

ANTHROPOLOGY AT ALABAMA

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

PROFESSOR ALLEN MAXWELL TO BE REMEMBERED



We were saddened this past Fall to lose a long-time colleague and friend, Professor Emeritus Allen Maxwell. "Max," as he was known around the department, retired in 2010 after 36 years of distinguished service to the University and department. Max joined the faculty of the Anthropology Department in the late summer of 1974. Over the years Max's Linguistic and Cultural Anthropology courses became legendary. It was rumored that he could fill all the chalk boards in a classroom and then write between lines during a lecture. Max arrived at the university with half a semi-load of belongings, ninety percent of them books. During his tenure Max became a prolific scholar and a vital part of the life of

the program. A memorial BBQ will be held at Moundville Archaeological Park on March 3, 2012.

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KOSIBA, WOLFGRAM JOIN FACULTY

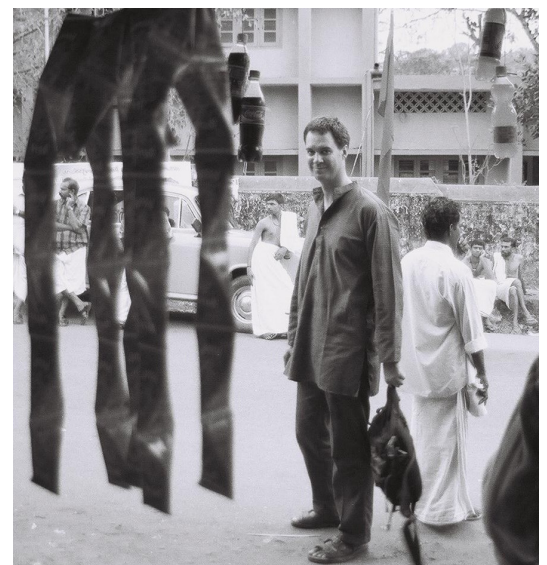
The Anthropology Department welcomed two new faculty during the 2011-2012 academic year: **Dr. Steven Kosiba** and **Dr. Matthew Wolfgram**.



Dr. Kosiba is an anthropological archaeologist with a specialization in the Andes, specifically the Cuzco region of Peru. His archaeological research focuses on the emergence of Inka sacred authority in Cuzco, the heartland of the Inka Empire. Dr. Kosiba's recent research and publications discuss how the Inkas first consolidated their state by producing a sacred landscape that both embedded and engendered a particular vision of social difference, order, and history. Dr. Kosiba employs high-tech analytical techniques—from three-dimensional computer modeling of archeological sites to the analysis of chemical signatures in ancient soils and ceramics—to reconstruct the particular practices and ceremonial activities that once took place within Andean political centers. Such methods provide him with the fine-grained data necessary to demonstrate how the Inkas claimed their absolute authority and cast autonomous peoples as political subjects by transforming culturally significant places and practices, such as shrines, local seats of power and feasting ceremonies. He is an interdisciplinary scholar who complements archaeological

research on state formation and indigenous concepts of state authority by conducting detailed historical research in the Spanish Colonial archives. Dr. Kosiba has directed and participated in several archaeological projects in the Andean highlands, the Peruvian coast, southern France, Sweden, and the southeastern United States. A National Science Foundation Dissertation Improvement Grant and a Fulbright-Hays (DDRA) Fellowship funded his research on Inka state formation. The results of his dissertation research are published in articles and book chapters, and are currently being developed into a book. His classes will focus on archaeological method and theory, anthropological approaches to the environment, Geographic Information Systems, and theories of urbanism.

Dr. Wolfgram is a linguistic and cultural medical anthropologist with research specializations in South Asian language, culture, and history and in social interactions in U.S. educational institutions. Dr. Wolfgram earned his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan and his fieldwork in India was funded by the American Institute for Indian Studies and by a University of Michigan Humanities Fellowship. His intellectual interests in linguistic anthropology include social interaction, linguistic relativity, culture and cognition, embodiment and bodily communication, political-economy of language, and anthropological theory. Dr. Wolfgram's primary fieldwork was conducted in Kerala—southern India—on the modernization of a historical ancient medical practice called Ayurveda. In particular, his work addresses the important role of linguistic practices such as translation in the ongoing rationalization and scientific enhancement of the tradition. He is also working on a second research project on the role of teacher-student interaction in the socialization of scientific conceptions of reality and of social class dispositions in the context of U.S. public schooling. Dr. Wolfgram is currently building a Discourse Analysis Lab which will be equipped with video and audio recording equipment and discourse analysis software, and all students and faculty interested in developing a social interaction component to their research are encouraged to make use of the new facility.



SIX MORE PhDs COMPLETED IN 2011



Dr. Blakely Brooks (center) with committee at December, 2011 UA Commencement.

An unprecedented six doctoral students successfully defended their dissertations in 2011, bringing to 16 the total PhDs awarded by our program.

Benjamin Blakely Brooks completed a dissertation on “The Andean Cultural Model of Susto: Cultural Consonance and Historical Trauma in the Andes,” advised by Dr. William Dressler. Blakely is presently a Lecturer at Mississippi State University.



Dr. Rick Brown

Richard A. Brown II completed his dissertation on “Biocultural Models, Cultural Consonance, and Salutogenesis in Type 2 Diabetes Treatment; Measuring the Impact of Symbol Systems on Health within a Mexican Community,” also advised by Dr. Dressler. Rick is now a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Institute for Circumpolar Health Studies, University of Alaska, Anchorage.



Dr. Lauren Downs (2nd from left) with committee following her defense.

Lauren Downs completed a dissertation on “The Glass Site (22WR502): An Investigation of Plaquemine Culture Architecture, Occupation, and Interaction in the Northern Portion of the Natchez Bluffs Region, Mississippi,” advised by Dr. Ian Brown. Lauren will officially graduate in May.



Dr. Claire Thompson (center) with committee following her defense.

Erin Phillips completed her dissertation on “Social Contexts of Production and Use of Pottery Engraved in the Hemphill Style at Moundville,” advised by Dr. Vernon J. Knight. Erin is currently teaching at Shelton State and Judson Colleges while she awaits official May graduation.

Sarah Szurek completed a dissertation on “Cultural Models of Food and Social Networks Among Mexican Immigrants to the Southeastern United States,” advised by Dr. Kathryn Oths. Sarah is now a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Florida, working with the Health Equity Alliance of Tallahassee.



Dr. Sarah Szurek (center) with committee at December, 2011 UA Commencement.

Claire Nanfro Thompson completed a dissertation on “Ritual and Power: Examining the Economy of Moundville’s Residential Population,” advised by Dr. John Blitz. Claire is presently teaching at Shelton State Community College.



Dr. Erin Phillips (right) following her defense, with committee chair Jim Knight.

Congratulations to all!

ACTUNCAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT 4TH SEASON

Lisa LeCount directed a fourth field season of archaeological research at the ancient Maya site of Actuncan in Belize, Central America last summer. The major goals of the 2011 field season were to continue household excavations in house mounds across the north portion of the site, conduct remote sensing surveys in three areas of the site, and test a large plaza to determine if it was a market place. John Blitz directed the ground truthing of magnetic anomalies found by the remote sensing survey. One of



the major findings of the project is that although most of the households were founded sometime in the Late Preclassic period around 400 B.C., beneath their stone foundations lay even earlier deposits dating back to 1000 B.C. LeCount suggests that the building of new households and the burying of earlier ones was part and parcel of the practices that institutionalized divine kingship at Actuncan. This idea is supported by the fact that the establishment of state-level institutions represented by the erection of a triadic temple, a carved stone monument, and an astronomic complex called an “E-group” also date to the same time as the founding of new houses.

This was largest project to date at the site, employing 30 Belizean men and women as excavators and lab workers and supporting research by graduate and undergraduate students and senior academics. The North American members of the Actuncan Archaeological Project this year were: Krystal Craiker (University of Texas, Arlington), Dr. Carolyn Freiwald (University of Wisconsin), Lauren Hahn (University of California, San Diego), Dr. Angela H. Keller (University of Texas, Arlington), David Mixter (Washington University, St. Louis), Clay Nelson (University of Alabama), Kara Rothenberg (University of South Florida), Daniel Salberg (University of Alabama), Sara Shults (University of Alabama), Bobbie Simova (University of Alabama), and Dr. Chester Walker (Archaeo-Geophysical Associates, LLC). Major funding for the Actuncan Archaeological Project was provided by the National Science Foundation and two University of Alabama grants: a College Academy for Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity grant awarded to LeCount and a Research Grants Committee Grant awarded to Blitz. The University of Alabama’s Department of Anthropology also provided logistical and financial support.

In 2012, the project will be excavating a Maya palace in the winter and running a field school through the University of Texas, Arlington in the summer. We look forward to another exciting year of discoveries, despite the December 2012 “end-of-the-world” predictions of the ancient Maya calendar.

JUDGE LYNN HUGHES VISITS, ESTABLISHES PRIZE



The Anthropology Department and the College were delighted to welcome **Judge Lynn Hughes**, a University of Alabama alumnus, who spoke to undergraduate and graduate students on September 15, 2011 about “Anthropology and Life.” Judge Hughes has served for a quarter of a century as a U.S. District Court Judge for the Southern District of Texas. Once an anthropology undergraduate student himself, the Judge made a compelling case for the value of anthropology beyond the academy.

We are particularly grateful to the Judge and Mrs. Hughes for their recent donation to establish the Hughes Prize, which recognizes students who have “captured the imagination of the faculty by potential, intransigence, inventiveness, perseverance, insight, or a combination of those traits.” In January we congratulated the first Hughes Prize recipient: **Ted Clay Nelson**, an outstanding undergraduate anthropology major specializing in archaeology.

JIM KNIGHT, JASON DeCARO RECOGNIZED

Two of our faculty, **Dr. Vernon (Jim) Knight** and **Dr. Jason DeCaro**, received notable honors during the Fall semester of 2011.



Prof. Jim Knight

Jim Knight was recognized at the Fall Faculty Meeting as a College of Arts & Sciences Leadership Board Faculty Fellow. This fellowship is the highest honor awarded by the College. This recognition comes as his book, *Mound Excavations at Moundville: Architecture, Elites, and Social Order*, received the prestigious 2011 Society for American Archaeology Scholarly Book Award.

Jason DeCaro was named a College of Arts & Sciences Distinguished Teaching Fellow, selected by a committee of faculty and by the Dean’s Office. He joins four prior fellows from our department: Professor Emeritus Richard Krause, Professor Michael Murphy, Professor Ian Brown, and Assoc. Professor Marysia Galbraith.



Dr. Jason DeCaro

WELCOME NEW STUDENTS

Welcome to our new graduate students for the 2011-2012 academic year!

MA: Johnna Dominguez, Michael Goldstein, Petrina Kelly, Heath Kinzer, Sarah Morrow, Maria Panakhyo, Daniel Salberg, Borislava Simova, Deanna Smith, Jeremiah Stager

PhD: Rachel Briggs (from MA program), Lynn Funkhouser, Erik Porth (from MA program)

CONGRATULATIONS TO STUDENT AWARDEES

Our students have once again made us proud through their extraordinary accomplishments!

Jeremy Davis has been awarded a Graduate Council Research Fellowship for 2012-2013.

Johnna Dominguez, now in the MA program, won 4th place in the social sciences at the UA Undergraduate Research Conference last year.

Daniel LaDu won the student paper competition at the Association for Gravestone Studies, and also has received a Graduate Council Research Fellowship for 2012-2013.

Taylor Payne won first place in the social sciences at the UA Undergraduate Research Conference.

Erin Phillips won 2nd place in the Southeastern Archaeological Conference Student Paper Competition.

Erik Porth won last year's DeJarnette Scholarship, as well as 1st place in the Southeastern Archaeological Conference Student Paper Competition.

FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY CLASS AT MOUNDVILLE

Doctoral student Jeremy Davis taught an ANT 269 Field Archaeology class at Moundville Archaeological Park during the May 2011 Interim session. His research focuses on understanding the history and social implications of Moundville's plaza. The plaza, together with earthen mounds and a palisade, was part of a massive construction project that established Moundville as a regional political center around A.D. 1250. Davis supervised undergraduate students excavating beneath the plaza to uncover the buried remains of structures detected by a magnetometer survey directed by Drs. John Blitz (UA) and Chet Walker (Archaeo-Geophysical Associates). Blitz, Davis, and students continued the plaza testing this fall and the research excavations will resume summer 2012.



Undergraduate archaeology students E. Gomberg and D. Cardwell at Moundville

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 Hughes Prize recognizes students who have captured the imagination of the faculty by potential, intransigence, inventiveness, perseverance, insight, or a combination of those traits.

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.

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.