The fall semester seems to have flown by, perhaps sped on by all the research activity and recognition these past few months. It’s common to have faculty and graduate students in the midst of a flurry of accomplishment, and this term we are delighted to note much highly regarded undergraduate achievement, too.

First, I’d like to join the department in congratulating faculty member Dr. Elizabeth Reitz on her being elected a 2012 Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science; the Association recognizes her many contributions to the field of zooarchaeology.

Though already a familiar face in the department, Dr. Jennifer Birch begins this spring semester as our newest faculty member. Her team’s discovery of a 16th century archaeological site called Mantle has fascinated a curious public and scholarly types alike. Bracketing the fall semester, both a popular documentary film and a scholarly book exploring the history, ecology and social implications of the Mantle site were released within six months.

For the first time, our department was represented at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association by a panel of anthropology undergraduates presenting original research.

The enthusiastic response by attendees of the AAA CURO panel (see photo, above) is but one testament to the vitality of undergraduate research. This semester anthropology major Allie Brown, with ongoing support by Dr. Laura German, has won a UGA Sustainability Grant, and Katie Partrick, a junior working closely with Dr. Laurie Reitsema, is a winner of the Joshua Laerm Award; Katie’s non-human primate research will use techniques at the vanguard of scientific exploration of behavioral factors in all primates.

Department members and new graduate students were well-represented at the annual meeting of the Southeastern Archaeological Conference, where a UGA Anthropology lineage of alumni at other institutions seemed omnipresent, too.

Scholars and scientists from 12 state universities and government organizations attended a recent workshop here introducing information management tools that will further strengthen the Long-Term Ecological Research Network’s decades-long impact upon landscape research.

Best wishes for a fun and productive spring term—
Allie Brown, a senior anthropology major, has been awarded UGA Sustainability Grant funding ($3,900) to implement her proposal, “Assessing UGA’s Current and Future Energy Infrastructure.” Dr. Laura German encouraged Allie to apply for the grant. Dr German and Allie “worked together on creating the research topic and proposal to submit to the Office of Sustainability. During this process, I created the research team, asking two other professors and students to join,” says Allie. The other two students involved are Jesse Toller, an engineering major, and Tyler Faby, who studies finance. Three professors support and assist the students throughout the projects. In addition to Dr. German, who serves as faculty for both anthropology and the Ph.D. program in integrative conservation, Dr. Thomas Lawrence in the College of Engineering and Dr. Richard Watson in the Department of Management Information Systems within Terry College are involved in the project.

It is her songwriting, though, that set her on the path to Nashville (where she now lives), and writing that connects her present career with her anthropology major. As she told the Huffington Post, “I like writing. And anthropology is so inspiring and it’s mostly researching and writing and I really enjoy that.” In 2011 she won the prestigious Chris Austin Songwriting Competition sponsored by MerleFest, an honor previously awarded Gillian Welch and Tift Merritt. It was then she allowed to herself, “Well, maybe I can write a good song.”

The album Have You Met Lera Lynn? is on local record label Slow Records. Her own site features news, interviews and free music downloads; visit lerallynn.com.

Lera’s June appearance on NPR’s “Mountain Stage”: www.npr.org/2012/06/12/154860270/lera-lynn-on-mountain-stage

Allie Brown helms a UGA Sustainability Grant team

Photograph by Steven Landry

Plenty of anthropology majors end up well travelled. Not so many travel with guitars and a backing band, touring behind a critically acclaimed first album. Lera Lynn, a 2008 graduate, is still on the move. In performances nationwide and on the airwaves, she and her band steer their indie Americana music through loud twang-flecked electric stomps into country melodies and stark ballads, while Lera’s rich vocals and stunning presence center the proceedings. Just this fall she made her second appearance on NPR’s A Prairie Home Companion in the midst of a set of shows that introduced her to such disparate audiences as roots music lovers in the U.K. and the uninhibited crowds at the Austin City Limits Music Festival, where she appeared by invitation.

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“Anthropology is so inspiring”— Lera Lynn observes life in song

Visit us for events and information at anthropology.uga.edu
A decade in the making: Jennifer Birch’s research now book, film

Dr. Jennifer Birch and her Canadian colleagues’ work excavating and interpreting a vast 16th-century Iroquoian community site, from ground survey to extraordinary revelations, has fascinated both lay audiences and archaeologists. It’s been shared widely by a powerful documentary and now by a significant scholarly work, co-authored by Dr. Birch and Dr. Ronald F. Williamson. Both movie and book have appeared within the past six months. An incredibly complex and vast Huron-Wendat settlement on the north-central shore of Lake Ontario, the Mantle site and the information it yields have changed long-held understandings of relationships among the Iroquois and Huron nations prior to European contact.

The documentary by Yap Films aired on the History Channel in Canada and attracted intense media interest. (Dr. Birch was interviewed by several national news outlets in both Canada and the U.S.; see link below.) The film foregrounds archaeological research in action. We follow the team of archaeologists and researchers assembled by Ontario’s Archaeological Services, Inc. (ASI). ASI is the largest archaeological consulting firm in Ontario; its chief archaeologist and managing partner is Dr. Ron Williamson. A property management firm contracted ASI to conduct the salvage excavation of the Mantle site. While a student, Jennifer Birch worked as a field tech during summers. “In 2003, my crew conducted the first survey of the site,” says Dr. Birch. “We immediately knew it was going to be a pretty big deal.”

In the documentary, the excitement of the researchers is evident as the mysteries of the site broaden, revealing both the sheer scope of its inhabitants’ economic enterprises and the unsuspected regional identities of those living among the wooden longhouses over generations. The scientists’ wonder culminates in the discovery of a piece of wrought iron—part of an axe—hidden at the site nearly 100 years before European contact with that region. A barely visible mark on the iron leads the trail to contemporary Spain, and a stunning theory as to how the iron ended up at the Mantle site. But why call the film *The Curse of the Axe*? Luc Lainé is a representative of the Huron Wendat Nation in Ontario; its chief archaeologist and managing partner is Dr. Ron Williamson. A property management firm contracted ASI to conduct the salvage excavation of the Mantle site. While a student, Jennifer Birch worked as a field tech during summers. “In 2003, my crew conducted the first survey of the site,” says Dr. Birch. “We immediately knew it was going to be a pretty big deal.”

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The documentary also features well-founded reenactments of communal life behind the triple palisades as well as of unexpected relationships and trade alliances emerging between often fiercely opposed contemporaries. Watching Mantle’s thriving society, it’s difficult to imagine its demise. In their headline about its discovery, the Huffington Post used “Ancient ‘New York City’ of Canada” to describe the Mantle site. In terms of the sheer acreage needed to support its inhabitants (1,500 - 2,000 people occupying a series of built and rebuilt longhouses over time), that headline is hardly hyperbolic.

The area used for agricultural fields alone is larger than present day Toronto. It is likely that the unsustainability of the enterprises needed to feed, clothe, and fortify the inhabitants against attack led to the abandonment of the site after a few generations, as the soils became less fertile and the forests and small game were depleted. The remains lay unknown for centuries because the primary building material, wood, did not leave immediately perceptible evidence.

The scholarly work, *The Mantle Site: An Archaeological History of an Ancestral Wendat Community* is co-authored by Dr. Birch and her chief collaborator, Dr. Ron Williamson of ASI. “When I started my Ph.D. in 2006 I expressed an interest in understanding the relationships between Iroquoian communities and how they changed over time. Ron offered me the Mantle site data as a case study and I spent the next few years sorting out the occupational history of the site, its development over time, and its regional context—all of which led to my dissertation, the book and then the film. It was a case of asking the right question in the right place at the right time.”

Dr. Williamson describes the new information yielded by the Mantle site as “a game changer in every way,” and the book has been eagerly anticipated by archaeologists. Faculty member and Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science Stephen Kowalewski explains the book’s importance:

The Iroquoian nations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had been vastly different just a few generations earlier. They changed profoundly—before European contact. Only archaeology can find this earlier and deeper history. In *The Mantle Site*, Birch and Williamson reconstruct how Iroquoian people came together, invented, and put into practice new kinds of social communities, new political orders, new ways of making a living, and new customs. So much for the notion of timeless tradition and peoples with no history. The Mantle Site is far more than a splendid study of one village. [T]his history is not just an Iroquoian story, because how people create new ways of coming together as political communities has something to say to us all.

To see a trailer of the documentary *The Curse of the Axe* (in which Dr. Birch appears) visit Yap Films at yapfilms.com/what-we-do/history-archaeology/

Dr. Birch gives a television interview and displays stunning artifacts from the Mantle site: globaltoronto.com/video/discovering+an+ancient+village/video.html

![](image)
Publications and Presentations

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS AND BOOK CHAPTERS


JOURNAL ARTICLES


**Garrison, Ervan G.**, Greg McFall, Alexander Cherkinsky, and Scott E. Noakes. 2012. Discovery of a Pleistocene mysticete whale, Georgia Bight (USA). *Palaeontology Electronica* Article number 15.3.31A.


Publications and Presentations

JOURNAL ARTICLES


Kowalewski, Stephen A. In press. Two metaphors and a myth. *Social Evolution & History* 11(2):64-67. [Comment on an article by Robert Carneiro]


WORKING PAPERS


PRESENTATIONS


Publications and Presentations


The department now offers two summer field schools. The inland school will cover two sites, Raccoon Ridge and Singer-Moye, and another site is on Sapelo Island. Visit http://anthropology.uga.edu/programs/field_school/for details.
The Anthropology Society wanted to celebrate Halloween. Perhaps biological anthropologist Dr. Laurie Reitsema and society president Evan Conaway might have settled for candy and costumes. It was not to be. A murder mystery was thrust upon them, hence upon those students gathered in Baldwin on the night of October 30. Just the day before, Dr. Reitsema and Evan had meandered through the Old Athens Cemetery on their way to Baldwin and were stopped and importuned by a female ghost who directed their attention to four wrapped skeletons under a broken crypt. One of the skeletons had been the ghost’s own, before her murder. Her death had been quick and painless, with no trauma involved. Typically, this belle wanted only to lie among the worthies in her Savannah family plot. Once back home, her soul would be at peace. When the bundled remains were unwrapped in Baldwin for forensic examination by Dr. Reitsema and the intrigued students, a tattered ink-penned note appeared amongst the wrappings. Another victim asked for help from beyond the grave. He’d been shot. He was desperate. He hadn’t meant to hurt anyone. The other two skeletons? Could they be macabre distractions from what transpired one deadly evening?

Thus goes the set up for the first Anthropology Society “Murder Mystery Halloween Potluck.” The event flyers themselves were gems of Western cognitive dissonance. “Come learn how to ID trauma and sex for human remains…Bring festive food!” (Showing great fortitude in the midst of tragedy, the members were able to both eat and solve grisly causes of death.)

The cemetery is next to our building, but how did this saga come to Baldwin? Dr. Laurie Reitsema shares some thoughts. “Skeletons are everywhere around Halloween and have a wide variety of meanings, depending on who you are. Somewhere between the camps of ‘flippant’ and ‘disturbing’, but distinct from both, lies the scientific study of skeletons, and Halloween is a great way to lure both camps to osteology, bioarchaeology and forensic anthropology. I just wanted to take people’s heightened interest in skeletons and turn it into a teaching moment. Although skeletons are everywhere around Halloween, the human body is everywhere, ALL the time.”

While interest in attractive flesh is perennial, Dr. Reitsema looked for a different angle on the body itself. Thus Halloween. All ghosts want their bones to be laid to rest. However, mixed-up bones do not guarantee eternal peace, but more vexed ghosts, especially if they’re already cranky about how they were dispatched from this life. There’s nothing like a murder mystery to bring attention to human remains. “We have a great osteology teaching collection in the department and this was a perfect opportunity to put the material to use, while free-riding on everyone’s seasonal enthusiasm for skeletons.”

“Students who know what they’re looking at are suddenly struck by human anatomy and human variation in a new way. Once students have some tools in their tool boxes permitting them to better understand human anatomy/osteology, they can easily develop a lifelong passion for it. A short activity like this can be a great way to increase scientific literacy for life, particularly concerning evolution (the unifying principal of biology, after all). Some osteological tools really aren’t that hard-earned, relative to the rewards, and require only some brief instruction—of course coupled with hands-on experiences.”

Evan Conaway came up with an elaborate back-story of murder and revenge to further heighten the society members’ interest in determining biological sex of the skeletons using pelvic and cranial anatomy, and identifying trauma (in the case of our particular collection, gun-shot trauma) to match skeletons to the appropriate ghost. “They were totally into it!” Dr. Reitsema gleefully observed. Her brief tutorial got the society members up to speed on ascertaining male or female characteristics of skeletal remains and then further osteological identifications.

“Students were really observant and picked up on a lot of those nuanced little clues that skeletons give. In addition to learning some skills about identification they went above and beyond and grasped how dynamic the skeleton really is, which has huge implications for how scientists use it to study activity, health and evolution. Overall, I was really impressed with their adeptness,” says Dr. Reitsema.

The evening of clues and conjectures sparked the students to solve together the mystery of two polite ghosts and their “extra” skeleton. Before the society members adjourned for the evening (none tons. Before the society members adjourned for the evening (none choosing the graveyard route), Evan tied together the strands of the event. The incurious may stop reading now.

A third party poisoned the female victim. That person escaped with flesh and garments still on his or her bones. The male victim who’d written the hard-luck story stole jewelry from the expiring lady. She shot him with her last breath. (Well, she actually used a gun, but that’s how mystery tropes work.) The ungalant poisoner buried their bones with decoys from the cemetery to further obscure the escape. Let the fugitive know that the dauntless members of the Anthropology Society, and Dr. Reitsema still await, armed with science.
**Elizabeth Reitz now Fellow of premier science organization**

Dr. Elizabeth Reitz has been named a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, an honor bestowed upon her by the association for “scientifically or socially distinguished efforts to advance science or its applications.” Dr. Reitz was recognized for pioneering research in the study of past diet and foodways, and for fundamental contributions to the development of zooarchaeology.

“I’m deeply moved by this unexpected honor and profoundly grateful to the many colleagues who contributed to this research. I’ve been fortunate to collaborate with many good colleagues. In particular, I think of those who have worked in the Zooarchaeology Lab. I’ve appreciated the opportunity to work with them over the years and look forward to many more interesting projects,” says Dr. Reitz regarding her recognition by the association.

The AAAS is the world’s largest general scientific society, and also publishes the journal *Science*. AAAS was founded in 1848; the tradition of AAAS Fellows began in 1874. The non-profit AAAS is open to all and fulfills its mission to “advance science and serve society” through initiatives in science policy, international programs, and science education. The organization will officially welcome Dr. Reitz as a Fellow on February 16 during the 2013 AAAS Annual Meeting in Boston, Mass.

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**Asher Rosinger wins Hudson Excellence in Teaching Award**

Even while earning a Master’s in Public Health, despite stints of field work, Asher Rosinger has racked up a lot of teaching hours—some of those in the Amazon. Asher, a bio-cultural anthropologist, has won the 2012 Charles Hudson Excellence in Teaching Award. His earning this distinction puts him forward as the department’s nominee for the Center for Teaching and Learning’s graduate assistant awards.

Asher says his “goal is to teach students about human variation across time and space [and] to impart a holistic understanding of the world around them.” He explains that gaining this world view enriches students beyond a semester in the classroom. “An anthropological perspective is valuable because it teaches students to think in a non-judgemental way that empowers them to tap into their own experiences and beliefs.”

He was nominated by his major professor, Dr. Susan Tanner. Asher is currently writing his dissertation on his research exploring how dietary water consumption affects body composition, hydration status, and risk of gastrointestinal disease in Lowland Bolivia.

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**Media-savvy double-major earns chance to affect his field**

“It’s like the Pulitzers for T.V. and radio.” Charles Hicks sums up the importance of the Peabody Awards, the most prestigious honor in television and radio. Charles, an anthropology major also majoring in journalism and mass communications, is one of just 30 student judges who help select the nominated programming. The competitive selection process includes on-the-spot review writing.

Thirty university reviewing committees, each comprised of a student and two faculty members from throughout the university, consider around 40 broadcast segments each and submit recommendations to the Peabody Board of Directors who determine the nominees.

The world’s oldest prize in electronic media is administered by the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communications. Though one might not associate Athens with such glamor, the road to picking up an award statuette in New York City begins in Athens.

“I am thrilled to have this chance because the exposure to a wide array of media professionals will help me develop a sharper eye when it comes to critiquing bodies of work,” says Charles. Peabody student judges have an opportunity to participate in the May 2013 awards ceremony. “I am really excited about the possibility of getting to meet some of my favorite media personalities.” Charles has promised to provide the department with photos of his tuxedo-clad evening, perhaps in the company of one of his role models.
The simple premise behind the complex LTER Network is that changes in ecosystems, whether driven by climate, human activity or natural events, can be best understood by careful observation and research over long stretches—decades or more—of time. The UGA anthropology department is a significant contributor to the National Science Foundation’s LTER Network. The anthropology department’s Sustainable Human Ecosystems Laboratory, or SHEL, hosted a workshop for the information management community of the LTER Network Nov. 27-30. SHEL serves as the Coweeta LTER’s information management office. The Coweeta LTER is based in the eastern deciduous forest of the southern Appalachian Mountains and is one of the oldest continuous environmental studies in North America. The lab is co-directed by John Chamblee, Coweeta LTER information manager and adjunct assistant professor of anthropology, and Ted Gragson, head of the anthropology department and Coweeta LTER lead principal investigator.

The workshop trained information and data managers from 11 universities and federal agencies in the use of advanced data management and synthesis software designed and built by UGA’s Wade Sheldon, information manager for the Georgia Coastal Ecosystem (GCE) LTER and scientific computing professional principal in the marine sciences department.

As the volume and diversity of ecological data grows, scientific discovery demands ecological scientists and anthropologists develop common tools to solve common problems so data, as well as published literature, can be used to frame and envision next-generation research. Sheldon’s tools, called the Data Toolbox for MATLAB, provide a critical step in meeting the need for a common set of tools and the hands-on workshop enhanced the tools’ usefulness to each LTER site by providing attendees not only with an introductory framework, but also a considerable amount of unstructured time in which managers could interact with software and its developer while using their own data and solving their own problems.

Funded by the National Science Foundation, the LTER Network consists of a multi-disciplinary group of more than 2,000 scientists and graduate students working from 25 sites throughout the continental U.S., Puerto Rico, French Polynesia, Alaska and Antarctica. Each site conducts long-term, place-based research on integrated human and natural systems, and sites frequently collaborate to produce continental scale research on socio-ecological systems.

The data management workshop was primarily funded through a contract received from the LTER Network Office using funds designated from American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009. Mathworks, the maker of MATLAB, also supported the workshop and its goals by providing consultation and short-term licensing support.

Wade Sheldon, University of Georgia, interacts with LTER affiliates as they explore the new Data Toolbox for MATLAB software. Sheldon developed Data Toolbox to standardize data formats throughout the LTER network so that they may be used efficiently in current and next-generation research.

Dominick Schneider, University of Colorado at Boulder (seated) and Hope Humphries, University of Colorado at Boulder, look on while Adam Sapp, University of Georgia, explores the new software at his work station.

Visit us for events and information at anthropology.uga.edu
Undergraduate sightings at major conferences are often limited to a few poster displays and the occasional paper. A panel presentation on the national level is a noteworthy event. At this year’s American Anthropological Conference (AAA) annual meeting, four stellar anthropology undergraduate students who worked last spring under the mentorship of Dr. Virginia Nazarea presented their research papers in a group panel titled “Roots in Transition: Transnationalism and Practices of Memory.” Terese Gagnon, Aida Curtis, Christopher Miller and Brian Walter conducted their research within the UGA Center for Undergraduate Research Opportunities (CURO) program that creates opportunities for undergraduates to engage in faculty-mentored research.

Each of the four students—Aida, Christopher and Brian graduated spring 2012—as well as Dr. Nazarea, worked on separate but related research projects, all centered around the themes of transnationalism, sense of place, and food identity. The panel’s presentations explored themes of diaspora from Persia, Asia, and Latin America. The papers presented were

**Dr. Virginia Nazarea:** Border Crossings and Conservation: Towards an Out of Place Sense of Place

**Aida Curtis:** Altars and Thresholds: Significance of Now-Rooz for the Persian Immigrant Community

**Terese Virginia Gagnon:** Landscapes of the Interior: Ethnobotany and Senses of Place Among Karen Refugees

**Christopher William Miller:** Marketing Identity: the Place of Business and Business of Place in Mexican Food

**Brian M. Walter:** Finding a Solid Place on Transitory Ground: Transnational Identification in a New Class of Hispanic Immigrants

The AAA meeting was held in San Francisco from November 14 - 18. “The presentation went absolutely wonderfully.” Terese also describes the group panel as “coming together in a beautiful way that exceeded all of our expectations.” The audience discussions and questions were lively, and several attendees requested copies of the papers presented. Audience members were also eager to participate in a tactile Persian New Year’s tradition shared by Aida, so as they exchanged comments with the presenters they also tied “wish knots” into wheatgrass strands to embody their hopes for the year to come.*

The panel proved an engaging and eye-opening experience to those on both sides of the dais, including attendees from Canada and Latvia impressed with the CURO model and our undergrads.

*The Persian tradition calls for releasing the wheatgrass wishes into a body of flowing water, in accordance with the idea of movement and new life. Aida and Terese set the fleet of wishes into the bay, “then scampered away like we’d get in trouble.”

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**Bioanthropological research proposal wins Laerm funding**

Last year Katie Partrick discovered a love for biological anthropology and chose to pursue a minor in our department. This year Katie is a winner of the Georgia Natural History Museum’s Joshua Laerm Award, which supports studies in natural history. Anthropology faculty member Dr. Laurie Reitsema has been working with Katie in developing research ideas involving their mutual interest in non-human primates. Katie is interested in how non-human primate behavior and physiology may correlate with that of human primates. She’s gained experience with both: first through assisting with behavioral studies at the university’s primate lab, then by interning at Yerkes National Primate Research Center, where the research centers on the relation of hormones to behavior. Dr. Reitsema’s academic background includes extensive work with non-human primates, focusing on their diets and reproductive ecologies. Katie’s research proposal, submitted to the Laerm awards committee, investigates the influence on social status on weaning age in captive female rhesus macaques. Dr. Reitsema nominated Katie for the award itself and will continue to supervise her work.

Working with the rhesus macaque population at Yerkes, Katie will assay blood cortisol levels and examine stable isotope signatures in breast milk for evidence of diet-based stressors. She’ll conduct sample preparation for stable carbon and nitrogen isotope analysis at the Department of Anthropology Bioarchaeology and Biochemistry Laboratory.

The investigation into the nutritional consequences of social ranking in non-human primates forms Katie’s honors thesis for her interdisciplinary degree in Animal Ecology and Population Biology. The experience working with Dr. Reitsema on this research furthers Katie’s experience with non-human primates to include stable isotope data and reproductive ecology, areas she’ll continue to visit in graduate work in primate research.
Jonathan Penland, a Ph.D. candidate in anthropology, is now Dean of the School of Christian Ministries at Toccoa Falls College. The college’s vice president for academic affairs, Dr. Brian Shelton, said in announcing Dr. Penland’s promotion this fall, “Jon is a popular professor, a respected colleague, and a capable administrator. Such qualities are afforded to a good dean, and he will bring wisdom and enthusiasm to the oversight of our ministry programs.”

Jonathan is currently completing his second Ph.D. in the department; he holds a Ph.D. in Adult Education from UGA. Jonathan joined the Toccoa Falls College (TFC) faculty in 2000 after serving 13 years in the Dominican Republic as an instructor in the Leadership Development Program for the Dominican Alliance and director for Dominican Alliance Associates. While at TFC, he has assisted in the design and implementation of a major in Cross-Cultural Adult Education and a minor in Sustainable Development.

After completing his 2004 Ph.D. in adult education, Dr. Penland refined his research interests in the importance of institutions and process in the negotiation of conservation space. Once accepted into our program, he began environmental and conservation work with Professor Pete Brosius as his major professor, creating a focus centered on involving students in stewardship of the environment.

Jonathan Penland defends his anthropology dissertation, An Examination of Transformative Education in Environmentally Based Study Abroad, in early spring. TFC’s students’ experience, both on campus and abroad, will be greatly enhanced by Dr. Penland’s work in conservation education.

### Three recent Ph.D.s illustrate the department’s research scope

**Christine Beilt, Ph.D. Fall 2012**
*A Multi-scale Analysis of Collective Action and Sustainability in the Coastal Mangrove Fishery Commons in Ecuador*

**Dave Himmelfarb, Ph.D. Fall 2012**
*In the Aftermath of Displacement: A Political Ecology of Dispossession, Transformation, and Conflict on Mt. Elgon, Uganda*

**Dan Bigman, Ph.D. Summer 2012**
*An Early Mississippian Settlement History of Ocmulgee*

### A whale of a story resurfaces

Back in 2008, Dr. Ervan Garrison and his colleagues from within both UGA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) discovered and were able to fully extract a large fossilized Atlantic gray whale jaw bone from the rock that had encased the mandible for over 35,000 years. In 2009, when we first reported on the find, Dr. Garrison and his students (see photo, right), were involved in a joint UGA and Emory team that restored the bone for study and display. (A cast is at the Smithsonian.)

The Atlantic gray whale was fished to extinction by the 1700s, yet the Pacific gray whale has rebounded to pre-whaling levels. An article just released in *Paleontologia Electronica* discusses how current taxonomies may be recategorized using data yielded by the fossilized gray whale discovery. Its lead author is professor in both geology and anthropology Ervan Garrison, and he and his co-authors examine how this find might continue to inform whale conservation efforts today. Read the article at [http://palaeo-electronica.org/](http://palaeo-electronica.org/)