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Something Old, Something New

by Kendall Farkas

Thanks to the generosity of Eta Sigma Phi, I spent six weeks in Greece participating in a brand new excavation. It was a unique experience for me since I was able to observe what it takes to begin a new archaeological project. Not only that, but Greece is an indescribably beautiful country. Between the mountains and shorelines, there was nowhere more beautiful that I could have spent my summer.

Since this was the first year of the project, there was a lot of work to be done. I utilized muscles I did not even realize I had. My day began at 4:45 AM. As painful as it was, and some days it was a true test of will to make my way downstairs for breakfast, it all became worth it when we would arrive on site by 6 AM to see the sun rising over



From top:

Sunrise over the mountains every morning on site.

Photo of Acrocorinth

At the top of Acrocorinth at the Temple of Aphrodite.

About the Author

Kendall Farkas was inducted into Eta Sigma Phi at Grand Valley State University (Iota Sigma), where she received her BA in Classical Studies. She is currently a graduate student at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, working toward her MAT in Latin and Classical Humanities. Ms. Farkas plans to continue in the field of teaching and is excited to use the knowledge she gained this summer to benefit her future students.



the mountains. On site, I had a unique opportunity to try different methodologies and techniques in archaeology that went beyond what I was taught in the classroom. To me, being an archaeologist is a privilege since we uncover the past and give life back to the people who lived thousands of years ago. Every artifact tells a story and it was humbling to be given the opportunity to be on the front lines of such discoveries.

After work, many of us would head into the village for lunch and coffee. We lived in ancient Corinth; a small village nestled alongside the ancient archaeological site. Acrocorinth loomed over us, providing a



Top: Me in front of the Parthenon.

Above: Grand Valley State University students at Eleusis.

unique and scenic backdrop. A couple restaurants, grocery stores, and tourist shops make up the town. The benefit to living in such a small town was that we really grew to know the locals and they treated us like their own. The people in the markets would teach us Greek phrases and how to carry on a simple conversation. Being exposed to the Greek culture in the village gave me some new perspectives. The Greek lifestyle is very humbling because they have a slower pace of life. One is meant to enjoy the moment, having a simple dinner

or sipping coffee and chatting with friends. “*Siga siga*” (slowly slowly) is the Greek way of life, a lifestyle very different from what I do in the United States and one to which I am very happy to have been exposed.

In addition to the excavation, I had plenty of opportunities to travel. My goal for the summer was to integrate my love of material culture with my future goal of being a teacher. And the best way to learn is to experience firsthand. No amount of classroom lecture or textbook images could prepare me for laying eyes upon

the Acropolis for the first time. And, having spent time in Greece, I am much better prepared to bring my love for the Classical world directly into my classroom. Throughout my time abroad, I experienced many things that I had only read about for class. Seeing Mycenaean citadels such as Mycenae and Tiryns, or visiting famous cult sites such as Eleusis really ignited that passion for the Classical world that I have carried with me and will carry with me into the classroom. I will be better prepared to teach about ancient Greece having seen and experienced it firsthand. I am now prepared to share my experiences with the students in my classroom and to establish connections between ancient remains and real life experiences.

Leaving Greece and the excavation was bittersweet, from our final farewells on site to walking through the village one last time hugging and saying goodbye to the people who lived there. But the best part of being a part of the beginning of an excavation is the anticipation of all the great things still left to be uncovered.

Without Eta Sigma Phi and the generosity of H.R. Butts Scholarship for Fieldwork in Classical Archaeology, this study abroad would not have been possible. This experience has helped shape and provides new direction for my future students and me. This was a summer that I will not forget and the memories and friendships I made will be something I carry with me forever.