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UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY · COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES



Spring 2024

Message From the Chair

It has been a good spring for the Department of Anthropology. This newsletter highlights the outstanding awards that our graduate students received, and the remarkable paths that some of our alumni have taken. On the heels of the 2022 renovation of the curation space at the **William S. Webb Museum of Anthropology**, the second and final major Museum renovation is now complete, providing a home for **Educelab**, the Office of State Archaeology, and **NAGPRA** operations. Also, Lafferty Hall is getting new windows, a new air handler, and a sprinkler system over the summer. I am looking forward to moving back into a better building in the fall!

Scott Hutson
Professor and Chair
scotthutson@uky.edu

**Game Designer and Anthropology Alum Lacey
Lansaw (BA/MA '16) Gives 2024 Anthropology**

Alumnus Talk

Lacey Lansaw completed the joint [BA/MA program](#) in the Department of Anthropology in 2016 with a master's practicum on ceramics from ancient Tres Zapotes, Mexico. Since then, she has used her background in anthropology to help design immersive worlds in video games, creating a holistic experience that players savor. She is currently working on the game Wonder Woman as part of Warner Brothers' Monolith Productions. Her March 22nd [Anthropology Alumnus talk](#) inspired the audience with a story of her resilient, unpredictable, and ultimately successful career path.



Lacey Lansaw discusses career paths at the March 22nd [Anthropology Alumnus talk](#)

Jasper Waugh-Quasebarth (PhD '19) Discusses Eclipse Folklore on CBS Morning News

In national news programming, we rarely hear about the carnivalesque nor about the sun and moon in India imprisoned by a creditor. Yet in anticipation of the full solar eclipse, [Dr. Jasper Waugh Quasebarth](#), who received his PhD from UK anthropology in 2019, had a chance to discuss these topics on [CBS Morning News](#). Waugh-Quasebarth serves as the Director and Archivist for the Center for Folklore Studies at The Ohio State University. His book, [Finding the Singing Spruce: Musical Instrument Makers and Appalachia's Mountain Forests](#) was published by WVU Press in 2023.



Jasper Waugh Quasebarth (right) on CBS morning news

Vellorimo Suminguit (PhD '97) Safeguards Intangible Cultural Heritage in the

Philippines

Dr. Vellorimo Suminguit is an expert in indigenous knowledge and intellectual property and a member of the faculty in the department of Behavioral Sciences at Central Mindanao University, Philippines. He received his dissertation in 1997 under the direction of Dr. John Van Willigen and recently crossed paths with current UK anthropology professor [Hugo Reyes-Centeno](#) at the [Second International Mamanwa Dialogue Symposium](#) at St Paul University in Mindanao. Dr. Suminguit, better known as Vel when he was here at the University of Kentucky, has served as the president of Friends of the Lumad, a network of people and organizations that advocates for human rights and ecological justice across the Philippines but more particularly in solidarity with the Lumad indigenous people. His UK training prepared him to undertake a [project funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development \(IFAD\)](#), which he presented at a UNESCO international workshop. He is also a [UNESCO global facilitator](#) for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage ([See Vel's profile here](#))



Dr. Vel Suminguit talks at the [Second International Mamanwa Dialogue Symposium](#)

Andrea Strassburg (BA '99) Crusades for Access on Campus, in Lexington, and Beyond

Andrea Strassburg received her BA from the Anthropology Department and has gone on to a 26-year career with UK Healthcare. She received a master's in Rehabilitation Counseling and currently works in Trauma Surgical Services. She states that her anthropology degree has helped her become an advocate and prepared her to work with patients and their families. In her own words, the degree has “helped with my true purpose in life: paying it forward, being as blessed as I have been as someone with a disability”.

Strassburg has had a number of accomplishments. She has been made a [Kentucky Colonel](#) for her advocacy work in



Andrea Strassburg with Governor Andrew Beshear

epilepsy. She has been on the UK Staff Senate since 2010. She has chaired the [Access Lexington Commission](#) (formerly referred to as the Commission for People with Disabilities) and in that capacity was able to ensure the inclusion of Accessible Neighborhoods in the city's Long Range Plan. In 2022 she was commissioned by Governor Beshear to sit on the Kentucky Statewide Independent Living Council and currently serves as vice chair of the Council. In 2023, she was one of the recipients of UK's [Sarah Bennett Holmes Award](#), recognizing employees who have made exemplary contributions to "issues that affect women at the university and across the Commonwealth."

PhD Candidates Keppeler and Roberts Win Wenner-Gren Dissertation Fieldwork Grants

In late Spring, [James Keppeler](#) and [Michelle Roberts](#) were both awarded prestigious grants from the [Wenner-Gren Foundation](#). The Foundation plays a leadership role in anthropology by publishing [Sapiens](#) anthropology magazine and the journal [Current Anthropology](#) while also sponsoring workshops as well as pre-doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships. Roberts' fieldwork project is titled: "Webs of Care: Understanding Acquired Disability in Rural Appalachia through Culture, Politics, and Biomedicine." Keppeler's fieldwork is titled: "Unearthing Mindanao: Archaeological Insights into Mindanao's Role in Early Philippine Agriculture"



James Keppeler and Michelle Roberts

Five Anthropology Graduate Students Receive 2024-25 Unite Predoctoral Awards

On May 1, Anthropology PhD students Emmanuel Asante, Nuwan Herath, Jessica Nwafor, Brittany Thompson, and Refah Tamanna each received Unite Predoctoral Research Enhancement Awards. The [UNITE Predoctoral Research Enhancement Program](#) provides a number of benefits to graduate students interested in an academic career, including a \$10,000 stipend, mentorship from UK professors, and research career development activities.



UNITE Awardees. From left to right: Emmanuel Asante, Nuwan Herath, Jessica Nwafor, Brittany Thompson and Refah Tamanna

John-Mark Hack (MA '93) Speaks at Anthropology Awards Ceremony

The [2024 Anthropology Awards Ceremony](#) celebrated excellent research, teaching, service, and scholarship among our graduate and undergraduate students and also featured the wisdom of John-Mark Hack (MA '93). The anthropology awards have not had an honorary speaker since 2019, and we are grateful to resurrect this tradition. Mr. Hack is currently President and CEO of [The Healing Place](#) in Louisville.



John-Mark Hack (MA '93)



Distinguished Undergraduate scholarly activity award winners. From left to right: Jeff Edwards, Jasmine Howard, Charles Logan, and Anna Spradling (Dr. Scott Hutson at far left and Dr. Juliana McDonald at far right)

PLEASE SUPPORT THE ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT WITH A GIFT TODAY

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 (M.A. '80, Ph.D. '85) to support graduate students in this department.
- The **Anthropology Legacy Endowment Fund** was established by William Schveri (B.A. '69, M.A. '78) 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.
- The **Anthropology Development 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.

- The **Olaf Jaime-Riverón Fund** supports international graduate students.

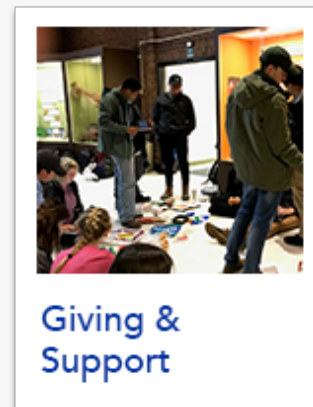
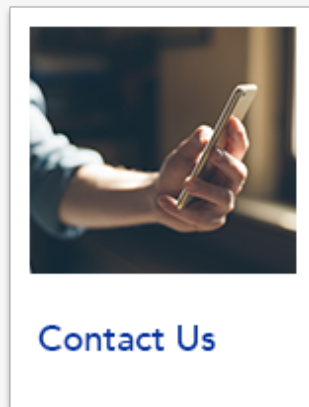
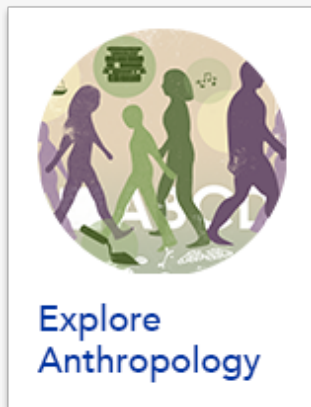
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2. In the **Select Your Funds** section, click the funds text box and type the name of the fund you would like to support.
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By mail, please send to:

UK Philanthropy
P.O. Box 23552
Lexington, KY 40523

For assistance, please contact **Debra Gold** at **859-257-8124** or **debra.gold@uky.edu**.



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