In the following pages I hope you enjoy reading about the accomplishments and discoveries made by Anthropology’s faculty, staff and students featured in this issue of Anthropology at Tennessee. Before reading ahead, however, I’d like to share with you some very exciting details about our imminent move to a brand new building on campus!

As most of you know, the Department of Anthropology has been located in Neyland Stadium since the early 1970s. Two years ago, the Tennessee General Assembly approved capital funding for a new building on the current site of the decommissioned Sophronia Strong dormitory, located on the northwest corner of Cumberland and 16th Avenue. This new science building will house not only our department but will be the home for Earth & Planetary Sciences (EPS), and the teaching laboratories for Biology and Chemistry. A very aggressive timetable has been set for our move with completion of design this academic year, groundbreaking next Fall, construction over the following two years, with our move-in slated for Fall 2016.

Because of the historic significance of the original Strong Hall (whose doors opened to its first 50 female residents in the Fall of 1925), several options were considered regarding its fate. One was to retain the original structure and build around it, while another was to raze it completely. The UT Administration ultimately decided on a “hybrid” plan in which approximately 20 feet of the east end of the original Strong Hall will be retained as the northeast entry façade to the new building. In addition, key arches and lintels from the current building will be retained as an homage to the heritage of Strong Hall. The “gardener’s cottage” on the northeast corner of the site will be preserved and re-purposed (equipment storage and even a lecture hall are options being considered). Finally, an archaeological dig in between the cottage and the new building near White Avenue may become a permanent outdoor teaching laboratory. (continued on p. 2)
**Head Hello**

(continued from p. 1)

The new building will be “state-of-the-art” with plenty of natural light, a large and airy first-floor “commons” and many “un-programmed” spaces intended to foster spontaneous student (and faculty) learning and collaboration. Two large lecture halls initially slated to be incorporated into the building are now planned to be built adjacent to the structure’s southeast corner. They will be stacked one on the other, rising to the level of the second floor. The planners are considering an accessible rooftop garden above the lecture halls, something I think all of the building’s occupants would gladly welcome!

A lot of green space between the building and 16th Avenue is planned as well as maintaining most of the mature, beautiful trees that grace the site along its southern and eastern borders. The designers are also working to make the new building and site a pedestrian thoroughfare and destination that will serve as an entrance from the Fort Sanders neighborhood to the north into the Cumberland Strip and the campus to the south.

The current thinking is that the Biology and Chemistry teaching labs will occupy the second and third floors. Anthropology will share the fourth floor with Chemistry and teaching labs will occupy the second and third floors. The planners are considering an accessible rooftop garden above the lecture halls, something I think all of the building’s occupants would gladly welcome!

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**PH.D. ACADEMIC PLACEMENTS 2005-PRESENT**

- Faberson, Tanya. 2005; Principal Investigator, Cultural Resources Analysts, Inc., Lexington, KY.
- Hargrove, Melissa. 2005; Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of Northern Florida.
- Tersigni, Mariateresa. 2005; Forensic Anthropologist, Central Identification Laboratory, Joint POW-MIA Accounting Command (HI).
- Spradley, Martha K. 2006; Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Texas State University.
- Sylvester, Adam. 2006; Assistant Professor, School of Life Sciences, University of Glasgow.
- King, Kathryn. 2007; Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of Arkansas, Little Rock.
- Berg, Gregory. 2008; Forensic Anthropology Lab Manager, Central Identification Laboratory, Joint POW-MIA Accounting Command (HI).
- DíGangi, Elizabeth. 2008; Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Binghamton University.
- Moore, Megan. 2008; Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Eastern Michigan University.
- Viehe, Katherine. 2008; Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Clemson University.
- Godde, Kanya. 2009; Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of La Verne (CA).
- Shirley, Natalie R. 2009; Assistant Professor of Anatomy, Lincoln Memorial University, DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine.
- Damann, Franklin. 2010; Consultant in Forensic Anthropology and Genetics at United Nations Development Program Committee on Missing Persons in the Americas.
- Haser, Michaela. 2010; Research Archaeologist and Cultural Resource Manager, TSA.
- Algee-Hewitt, Bridget. 2011; Research Scientist, Stanford University.
- Pyszka, Kimberly. 2012; Assistant Professor, Auburn University Montgomery.
- Breen, Eleanor. 2012; Deputy Director of Archaeology, Department of Historic Preservation & Collections, M.E. Vernon.
- Kelso, Rebecca. 2013; Assistant Professor, West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine.
- Yankovsky, Shelly. 2013; Visiting Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Valdosta State University (GA).

**Department Accolades**

Professor Dawnie Steadman was elected as a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (November 2011).

Doctoral student Thad Bissett was awarded a Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant from the National Science Foundation in support of his project “Investigating the origins of the Shell Mound Archipel: Occupational histories and interaction among shell-bearing sites in western Tennessee” (December 2011).

Professor Michael H. Logan was named Quest Scholar of the Week for the publication of his article “American Indians with African Ancestry. Differential Fertility and the Complexities of Social Identity” in the December 2011 issue of Human Ecology (Jan. 9, 2012).

Assistant Professor Bertin M. Louis, Jr. was named a 2012 Leadership Fellow by the American Anthropological Association (AAA) and received the AAA Leadership Mentoring Award (May 2012).

Associate Head David G. Anderson was named Quest Scholar of the Week in recognition of his grant proposal being accepted and funded by the National Science Foundation (Aug. 3, 2012).

Doctoral candidate Jaymelee Kim and doctoral student Amanda Reineke were published in the American Anthropological Association’s Anthropology News. Their article, “The Whole is Greater than the Sum of Its Parts,” highlights UT’s Disasters, Displacement and Human Rights program (April 2013).

Doctoral candidate Jaymelee Kim received a Dissertation Fieldwork Grant from the Werner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, and a National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant (April, July 2013).

Distinguished professor and president emeritus of the UT system Jan Simek was elected as a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science for his contribution to the field of prehistoric archaeology (September 2013).

Doctoral candidate Christina Fojas received a Dissertation Fieldwork Grant from the Werner-Gren Foundation in support of her project “Modeling Prehistoric Health in Middle Tennessee: Mississippian Populations on the Threshold of Depopulation” (October 2013).

**Faculty Books**


**Share your news with us!**

The Department of Anthropology wants to hear from you! Please update your contact information and submit alumni news at http://valsconnect.com.
This February, Dr. Giovanna Vidoli joined the Forensic Anthropology Center (FAC) as an assistant director and assistant research professor. With an academic background planted firmly in anthropology, Vidoli’s interests mirror her experience in identification of missing individuals, mass fatality incident management, and improving and validating methods used in forensic anthropology.

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND.**

I worked between each degree and by the time I started my doctorate in 2006 (SUNY-Binghamton University), I had worked as an archaeological field technician for various cultural resource management firms around the country; volunteered with the Forensic Anthropology Foundation of Guatemala with the excavation and analysis of skeletal remains of genocide victims from that country’s Civil War; worked with the excavation and analysis of skeletal remains of victims of a plane crash, and I plan to expand my bioarchaeological research to other regions in Tennessee.

**WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH INITIATIVES AT THE FAC?**

My hope is that initiatives continue to be innovative, collaborative, and applicable to current world situations. I would also like to focus on more inter-departmental collaborations. Dr. Mundorff has really demonstrated that inter-agency research can be very exciting with her mass graves project that was highlighted in the News Sentinel in April. I would like to include more cutting-edge technology in the detection, recording, and documenting of graves, as well as expanding the technology used in the analysis of skeletal remains in order to increase the capabilities of forensic archaeology and anthropology within legal and humanitarian contexts.

**WHAT LED YOU TO UT?**

The year and a half prior to joining the FAC, I was a co-instructor with UT alumna Dr. Elizabeth DiGangi for short courses in forensic archaeology and osteology in Bogota, Colombia, through the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program. The work in Bogota brought together my interest in human rights work and conducting a mass grave archaeological excavation and the analysis of skeletal remains. The experience of teaching combined with my past work and research experiences in archaeology and forensic anthropology were a natural progression to working with the FAC. Plus, I already had a relationship with Knoxville. My dissertation research focused on the Middle Cumberland Region in Tennessee, and much of the data was collected at the University’s Archaeological Research Laboratory.

**Dr. Giovanna Vidoli**

Dr. Giovanna Vidoli joined the Forensic Anthropology Center (FAC) as an assistant director and assistant research professor.
Joint professorship established with leading national lab

In 2012, the Department partnered with Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Oak Ridge, Tenn., to offer joint faculty appointments. The open appointments allow for unique collaboration between ORNL scientists and Anthropology faculty and students.

Dr. Chris Boehnen
Research and Development Staff Member, Program Manager

Interests: Biometrics, computer vision, child, age estimation, pornography detection and grave detection.

Dr. Devin White
Senior Research Scientist and Team Lead for Scalable and High Performance Geocomputation

Interests: Quantitative social science, data fusion, data visualization, UDAR and SAR.

Education
Ph.D. Computer Science and Engineering, University of Notre Dame
M.S. Computer Science and Engineering, University of Notre Dame
B.S. Computer Engineering, University of Notre Dame

WHAT PROJECTS ARE YOU PURSUING?

There are a few. First, a study on the impact on biometric recognition, such as fingerprint or iris recognition, of decomposing bodies. Second, we’re working on trying to get a site set up at ORNL to assist in the mass graves study. Additionally, I am looking into how facial structure and images vary, and how that impacts face recognition and age estimation.

WHY COLLABORATE WITH UT?

As a researcher, I find that having an academic tie is something that I enjoy and find beneficial to both my university and non-university research efforts. The Department of Anthropology, in particular, is important because it provides a tie in with the FAC and is best suited to answering some of the fundamental questions in biometrics, my primary research field.

Dr. Bertin M. Louis, Jr.

Louis announces books

“...I returned to Nassau in 2012 for further research as a core faculty member of UT’s Disasters, Displacement and Human Rights Program.

“I wanted to move away from the church to see how other Bahamians of Haitian descent articulate disenfranchisement,” says Louis.

Since returning, Louis has been working on two books stemming from his research. Louis submitted a manuscript to New York University Press this summer on the topic of Haitian Protestantism. The edited volume is based on a double panel in which he participated with the American Anthropological Association in San Jose, Calif.

His second book addresses transnational statelessness.

“Hopefully my research will contribute to breaking down negative stereotypes of Haitians in the Bahamas,” says Louis. *KB*

Education
Ph.D. Anthropology, University of Colorado
M.A. Anthropology, University of Colorado
B.A. Anthropology and History, University of California, Berkeley

Interests:
- Geocomputation
- Visualization, LIDAR and SAR.

Education
Ph.D. Computer Science and Engineering, University of Notre Dame
M.A. Computer Science and Engineering, University of Notre Dame
B.S. Computer Engineering, University of Notre Dame

WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON?

My primary project is focused on the remote detection of mass gravesites, which is an effort led by Assistant Professor Amy Mundorff and doctoral student Katie Corcoran. Professor David Anderson and doctoral student Thad Bischof recently talked me into working with them on a project that is looking at the impact of sea level rise on state formation and past/future global population distribution. Last but not least, I have been working this summer with graduate student Jamie Haverkamp (Geography) on a climate-induced migration project that is of interest to the Disasters, Displacement and Human Rights Program.

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DO YOU HAVE AT UT?

It provides a way for me to stay academically grounded and connected to anthropology while also exposing faculty and students to the applied research and development environment of the lab. Both organizations benefit greatly from this type of intense interaction. Second, it’s a way for me to bring my professional experience in domains like remote sensing, GIS, and software development to the department in the form of lectures and classes. Third, it opens up some interesting funding and publication options that aren’t normally available to both parties.

Dr. Bridget Algee-Hewitt

Algee-Hewitt named first Haslam Postdoc Fellow

Dr. Bridget Algee-Hewitt completed a two-year appointment as the first Haslam Postdoctoral Fellow this fall. Made possible by the generosity of the Jimmy and Dee Haslam family, the fellowship provides an ambitious scholar the opportunity to conduct research with resources made available through the Department of Anthropology, primarily the Anthropological Research Facility and the Bass donated skeletal collection.

“I feel very passionately about the Bass collection,” says Algee-Hewitt, who first came to UT in 2005 as a doctoral student in biological anthropology.

Algee-Hewitt worked closely with the Bass collection when she returned as a Haslam Fellow in 2011. She conducted a genotype-phenotype analysis to test the correspondence between genetically defined ancestry, skeletal traits, and personally-reported or culturally ascribed identity.

In September, Algee-Hewitt accepted a position in the Rosenberg research lab at Stanford University.

“I’m excited to use the Bass collection in collaboration with Stanford,” says Algee-Hewitt, who will focus on computational problems in evolutionary biology and human genetics.

“...I submitted a manuscript to New York University Press this summer on the topic of Haitian Protestantism. The edited volume is based on a double panel in which he participated with the American Anthropological Association in San Jose, Calif.

His second book addresses transnational statelessness.

“...Hopefully my research will contribute to breaking down negative stereotypes of Haitians in the Bahamas,” says Louis. *KB*

The Department of Anthropology in conjunction with the Forensic Anthropology Center invites applications for the Haslam Postdoctoral Fellowship Program. Appointment can be as early as January 2014 for a two-year term with the possibility of renewal for a third year. For more information and to apply, visit http://fac.utk.edu/haslam.html.

Facultty Focus

Dr. Bertin M. Louis, Jr.

Antropology at Tennessee

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“...Hopefully my research will contribute to breaking down negative stereotypes of Haitians in the Bahamas,” says Louis. *KB*
Big Data: Anderson builds national archaeological database

In September 2012, Associate Head David G. Anderson received $141,000 from the National Science Foundation towards his research project “Developing the Cyberinfrastructure for a National Archaeological Site Database.”

The two-year project aims to integrate archaeological electronic data files across multiple states into a unified and open digital index. From there, state, federal, and international researchers can generate maps, tables and analyses for primary research, higher education and public research.

“It could very well be the best $141,000 that NSF ever spends,” writes one NSF reviewer.

Anderson’s team includes world-class scholars from the Alexandria Archive Institute, Indiana University South Bend, and University of California, Berkeley, including recent White House Champion of Change awardee Eric Kansa.

“They’re all brilliant—and half my age,” says he of his colleagues. However, the extra years Anderson brings to the table only helps to solidify the project’s foundation.

Fifteen years ago, Anderson conducted a similar project that brought together site file managers from across the southeast to produce maps with primitive GIS technology.

“Then I’m turning it over to the younger generation,” says Anderson, giving a nod to his research team. “I’ve told them this is going to be their life’s work.”

A veteran of the National Park Service, Anderson joined the Department in 2004 after doing archaeological work for 30 years in the Southeast.

He recalls running an excavation at Shiloh Indian Mounds National Historic Landmark when he received the offer from the University.

“If I had known this would’ve been such a great job I would’ve signed the letter right away,” he says. “I’m just thrilled to be here.”

“I’ve actually driven to two states to pick up the data,” laughs Anderson.

Thus far, data has been successfully integrated from eight states with the help of Josh Wells, assistant professor of anthropology, who joined the Department in 2006 after working at UT’s Department of Anthropology’s Laboratory for Archaeological Resource Management. Wells and his team have been working to release the sensitive records of data transmission, storage, and use, and what Anderson describes as overall remarkable cooperation from officials in some 18 states, some offices reluctant to send the information over the Internet.

“A lot of brilliant people are associated with the project,” says Anderson.

The subject again from a less regional perspective: he’s targeting Eastern North America.

“The time is right,” says Anderson. “If we can pull this off, it will serve as a model for future data integration projects. It’s a way to build a research tool for the future.”

With over 1 million archeological sites in North America, integrating the data—let alone gaining access to it—is a complex task.

Anderson says the biggest challenge is getting State Historic Preservation Offices and allied federal and tribal agencies to release the sensitive records on prehistoric and historic sites.

Despite using high level encrypted protocols for data transmission, storage, and use, and what Anderson describes as overall remarkable cooperation from officials in some 18 states, some offices hesitant to send the information over the Internet.

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Thus far, data has been successfully integrated from eight states with the help of Josh Wells, assistant professor at Indiana University South Bend and Stephen Verka, an archaeologist with UT’s Department of Anthropology’s Archaeological Research Laboratory and one of the project Co-PIs.

While the goal is ultimately to integrate data from all 49 states in North America, the project’s immediate goal is to link data from 15-20 states (over half million archaeological sites) within the next year.

“I’m looking forward to the science of it and what we can learn about past human use of the continent,” says Anderson, mentioning links to climate change and political geography.

A workshop is slated for early 2014 in Knoxville to discuss site file management and the project’s progress, with all project participants invited.

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Heath nears end of archaeological study on slavery

Dr. Barbara J. Heath, left, and her new book, “Jefferson’s Poplar Forest.”

This December, Associate Professor Barbara J. Heath concludes a three-year study of the development of slavery in the Virginia piedmont funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Heath’s research pinpoints a single enslaved community inherited by Thomas Jefferson in 1774.

“I wanted to take the story back in time and look at how and why the community developed,” says Heath.

Between 1730 and 1780 a core of families, part of a group of 135 enslaved individuals that Jefferson inherited, lived at Indian Camp in modern-day Powhatan County. After Jefferson inherited them, he moved them west to the Wingos and North Hill quarters at Poplar Forest, his plantation in Bedford County.

“Being at the University allows you to ask questions and go wherever you want with them,” says Heath, who joined the Department in 2006 after working at Poplar Forest as director of archaeology and landscapes.

Heath’s questions have led her down a path of historical archaeology of eastern North America, colonialism and the African diaspora.

Over the past three years, she has spent time between Virginia’s Blue Ridge Mountains and Tidewater region comparing artifacts from excavated households and yards.

In the process, she contributed to and edited the 2012 edited volume “Jefferson’s Poplar Forest: Unearthing a Virginia Plantation.” Her research traces the slave community’s material culture, family formation and economic activity.

This summer, 13 students from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Middle Tennessee State University, and Virginia Commonwealth University joined Heath for a five-week field school at Indian Camp in Ballsville, Va.

Students learned the fundamentals of fieldwork, screening, distinguishing soil changes, and recording information.

Graduate students Crystal Ptecek, Hope Smith and Meagan Demnison attended, and junior Kathryn Gard collaborated with the team thanks to an undergraduate summer research award from the Office of Research.

The most exciting discovery of the summer was evidence of two unknown buildings, followed by two additional activity areas. The team also uncovered upwards of 4,000 artifacts that will be washed, cataloged and analyzed by Heath with the assistance of UT students before being stored in the Virginia state repository.

Thinking back to her recent book, Heath muses, “There’s room for volume two now.”

Heath’s additional projects:

With assistance from graduate student Brad Hatch, Heath is working on a grant through St. Mary’s College of Maryland involving the collection of artifacts from English settlements in Northern Virginia: “Colonial Encounters: The Lower Potomac River Valley at Contact 1500-1720 AD.”

Heath is collaborating as an academic partner with “The DAAEC Consortium,” a two-year project launched by Monticello and funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Heath and graduate student Hope Smith will contribute data from archaeological collections to the Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery (daacs.org) to advance the study of slavery in North America and the Caribbean.
W

den doctoral student Thad Bissett says that he’s an archaeologist, people often ask if he travels to Egypt. “Nobody thinks of what’s under the ground here,” says Bissett. “Tennessee has unbelievable archaeology. It’s just that everything is buried.”

In Bissett’s case, he faces an additional obstacle in his research: the archaeological sites of interest are submerged beneath Kentucky Lake in western Tennessee.

Tom Lewis and Madeline Kneberg Lewis, founders of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, excavated the sites in the 1950s and early ’40s as the Tennessee Valley Authority built the Kentucky Dam. The dam eventually flooded the Tennessee River Valley.

Thousands of artifacts from the excavation—stone projectile points, cane dolls, bone and stone tools, and skeletal remains of past inhabitants—are housed in the University’s McClung Museum along with detailed records of where the artifacts came from in the multi-layered occupation, pre-8,000 years ago. Right: Artifacts from the later occupation, post-8,000 years ago.

“Scores of archaeologists go on site and look at dates, total number of artifacts, and composition of the shell mound, but have accumulated,” says Bissett. “But you don’t just bury your dead in trash.”

Perplexed, Bissett set out to determine how old the shell middens were and how long they took for them to build up. One way to look at it is that if the mounds go up in 10-50 years they’re probably being built. If they go up in 1,000 years they’re not created as a burial mound but have accumulated,” says Bissett.

In December 2011, Bissett was awarded a highly competitive Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant from the National Science Foundation to help answer these questions. “Considering that all those sites are now under water and long term submergence has the tendency to destroy archaeological sites, there’s no way to learn about this stuff other than figuring out how to look at it in the museum,” says Bissett, who stumbled upon the collection as a graduate assistant in the McClung Museum.

The NSF funding provided for 48 radiocarbon dates to be taken from seven sites in western Tennessee. By choosing samples that were relatively uninteresting, like small fragments of deer antler, Bissett was able to dramatically increase the amount of information about the sites without destroying the unique cultural artifacts in the McClung.

“I have 6,000 years of history covered in seven sites from 9,000-2,500 years ago,” says Bissett. “The oldest date is about 1,000 years older than we previously thought. That makes the site that date came from, the Eva site, one of the oldest shell middens in the eastern United States.”

The radiocarbon dates also revealed that the mounds took between 600-1,000 years to form, rejecting the idea that the mounds were built intentionally. Bissett says the information will interest other archaeologists as they work to reconstruct the history of the region.

Associate Head David G. Anderson, Bissett’s graduate advisor agrees: “That’s doing fabulous work. His dissertation has the potential to be a classic.”

Artifacts from Eva, an Archaic shell mound in Benton County, Tenn. Pictured left: Various bone, antler, and chipped-stone tools from the early phase of the site’s occupation, pre-8,000 years ago.

Student Spotlight

From Trash to Ceremony:

Doctoral student tracks down dates of Archaic burial mounds in Tennessee

I

n April, the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research awarded the prestigious and highly competitive Dissertation Fieldwork Grant to doctoral candidate Jaymee Kim. Kim says the honor was especially meaningful—and in more than one way. “It isn’t all about the money,” says Kim, who received $13,406 in funding. “Mostly it was the idea that someone removed from all the craziness of graduate school thought my research was relevant and important to the field.”

Kim’s doctoral research explores the transitional justice framework being used to address human rights violations that occurred in Canada’s Indian Residential Schools beginning in 1876. The violations, ranging from abuse and forced assimilation, to death and burial, were directed towards seven generations of Native children who attended the schools, which operated until 1996.

Kim says her interest in the topic ultimately stems from her upbringing in an abusive household. “I started reading about forensic anthropology because I wanted to help people who suffer abuses and violence,” she says.

As an honors student at Rochester Institute for Technology, Kim independently pursued topics like criminal psychology and violent offenders while earning a bachelor’s in packaging science. “I believe interdisciplinary work and knowledge give more depth to your research,” she says.

Preliminary fieldwork took her to Canada in the summers of 2011 and 2012, with the latter funded by the UT W.K. McClure Scholarship for the Study of World Affairs. “I believe interdisciplinary work and knowledge give more depth to your research,” she says.

Outside of the Department, Kim has a master’s thesis, deeply rooted in biological anthropology, examined establishing sex in juvenile victims. Its completion gave Kim pause to reconsider her specialization within the field.

“Young, I’m helping those who didn’t survive but I wanted to help those who did,” she recalls. “Then I finally started feeling that things were coming full circle.” Being part Native herself, Kim settled on the Indian Residential School Era and began to for an intra- and inter-disciplinary approach to her doctoral work.

“I want to ask cultural questions that inform forensic anthropologists,” said Kim, who self-identifies as a bio-cultural anthropologist. “We can do forensics better by asking these questions.”

Questions like: What is the sociopolitical context? Is forensic analysis desired? Why? By whom? Who is requesting excavation and commemoration?

Outside of the Department, Kim has taken an international human rights law course in the College of Law, and she is working towards a graduate certificate in linguistics through the College of Arts and Science. “I believe interdisciplinary work and knowledge give more depth to your research,” she says.

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In December, the Wenner-Gren Foundation and through the National Science Foundation’s Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant, Kim is in Canada June through December.

She is gathering ethnographic data in the form of interviews, observation, and participant observations across Vancouver, British Columbia, and the lower mainland. Her focus is on the similarities and differences in goals, and perceptions of transitional justice efficacy. Her hope is to contribute to the anthropological dialogue about justice and reconciliation.

“A big theme that I’m finding is that you can’t treat residential school abuses alone in a bubble,” says Kim. “Even though the Indian Residential Schools are viewed in scholarship as a historical issue, the schools didn’t close until 1996. There are still current rights-related issues on the ground.”

In addition to an unfolding relationship between past and present human rights grievances, Kim has also noticed an increased number of researchers cropping up in the field. “I’m falling over graduate students here,” says Kim, who remembers running into one student last summer. “This research is drawing attention, and it’s good on several accounts—the more the merrier to cover the issues and it’s good to know that people care.”

Student Spotlight

Doctoral student forges path for interdisciplinary research

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