

2017-2018

# Alumni Newsletter



## In this Issue

- Letter from the Chair
- Anthropologists in the Field
- Faculty Spotlight
- Welcome Drs. Kristin Hedges and Sherman Horn III
- Where Are They Now?
- The Big Move

# Letter from the Chair

Deana Weibel



Summer has come and gone, and we in the Anthropology Department find ourselves looking forward to a new start and a terrific 2017-2018 academic year. I'm an anthropologist of religion who specializes in pilgrimage and tourism, and I'm writing to you from the road as I return

from a very special pilgrimage of sorts, a trip to Nebraska to experience the totality of the August 21, 2017 "Great American Eclipse". It has been fascinating to travel overland to a get inside a narrow band cutting across the country from Oregon to South Carolina, along with millions of other people, all hoping to stand in the shadow of the moon and stare up at the sun's corona for a minute or two. Tiny towns along the path prepared for an influx of visitors, offering \$25 parking spaces, last minute glasses, eclipse foods and souvenirs and unique photo opportunities. The experience was intense, but so was the anticipation!

Anticipation for the new year in Anthropology is intense as well. We are continuing our important community partnership with Bethany Refugee and Immigrant Services, offering internships and other class experiences that help our students learn about the diverse refugee community in West Michigan and put their skills to use connecting with that community. We are expanding and deepening our other community partnerships, as part of our commitment to applied anthropology, a form of anthropology that focuses on finding solutions for real-world problems (we also now offer a Certificate in Applied Anthropology). If you have suggestions for us, please share!

We are going to have two new faces in the Anthropology Department this year. New Visiting Professor Sherman W. Horn III is an archaeologist who conducts research in the Central American and Caribbean nation of Belize. Professor Horn's work focuses on social networks, trade and exchange, and complex societies. He'll be teaching Human Origins and Origins of Civilization for us this fall, and also run a section of Introduction to Archaeology during winter semester. You may also see Dawn Rutecki in our offices and classrooms. Her work combines issues of archaeology, gender and religion, and she'll be teaching a section of People and Cultures of the World. And you may see more of one special face – Wesley

Jackson, our Collections and Information Management Specialist (his new title!), will be increasing his hours and presence in the lab, and will be teaching again for us, a section of Origins of Civilization on the Holland campus.

Our faculty (and many of our students) explored the world again this summer. As anthropologists and archaeologists we always seem ready to head out to explore. Professor Elizabeth Arnold led her archaeological field school in Israel, taking with her an intrepid band of GVSU students whose horizons were expanded by the experience. Professor Gwyn Madden conducted an ethnographic field school here in West Michigan, focusing on special education classrooms, then headed to Ukraine to conduct research in biological anthropology (taking a few GVSU students for good measure). We had faculty voyaging throughout the summer months, hitting such destinations as Guyana, Germany, Kenya, Norway, Peru, Switzerland and Uganda, as well as teaching summer classes and conducting research closer to home. As always, most of us spent at least part of the summer hunched over our laptops, writing!

One last important piece of news is that Professor Janet Brashler has announced that she will be retiring in 2018. She will be on leave from teaching during fall 2017, return for a last semester of classes in winter 2018, and provide students with a last chance to take her celebrated local archaeological field school during the summer of 2018. Professor Brashler's contributions to the classroom will be deeply missed. Since she lives so close to campus, we don't expect her retirement will mean we won't see Professor Brashler anymore – we hope she will have a continued role in the Archaeology Lab and in keeping the rest of us committed to our mission!

As for me, I'm entering the last year in my term as unit head of Anthropology, anticipating more time to conduct research and, yes, write. Academic departments, like celestial bodies, experience natural cycles and changes, and we're going to see some transformations this year. But, to paraphrase the 1980s pop band Timbuk 3, "The future's so bright, (we) gotta wear shades!"

Please keep in touch and stop by when you can,  
Deana Weibel  
Chair, Anthropology Department

Cover Photo: Dr. Christopher Shaffer demonstrates bow and arrow technology at the Paleo-Olympics. This year marked the 9th year for the annual games, a collaborative event put on by the Archaeological Society, the Classics Society, the Theta history club and the Anthropology Club.

Learn more about this year's games - [here](#)

Learn more about Dr Shaffer - [here](#)

Credit: Kevin Sielaff (Grand Valley Lanthorn)

# Anthropologists in the Field -Summer 2017

The faculty were busy with research and field schools this summer. Below are just a few of their stories - [click here](#) to see what your favorite professors are up to!

Dr. Madden had two projects going on this summer. One continued her studies in Borschiv, Ukraine to excavate and process human remains from Verteba Cave. She and six students spent the month of July in the Cave to get a better idea of how human activity has been shaped by the environment, as well as how humans have re-shaped the environment. The second project was right here in West Michigan where she taught a new field school researching Autism in the Special Education Classroom.

Dr. Schwartz spent his summer finishing an article for an upcoming issue of Ancient Warfare on the wars between ancient Israel and Moab as described in the Mesha Stele and the Bible. He also applied for and received permission to conduct future excavations on the remains of an early nineteenth century house in Clam Harbour Nova Scotia.



Dr. Rhoads

“I spent 6 weeks in Uganda (April-June) working with colleagues at the Advocacy Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE, Kampala). ACODE is Uganda’s #1 research institute/Think Tank. I was following up work begun during my 2014-2015 sabbatical there. My main collaboration was advocating for a national resettlement policy, building upon my earlier study with ACODE on the impacts of forced resettlement due to land acquisition caused by oil sector development. My advocacy involved a) writing and presenting a civil society response to the proposed national policy (on behalf of the Civil Society Coalition for Oil and Gas, an NGO). This also involved facilitating meetings to connect civil society organizations (e.g., ACODE) with the consultants contracted by the government to draft a national Land Acquisition, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy (LARRP).”

## Congratulations Scholarship Recipients!

### Richard E. Flanders University Club Scholarship:

Margariata Alviar Murphy, Andra Durham, Victoria Zellar



### Walton Boston Koch Scholarship:

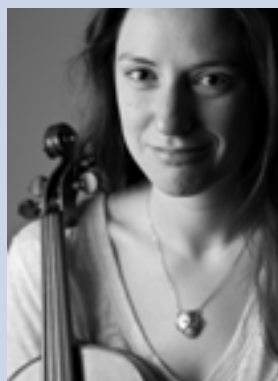
Dustin Vander Platts, Adrian Rios

### Quimby Scholarship:

Johnathan Bluck



Margarita Alviar Murphy



“The Richard E. Flanders scholarship helped me by cutting down on financial pressure, allowing me to spend more time on school and less time working extra shifts to cover tuition costs.”

Andra Durham

## GIVE TODAY

Richard E. Flanders Scholarship Endowment  
Dr. George I. & Helen Z. Quimby Scholarship  
Walton B. Koch Memorial Scholarship

[CLICK HERE!](#)

“ This scholarship made it possible for me to focus my time on school,



rather than work, and significantly decreased my stress throughout the school year.”

Victoria Zellar

# Faculty Spotlight

## National Geographic Grant Awarded to Anthropology Professor Christopher Shaffer



Chris Shaffer and his partner, Marissa Milstein (University of Minnesota), were awarded a National Geographic Society Center for Research and Exploration grant for their work co-managing bushmeat hunting and health among Waiwai forager-horticulturalists in Guyana, South America. This co-management program seeks to combine theoretical and methodological approaches from conservation biology, anthropology, and ecosystems health for people-oriented conservation. While bushmeat hunting threatens food security and biodiversity conservation throughout the tropical world, indigenous reserves, where indigenous groups seek to practice traditional subsistence strategies, including bushmeat hunting, now make up more than 20% of the land area in Amazonia. Chris and his interdisciplinary team of researchers are training Waiwai hunters to collect data on their own harvesting practices, conduct line transect surveys, and conduct necropsies on hunted animals. Hunters collect data on offtake and hunting locations through self-monitoring forms and a participatory geographic information system (GIS). These data are used to assess long-term sustainability for the harvesting of vulnerable species and manage offtake accordingly. Hunting, butchery, and consumption of bushmeat also

expose hunters to a high risk of disease transmission and some of the most virulent diseases in human history, like HIV and Ebola, have emerged through bushmeat hunting. Therefore, Chris and his team also conduct disease surveillance on animals hunted by the Waiwai, identifying diseases through histopathological and parasitological analysis of tissue samples. In addition, they are conducting ethnographic research to identify the cultural drivers of bushmeat hunting, indigenous perceptions of disease, cultural practices that may mitigate or enhance the potential for zoonotic transmission, and to determine community goals for sustainability and implement culturally appropriate interventions. The long-term goals of this program are to provide the capacity building necessary for the Waiwai to sustainably manage their own resource use and health.



## Dr. Arnold named the Padnos/Sarosik Endowed Professor of Civil Discourse

Dr. Elizabeth Arnold was recently named the third Padnos/Sarosik Professor of Civil Discourse at GVSU.

This two-year appointment will allow Dr. Arnold to develop a new course focused on climate change to give students the ability to promote and lead civil discourse on this issue. She will also engage the broader community in a civic discourse on climate change through a public symposium in the fall of 2018.

## Congratulations!

Congratulation go out to Dr. Janet Brashler who will be retiring from teaching following the 2017-2018 academic year. Although the department is sad to see her go, as she has done so much to enhance our students' knowledge and has contributed to the greatness of the department, we are happy for her years of service to the University and all of the students. We also anticipate that she will be a visible part of the department for years to come, working with collections and students!



Dr. Janet Brashler

# Welcome Drs. Kristin Hedges and Sherman Horn III

Hello! My name is Dr. Kristin Hedges. I am a new faculty member in the Anthropology Department at GVSU. I am a medical anthropologist and extremely passionate about my field. I was driven to the field of anthropology after my service in the Peace Corps. I was a public health volunteer in Kenya from 2000-2003. During these years I worked hard to understand the connection between culture and health in terms of HIV risk. I quickly learned that 'cookie-cutter' public health approaches do not work within every community. During these years I realized the benefit and need for culturally appropriate health interventions.

My research interests are linked to gender inequality and health, including HIV/AIDS, juvenile justice, and substance abuse. My current project is working with local Maasai healers to document medicinal plants and understand changes in access to health care within the community. I enjoy having students involved in my research, please come see me if you are interested in the project.

In my free time you most likely would find me outdoors; hiking, camping, canoeing, or rock climbing. I also love cooking and just hanging out with my kids.



Sherman Horn III received his Ph.D. in anthropology from Tulane University in 2015 and worked as a Research Scientist at HD Analytical Solutions, Inc., before joining the faculty at Grand Valley State University. He has conducted archaeological fieldwork in Africa, Europe, North America, and Mesoamerica, and he is Deputy Director of the El Pilar Archaeological Project in Belize and Guatemala. Sherman specializes in using geographic information systems (GIS) software to explore, analyze, and integrate large archaeological datasets comprising remote sensing, paleoecological, settlement survey, materials provenance, and artifact distribution data. His work with Maya ceramics from the Belize Valley revealed complex exchange systems and patterns of resource use during early periods of occupation. He is particularly interested in using GIS and artifact sourcing studies to reconstruct ancient interaction and exchange networks, which he sees as important drivers of social change among early agricultural communities.

## Anthropology Honors Society

In April we welcomed eighteen new initiates into Lamda Alpha, the National Scholastic anthropology fraternity. Grand Valley State University's Michigan Beta Chapter of Lambda Alpha is dedicated to promoting and recognizing scholarly achievement by students working toward degrees or minors in anthropology; or students with a strong interest and background in anthropology.



### Honored students:

Michaela R Allen, Jessica A Baniukaitis, Jonathan F Bluck, Roberto Carriedo Ostos, Ashley Louise Day, Brooke E Haines, Jessica E Hinderer, Taylor R Lee, Samuel M Lopresto, Tiffany M Mann, Ashley L Newton, Kellyn M Sanders, Shelby J Sullivan, Dustin J Vander Plaats, Ashley L Ware, Emily R Whitney, Victoria V Zellar, and Trenton M Zylstra

# Where Are They Now?

## Holly Chadwick - Alumna '01



Holly Chadwick was named the Anthropology Distinguished Alumna this year. Holly came to Grand Valley in 1997 and graduated from the Anthropology program in 2001. She continued her studies at Grand Valley and obtained a master's degree in Social Work in 2003. As part of her education here at GVSU Holly did an internship in Detroit at the Arab American Center. During her graduate studies, Holly took an internship working at Bethany Christian Services in Grand Rapids, where she was employed in a variety of capacities working with unaccompanied minors and resettlement. This experience helped spur her interests in refugee populations. Since that time, Holly has worked with various agencies helping to resettle refugees from across the globe. Working from home and abroad, Holly has held various positions revolving around the resettlement and integration of

vulnerable and alien populations. Currently serving as Associate Director for Refugee Processing for the Church World Service, one of the primary organizations that facilitates refugee resettlement in the United States, Holly acts as a liaison between governmental and nongovernmental organizations, working to resettle refugees into the United States. She acts as the principle representative for the Resettlement Support Center (RSC) on matters of policy and compliance measures under the terms of the RSC Cooperative Agreement. As a distinguished alumna, Holly was asked to come to Grand Valley and present to the student body and community. Her talk was titled, "Why Resettlement? The History, Need and Process of Global Refugee Relocation," and showcased her anthropological training.

Her anthropological background has helped her to think about issues holistically, not to find a side as argumentative, but to see the validity in many different view points. This skill has been crucial to her work, as the populations she deals with are for very diverse backgrounds and have differing cultural norms.

---

## Carl Sjostrand - Alumnus '07

After graduating in 2007, Carl Sjostrand got an internship on the Groveland Ranger District on the Stanislaus National Forest just west of Yosemite National Park in California. In 2010 he returned to the Stanislaus, this time hired as an archaeological technician, and led a small crew on the first archaeology survey and monitoring of the Tuolumne Wild & Scenic River in 30 years. In 2013, he was part of the BAER Team for the Rim Fire which burned over 257,000 acres on the Stanislaus National Forest and Yosemite National Park - the third largest fire in California history. On the Stanislaus, approximately 2000 archaeological sites were in the burn area and many were destroyed, covering most of the sites Carl had visited and worked on during his time on the forest. He returned in 2014 to help continue to assessment and restoration efforts after the devastation of the Rim Fire. Today, he continues to work for the US Forest Service recording and monitoring archaeological sites.

Carl also created and maintains a webcomic! Find out more [here](#).



# The Big Move

As our department continues to expand, we have expanded out work space. In 2014-2015 the Anthropology Department relocated its staff and Faculty offices from AuSable Hall to the second floor of Lake Michigan Hall. With this came an expansion of labs and work spaces designed to cater to the many facets of the discipline. The ELVis lab (Ethno-Linguistic-Visual space) is designed for ethnographic and linguistic anthropology while the Bio Lab specializes in biological and physical anthropology. The third space is a new storage space to relocate many of the existing archaeological collections out of the old basement laboratory and into compact storage close to workspaces. The Anthropology Lab, located at LMH 249, is still the primary center for student activity outside of classes. In the faculty suite, we also have two interior rooms which faculty and students use to collaborate on projects. These spaces allow projects to be secure for extended periods without having to take care of collections or materials between working times. Our mission to provide a state-of-the-art facility for faculty, staff, and students has been greatly advanced with these new spaces.



Our new compact storage provides better protection for our collections



Photographs of Frances Densmore and Margaret Mead provide inspiration in the ELVis lab.

## Power of Giving



A strong liberal education serves as the foundation for Grand Valley State University's wide array of undergraduate and graduate programs, fostering critical thinking, creative problem solving, and cultural understanding. Through personalized learning enhanced by active scholarship, we accomplish our mission of educating students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies.

## Stay Connected

To ensure future communication, take a moment and make sure that your information is correct with Alumni Relations, [click here](#)

Also connect with the department and other alumni on our facebook page, [click here](#)



Anthropology Department  
1 Campus Drive  
Allendale, MI 49401

## Lab Update



*Wesley Jackson - Collections and Information Management Specialist*

We have had a busy few years in the lab. As we moved the skulls into the new Biological Lab, we were able to showcase more student projects and have a small area devoted to our faunal collection. We have expanded our collections through several local projects including the field school at the Muskegon State Game Area, and collaborative works with the Ottawa County Parks. Several students have also been busy working through our older collections to make sure our records are accurate and up-to-date. Our intentions are to get our collections into a searchable digital database that can be accessed online. This multi-year project is ambitious, but will allow our collections to be used in research remotely.

Be sure to come visit and see the new faculty and lab spaces. The W. L. Coffinberry Chapter of the Michigan Archeological society meet in the lab on the 2nd Wednesday evening of each month and the Anthropology club has been having weekly meetings on Thursday nights.