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UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY · COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES



Message from the Chair

September 2021

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Greetings! I am excited to introduce myself as the new chair of the Anthropology Department. The outgoing chair, Lisa Cliggett, provided us with

five years of excellent service, and I hope to continue the good work she has done.

Taking over in the middle of a pandemic has made me realize just how resourceful, tenacious, and intrepid our students and faculty are. As more and more Kentuckians got vaccinated over the spring and summer and the infection rate plummeted, the prospects of a somewhat normal semester looked good. The late summer arrival of the delta variant has produced Kentucky's highest infection rates ever, yet with great pride I can announce that our undergraduates, graduate students, and professors are meeting the challenges of getting back into the classroom and also continuing our research, outreach, and other activities.

This fall we have several new faces in Lafferty Hall and Export St. First, we welcome new assistant professor Crystal Felima. Dr. Felima's dissertation, from the University of Florida, builds from 27 months of fieldwork in Haiti, where her research focused on the experience of floods in Cap-Haitien. With certificates in Latin American Studies and Disaster Management, Dr. Felima comes to us from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

We also welcome three new post-docs. Dr. Lee Bullock received his Ph.D. from our department in 2020 and has joined us on a teaching post-doctoral fellowship. Dr. Bullock was an award-winning teacher as a graduate student and will be teaching economic anthropology, prisons and incarceration, and cultural diversity in the modern world. Dr. Phyllis Johnson, a University Postdoctoral Research Fellow, comes to us from Vanderbilt University and specializes in ancient Maya archeology, lithic analysis, and soils analysis. Dr Katherine Napora comes to us from the University of Georgia and serves as the inaugural Post-Doctoral Research Scholar in the Office of State Archaeology. She specializes in the reconstruction of past environmental conditions in eastern North America.

One of the most exciting bits of news from the department is that Dr. George Crothers, Director of the William Webb Museum of Anthropology, helped secure a \$445,000 Saving America's Treasures grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Below we describe how this grant will help update the climate control system for the Webb Museum's world-renowned collections. This issue of the newsletter also highlights assistant professor Hugo Reyes-Centeno's research on human teeth. He and a colleague recently proposed that the shovel shape commonly found in Native American incisors may have developed as an evolutionary adaptation to the environment of Native Americans. This issue also celebrates Associate Professor Kristin Monroe's appointment to the Sheikh Islamic Studies Professorship. In addition, readers will find a profile of current graduate student Gabriela Montero Mejia and graduate alumna Virginia Carter (PhD '88), former director of the Kentucky Humanities Council.

We'd love to hear what you have been doing. Please send us your news!

Best wishes,

Scott Hutson
Professor and Chair

Hugo Reyes-Centeno Takes Interdisciplinary Approach to Human Origins – One Tooth at a Time

By Richard LeComte

Hugo Reyes-Centeno has sunk his teeth into a fascinating, multidisciplinary approach to the study of human evolution at the University of Kentucky. That approach involves (yes) teeth.

Reyes-Centeno joined the Anthropology Department faculty in the College of Arts & Sciences as an assistant professor in fall 2020. A paper he wrote with colleague Hannes Rathmann explores how anthropologists can trace the origins and diversity of humans using specific characteristics of teeth. For example, Native Americans today frequently have a “shoveled,” or curved, back side of their front teeth – the



Hugo Reyes-Centeno joined the Anthropology Department faculty in the College of Arts & Sciences as an

incisors. The incisors of people with European ancestry typically have flat backs.

“Incisors are the front two teeth you see when you smile, particularly the first two teeth,” said Reyes-Centeno, who earned his doctorate at the University of Tübingen in Germany. “We know that Native Americans have shoveled teeth, in some populations at almost a 100% frequency. So, if you take a person with Native American ancestry, they’re quite likely to have that kind of trait.”

[Read more.](#)

assistant professor in fall 2020. A paper he wrote with colleague Hannes Rathmann explores how anthropologists can trace the origins and diversity of humans using specific characteristics of teeth.

Board of Trustees Names Kristin V. Monroe to Sheikh Islamic Studies Professorship

The University of Kentucky Board of Trustees has named Kristin V. Monroe, associate professor of anthropology in the College of Arts & Sciences, as the new Hajja Razia Sharif Sheikh Islamic Studies Professor.

Dr. Hamid Hussain Sheikh, Sr., a retired obstetrics and gynecology specialist, and Amy Lee Sheikh of Lexington, created the professorship in memory of his mother, Hajja Razia Sharif Sheikh. A native of Lahore, Pakistan, Hajja Sheikh was active in her community and a leader in her faith. In addition to the professorship, the Sheikh family has supported a scholarship and the Hajja Razia Sharif Sheikh Islamic Studies Lecture, which Monroe will supervise.

“I am very honored to accept this professorship given in the name of Hajja Razia Sharif Sheikh and I am grateful to the Sheikh family for their support for the scholarly study of Islam and Muslim-majority societies at the University of Kentucky,” she said. “Efforts like theirs help to build and expand understanding of cultural and religious differences.” [Read more.](#)



Associate Professor of Anthropology Kristin V. Monroe's research has focused on experiences of mobility, political violence and citizenship in Beirut, Lebanon, in both historical and contemporary eras.

Webb Museum of Anthropology Awarded Save America's Treasures Grant

By Lindsey Piercy

The Department of Anthropology in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Kentucky has been awarded a major grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to help preserve Kentucky's cultural history.



The Save America's Treasures (SAT) grant, totaling more than \$445,000, will be used to improve the environmental conditions of the approximately 10,000-square-foot collections storage area of the William S. Webb Museum of Anthropology.

George Crothers is director of the Webb Museum. Founded in 1931, the Webb Museum remains dedicated to enhancing knowledge about and preservation of the nation's cultural heritage.

The museum, located in the Anthropology Research Building on UK's campus, houses a world-renowned archaeological collection from more than 250 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places — including Native American, Revolutionary War- and Civil War-era sites.

“Our goal is to preserve these significant collections for future scholarly research,” George Crothers, director of the museum, said. “The funding will allow us to insulate the interior wall, complete roof framing and install a new HVAC system, which is needed for environmental control.” [Read more.](#)

Doctoral Student Gabriela Montero Mejia's Work Is Supported by the Robert M. Odear, '28, '30 Faculty Research Fund in Latin America

What drew you to the University of Kentucky graduate program?

I have a Licenciatura degree in archaeology from the Universidad Veracruzana in Mexico, my country of origin, obtained in May of 2016. I moved to the United States in 2017, when I was accepted to the Ph.D. program in Anthropology with a Research Excellence stipend at the University of Kentucky. I have been part of several archaeological projects in Mexico since 2013, as an undergraduate and graduate student. At the Eastern Lower Papaloapan Basin, where I focus on for my dissertation research, I was part of all the field and laboratory seasons of the Recorrido Regional Arqueológico Tres Zapotes project (Tres Zapotes Regional Archaeological Survey, RRATZ), directed by University of Kentucky professor Christopher Pool and staff archeologist Michael Loughlin. My interest in populations under Aztec and Spanish imperial control emerged while I was working for this project, and I chose to pursue this research in a Ph.D. program at UK with Dr. Christopher Pool as my advisor.



Gabriela Montero Mejia anticipates earning a Ph.D. in May 2022, and the working title of her dissertation is, "Colonial laborers of the Cortés estate: Indigenous populations and Spanish conquest in the Mexican Gulf Coast."

Describe the research you are conducting and the professor who is your primary mentor.

My advisor is Dr. Christopher Pool, a prominent researcher in the archaeology of the Mexican Gulf Coast. Dr. Pool is a full professor in the Department of Anthropology, and he has conducted several archaeological projects over more than

30 years in Mexico. His research encompasses a broad range of themes, including long-term change in economic and political organization, historical ecology, culture contact, and the evolution of social complexity. The research I am conducting under his supervision focuses on an archaeological assessment of changes in quality of life of indigenous populations to measure economic impacts of the contact period in Mexico, exploring how alterations in access to agricultural land affected native communities after European conquest. [Read more.](#)

ALUMNI PROFILE: **Virginia G. Carter**

Ph.D. '88 and M.A. '78 Anthropology;
M.A. '72 Art History



By Julie Wrinn

For 25 years, Dr. Virginia G. Carter was one of the most influential figures in the cultural and intellectual life of Kentucky through her leadership of the Kentucky Humanities Council. Founded in 1972, Kentucky Humanities is an independent, nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Dr. Carter transformed the organization from a grant-making body to a provider of humanities programs throughout the state. She established the Kentucky Chautauqua program, which recreates historical personalities using actors, and her production of *Our Lincoln* was performed nationally for the bicentennial of President Abraham Lincoln's birth near Hodgenville in 1809.

She holds three degrees from UK, including two from the Anthropology Department, where she was the first woman to complete a doctorate in 1988, and she had a lot to say about how the department prepared her for success.

What was your childhood like and what brought you to UK?

I was born in pre-shopping mall Lexington, when our neighbors kept cows, goats and chickens. I attended school when integration was introduced, polio was a major threat and farming was a major occupation. I spent a lot of time climbing trees and catching snakes in creeks and streams. For my mother, everything was an opportunity for a science lesson: chicken for dinner meant learning about the valves of the (chicken) heart, a hike in the woods always included biological and geological classificatory systems — fossils, trees, ferns, liverworts, mushrooms, insects, reptiles, birds and the occasional stone artifact. I also spent a great deal of time drawing and painting and managed to take piano lessons for 13 years.

Too independent to enjoy the regulations of high school, I left after the first semester of my senior year and enrolled at UK. I took classes in everything except math — French and Spanish, geology, biology, art history, studio art, and one very important class in introductory anthropology. That's when I learned about Mary and Louis Leakey's work in Olduvai Gorge and vowed to go there one day. [Read more.](#)

Anthropology Department Awards for Students

Thanks to the generosity of alumni and friends, the department is able to reward demonstrated excellence among its students by supporting their future scholarship in a variety of ways. Donating to a departmental award is one of the easiest ways for alumni and friends to make a significant impact on our students' success. Congratulations to the following students!

Adelski Endowed Fellowship Fund in Anthropology

Alberto Ortiz Brito
Shayna Skye Lindquist
Gabriela Montero Mejia
Ashley Whitten

Established in 2011 by Robert Adelski in honor of his sister, Elizabeth Adelski (Ph.D. '85, M.A. '80), this award is designated for graduate students who have submitted external dissertation funding proposals and passed their qualifying exams. The award provides \$3,000 in "bridge" funding to enable students to begin their dissertation fieldwork immediately.

Department of Anthropology Legacy Fund

Sia Tsoukras Beasley
Chelsea Lynne Cutright
M. Ruth Dike
Alyssa Farmer

Established in 2015 by William F. Schweri (M.A. '78, B.A. '69), this award supports Anthropology students through travel to academic conferences, study abroad, internships, and research opportunities.

Donald P. Cliggett Ph.D. International Travel Research Fund

Pasama Zawadi Cole-Kweli
Alyssa Farmer

Established in 2018 by Professor Lisa Cliggett in memory of her father, Dr. Donald P. Cliggett, this fund supports travel and other costs associated with field research for Anthropology undergraduate or graduate students to Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and the Middle East, Asia, and Europe.

Dr. Donald L. and Marie E. Hochstrasser Scholarship Award

Gary W. Chandler

Established by UK Libraries to honor Marie and Donald Hochstrasser, this scholarship is awarded to Kentucky native Anthropology students who work or have an interest in working in a University of Kentucky museum or special collections.

Margaret Lantis Award for Excellence in Original Research by a Graduate Student

Dayton Starnes II

Robert M. Odear '28, '30 Faculty Research Fund in Latin America

Alberto Ortiz Brito

The Odear award supports graduate students conducting preliminary dissertation research, dissertation research, or M.A. research in Latin America.

Susan Abbott-Jamieson Dissertation Research Fund Award

Alisha Mays

In 2001, a generous gift from UK alumna Ashley Judd was used to create and endow the Susan Abbott-Jamieson award. Named for anthropology Professor Emerita Abbott-Jamieson, who taught Judd in cultural anthropology classes, the fund provides dissertation research grants to doctoral students.

William Y. Adams Fellowship Fund in Anthropology

M. Ruth Dike

Shayna Lindquist

Distinguished Undergraduate Award

Elaine Gollihue (Research)

Ellie Johnson (Scholarly Activity)

Ashley Mayes (Scholarly Activity)

Gwyneth “Baylee” Priest (Research, Service)

William Reikert (Research)

Adam Reynolds (Scholarly Activity)

Gillian Stawiszynski (Scholarly Activity)

Victoria “Tory” Stephenson (Research)

Department of Anthropology Graduate Student Service Award

Dr. Takami S. Delisle

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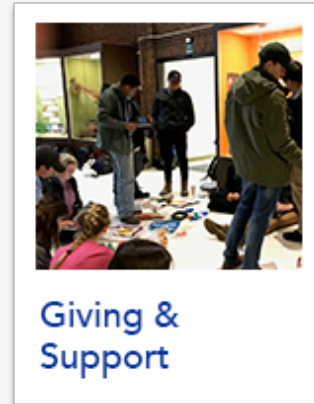
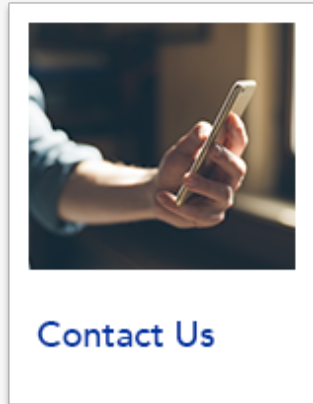
The Department of Anthropology offers students opportunities to learn about the diverse people of today’s world, as well as about their biological and cultural origins. We train students to become professional anthropologists who can engage in both academic and non-academic settings, with strong foundations in theoretical and substantive areas. Your donation today is an investment in the future of the Department and the next generation of scholars. You can also make your gift to honor or memorialize a friend, relative, or faculty member. Please designate your donation to an area of your choice, or you can direct your gift to the Department’s greatest needs:

- The Adelski Endowed Fellowship in Anthropology was established by the estate of Elizabeth Adelski (Ph.D. ’85, M.A. ’80) to support graduate students in this department. To make an online gift to this fund, please visit www.as.uky.edu/givetoas and type “Adelski Fellowship” in the search box at the top of the screen.
- The Anthropology Legacy Fund was established by William Schweri (M.A. ’78, B.A. ’69) to offer students experiences in real-world settings that enrich what is learned in the classroom, such as student internships, travel to academic conferences, travel abroad, and research. To make an online gift to this fund, please visit www.as.uky.edu/givetoas.
- The Anthropology Development Gift Fund provides critical resources for responding to student needs, attracting world-class faculty, and supporting innovative research opportunities that enable our students to compete in the global marketplace. To make an online gift to this fund, please visit www.as.uky.edu/givetoas.

By mail, please send to:

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