MA 1994) has been appointed Director of the National Park Service's (NPS) Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC).

Susan Olin (BA 2004), after finishing her MA at the University of Southern Mississippi, has accepted a post with Brockington and Associates, a large CRM firm based in the southeast with offices in Atlanta, Charleston, Jacksonville and Savannah.

LOST ALUMNI

We have lost track of these alumni. Please contact us if you know how to reach them!

Colette Anderson-Gill
Jerry D. Ernsberger
Mikael Haller
Meghan Legraff
Jason A. Mann
Stacye E. McGrath
Kimberly Neutzling
Pamela Jean Richardson
Jennifer Ann Steelman
Marcia Allen Wiggin

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIVING

We humbly invite you to consider making a tax-free donation to one of the following initiatives:

The Anthropology Field School Gift Fund goes to the support of our undergraduate field schools in archaeology. Our field schools receive no budget from the University, and depend heavily on these gifts for supplies and operating expenses. Our most recent major purchase from this fund was a work truck that has proven invaluable to faculty and graduate student research. Our annual field schools for undergraduates date back to 1956. Traditionally they are among the most memorable experiences of our alumni.

The Anthropology Lectureship Fund goes to support distinguished guest speakers from outside the University. We try to have at least four guest speakers per year. These speakers greatly enrich our undergraduate and graduate programs by exposing our students to prominent ideas by the leading lights in our discipline.

The David and Elizabeth DeJarnette Endowed Scholarship in Anthropology is awarded to support graduate student research on Moundville or Moundville-related topics. Each spring, the award is made during the popular DeJarnette Barbecue, held at Moundville Archaeological Park during the Saturday of Honors Week. Since it was founded in 1993 by Sarah and James Caldwell, the endowment has steadily grown. In recent years our DeJarnette Scholars have received awards of as much as \$6,000.

The Richard A. Krause Award is given for academic excellence at the graduate level in anthropology. The recipient of this annual award is chosen by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Department based on classroom performance and the promise of the student's proposed thesis or dissertation research project.

The C. Earle Smith Award is given for academic excellence at the undergraduate level in anthropology. The annual award goes to the graduating senior in anthropology having the highest overall grade point average. Names of former "Smitty" award winners are prominently displayed on a plaque in the Department.

The Bob Work Award is a graduate student paper competition with a monetary prize of \$100. Each January, archaeology graduate students submit papers for review by a faculty committee. The winner receives recognition during Honors Week.

Checks directed to any of these initiatives should be made out to the UA College of Arts and Sciences and mailed to the Department at Box 870210, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487. If you would like to discuss a contribution, please contact Jim Knight, Director of Departmental Development.