

# Linking Southwest Heritage through Archaeology (LSWHTA): Using Critical Heritage Dialogues to Engage High School Students and Promote Higher Education Pursuits

Sara Chavarria, Ph.D. – College of Education, University of Arizona

Barbara Mills, Ph.D. – School of Anthropology, University of Arizona

Stanley Bond, Ph.D. – NPS Chief Archaeologist, Washington, D.C.

Corey Knox, Ph.D. – College of Education, University of Arizona



# Meet the University of Arizona Team



**Stephen Molinares**  
Graduate Student:  
Applied Archaeology MA



**James Burton**  
Undergraduate: Literacy,  
Learning, and Leadership  
Education Major



**Rebecca Perez**  
Undergraduate: Literacy,  
Learning, and Leadership  
Education Major



**Tony Viola**  
Undergraduate: Literacy,  
Learning, and Leadership  
Education Major &  
American Indian Studies



**Dr. Corey Knox**  
Project Director,  
Education



**Dr. Barbara Mills**  
Principal Investigator,  
Anthropology



**Dr. Sara Chavarria**  
Principal Investigator,  
Education



# Our Purpose – Regional Archaeology as a Heritage Bridge

- Extend the **reach of the National Park Service (NPS)** to diverse neighbor communities.
- LSWHTA introduces **local high school students and educators** to NPS units, other heritage sites, and archaeology-related labs on the University of Arizona campus.
- **Highlight the cultural heritage** of our region using an archaeological lens to explore the past and participants' heritage.





# Our Learning Experiences

**Experiential informal education** activities (hands-on, excavation, artifact analysis, tours of archaeological laboratories) and University **campus activities**.



## Labs:

- Tree-ring Laboratory
- Zooarchaeology
- Bioarchaeology
- Ceramics
- Conservation
- Accelerator Mass Spectrometry

## Field Schools:

- Archaeology Southwest Preservation Archaeology Field School
- Pima Community College Field Course



## UA campus:

- Meet an admissions advisor
- Meet college students
- Explore the UA campus





# Our Learning Experiences

Interpreted visits to NPS, museums, and heritage/cultural centers.

## Museums, Centers, and Heritage sites:

- Arizona State Museum
- San Xavier Mission
- Tohono O'odham Cultural Center & Museum
- Western Archaeology and Conservation Center
- San Xavier Co-operative Farm



## National Parks and Monuments:

- Casa Grande NP
- Grand Canyon NP
- Tumacacori NHP
- SaguaroWest NP
- Montezuma Castle NM
- Montezuma Well
- Tuzigoot NM
- Wupatki NM



# Our Expected Project Outcomes

## Students to leverage their Digital Media Saavyness to tell their heritage stories

- Each student receives an iPad to record their path and accompanying training.
- Discussions around archaeology and community connection to the past occur.

## Career exploration to broaden their ideas

- Learning more about the possible career paths tied to cultural or archaeological studies.
- Provide timeline (and support) of when to apply for FAFSA, UA, scholarships.



# The Student Experience with Hosts/Staff

## The experience challenge:

- Physical and **intellectual guided experiences** will take place for 4 months (Saturdays and weds evenings) – to assist the participants in processing what they are being exposed to.
- Students will engage with our team (7) and up to 25 hosts from national parks, museums, and centers.
  - Some of us are trained educators, some are not.
  - Each of us come with our own idea of what high school students need to experience.
  - Each of us will leverage our individual programs, activities, and approaches to share information we value.





# Question: HOW DO WE ENSURE THAT STUDENTS CAN ENGAGE IN WHAT WE ARE SHARING?

## How do we ensure that students:

- Experience **multiple story perspectives** to be able to see themselves in the story?
- **Critically process** what they are learning and **question** what they are hearing, seeing, and experiencing?
- Find their **voice** and feel comfortable questioning the perspectives presented?

## Our Approach:

1. Provide all participants and hosts with a clear **educational framework** that helps us stay focused on our outcomes.
2. The educational framework is accompanied by **critical questions** meant to foster critical dialogues/conversations.
3. We introduce **scaffolded activities** to guide the student's exploration into their potential stories.



# #1 - Our Educational Framework

This 4 emphasis process allows students to gain a deeper knowledge of the diversity of their own and others' Southwest culture.



## Archaeology as People and Place

Southwest Archaeology Student Scholars visit and explore various archaeological sites, labs, and educational facilities throughout Arizona and New Mexico gaining hands-on experiences in archaeology and cultural heritage.

## Archaeology as Practice

Archaeologists, naturalists, and community experts provide workshops and presentations on the methods used in excavation, preservation, and interpretation. Cultural experts provide education on the historical and cultural significance of sites.

## Archaeology as Personal

Student Scholars are supported in exploring their personal and cultural connections to cultural sites and archaeological practices. Guiding questions encourage students to use their own funds of knowledge and cultural identities to reflect on and interpret the sites and archaeological practices.

## Archaeology as a Profession

Student Scholars engage with the University of Arizona through visits to labs, academic departments, and other campus facilities. They also will engage with professors, researchers, and undergraduate and graduate students and explore various career and educational pathways in archaeology, anthropology, education, history, Mexican American studies, and Native American studies, to name a few.



## #2 - Reflection Questions = Critical Conversations



- What can you tell about the people who lived here/constructed this?
- What are the stories being told?
- What do you see?

- What is the role of the archaeologists and other scientists in finding, conserving, and telling the story of this place?
- Are there other ways to interpret this site/place?
- How do archaeologists know what happened, who lived here, the meaning and use of artifacts?

- What connections do you have to this place?
- How might you understand this place and these people differently?
- How would you go about finding more answers?
- What questions do you still have?
- What are your personal/cultural experiences, beliefs, values that could influence how you interpret this place and the people who lived here?

- What skills and interests do you have that connect to cultural studies, archaeology, history?
- What are careers and majors that could include the study of culture and heritage?
- What questions about archaeology, cultural studies, or the sites we visited, do you have that you would like to investigate further?





# #3 - Scaffolded Learning/Inquiry Activities



## Photo scavenger hunts

- Specific locations  
*Ex: Take photos of objects/artifacts, features, landscapes, people*
- Tied to a theme  
*Ex: Look for something that represents \_\_\_\_\_.*

## Video recordings

- Specific to location  
*Ex: Record how this place is important to you, your family, your career path?*
- Reflection about experience  
*Ex: Record an museum exhibit element that you find familiar.*

## On site Questioning

- 1 minute discussion challenge (groups) followed by quick share  
*Ex: Is graffiti from the past vandalism or art?*  
*Ex: Who is telling the story of Casa Grande? Are you represented?*



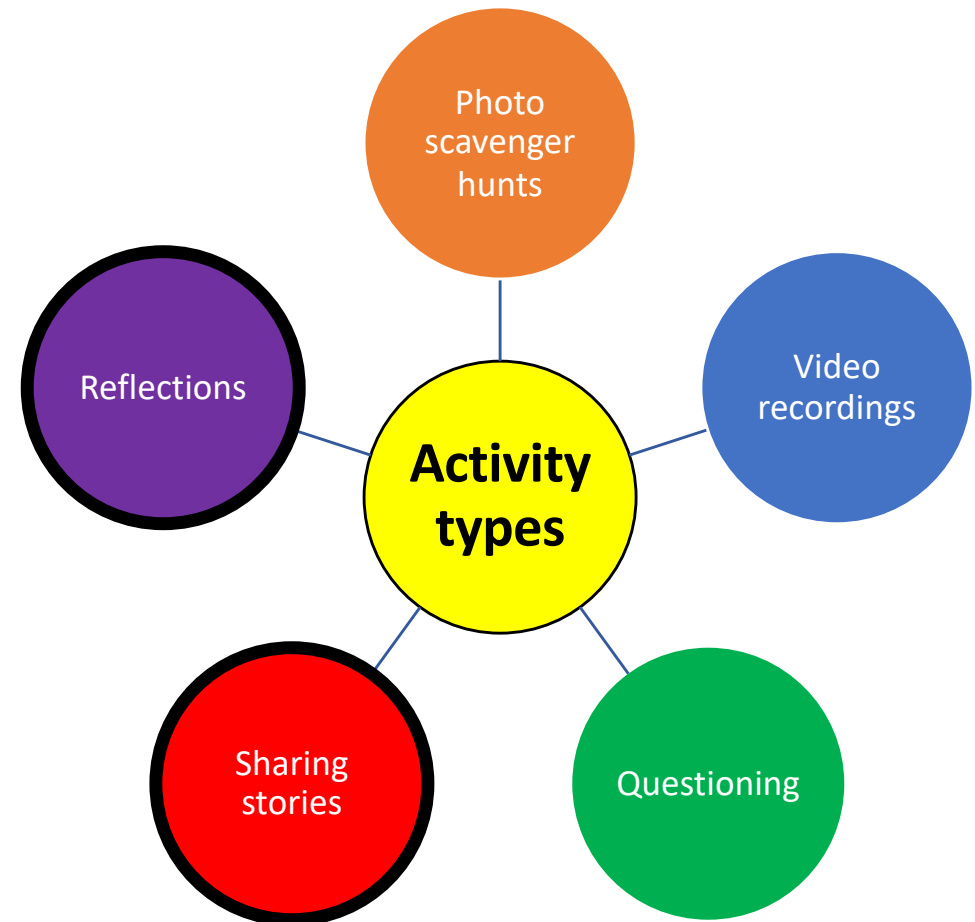
# #3 - Scaffolded Learning/Inquiry Activities

## Reflections

- Cactus – flower, thorn, bud
- Favorite thing you (heard/saw/experienced) + 5-10 word why?
- K-W-L (part 1: what do you know, what do you want to know, & part 2: what have you learned)
- Think-Pair-Share

## Story Sharing by education team

- Tied to identity – family, heritage, history  
*Ex: Sara – I am of mixed heritage – etc.*
- Tied to understanding of topic  
(archaeology, culture, socioeconomic lens)  
*Ex: Sara – Archaeology revealed my indigenous history missing from my history books!*



# Emerging Insights from the Conversations/Dialogues

## Exploring Cultural Heritage Identity:

Students sharing about their own unknown understanding about *their heritage* -- Because their families do not talk about it. Because they do not learn it in school.

## Identifying Community/Family Practices:

Students identifying connections as they see themselves as having some *similarities* in areas such as ceremonies, gatherings, celebrations, religion, hunting, food, home, language, and value of family togetherness.

## Connecting to Personal/Individual Interests:

Students seeing their own interests in areas such as *fashion* evolution, *music* instruments they use, role of *medicine*/health (blankets as disease carriers during European contact), value of *animals* (bioarchaeology), and *migration* stories to Tucson/Arizona (*some old; some recent*).

## Observing Technology and Sophistication of Ancestral Peoples:

Students observing how *advanced* the irrigation, architecture, and agricultural practices were of desert inhabitants of the past. Impressed by their innovation and the creativity of ancestors as smart and innovative *survivors*.





# Next Steps: Evaluation

## Research Experience for Undergraduate project

- Review all participant videos (75+) and conduct qualitative analysis of content.
- Interview select participants and hosts about the program.
- Compile strategies to share for underrepresented audience participation at parks, museums, cultural centers



# Thank YOU

Sara Chavarria, Ph.D. – College of Education,  
University of Arizona

[spchavar@email.arizona.edu](mailto:spchavar@email.arizona.edu)

Barbara Mills, Ph.D. – School of Anthropology,  
University of Arizona

[bmills@email.arizona.edu](mailto:bmills@email.arizona.edu)

Stanley Bond, Ph.D. – NPS Chief Archaeologist,  
Washington, D.C.

[stanley\\_c\\_bond@nps.gov](mailto:stanley_c_bond@nps.gov)

Corey Knox, Ph.D. – College of Education,  
University of Arizona

[cknox@email.arizona.edu](mailto:cknox@email.arizona.edu)

