Welcome, to those of you who are just joining us in the department and at the university, and a warm welcome back to those of you re-enlisting for another semester.

This issue of our newsletter lets you know of recent awards and research funding for faculty and students alike. We also share some multi-faceted research that embraces our commitment to ecological and environmental anthropology. Assistant Professor Don Nelson is part of a collaborative effort to assess environmental degradation, while Pete Brosius, director of the Center for Integrative Conservation Research, and his team survey both social and production considerations of the emerging biofuel industry in the U.S. South. Resource inequity is addressed by cultural anthropologists Laura German and Don Nelson.

The archaeologists have been busy, too. This summer the department held two simultaneous archaeological field schools. This is a first. Victor Thompson led one on Sapelo Island, while Jennifer Birch led the Singer-Moye/Raccoon Ridge field school. Both saw other successes, as well. Thompson was able to pursue his National Geographic-funded research in Florida, while Birch saw the publication of a new edited volume of essays discussing coalescent societies. Included among the essay authors is the department’s Stephen Kowalewski.

Have a great semester,
Charles M. Hudson, Jr., Franklin Professor of Anthropology and History Emeritus, died on June 8, 2013. Hudson was the foremost authority on the history and culture of the Native American people in the Southeast, and a prolific author whose work produced profound revelations. These discoveries were grounded in painstakingly researched archaeological and historical records and supported by contemporary geography. The best known of these is his tracing, with Marvin T. Smith and Chester DePratter, the route of Hernando de Soto’s sixteenth century expedition across Georgia. Hudson’s account of this ragged trek in his definitive work, *Knights of Spain, Warriors of the Sun: Hernando de Soto and the South’s Ancient Chiefdoms*, illuminates the lasting influence of colonial Spain upon the region’s societies. Other titles shaping the understanding of the early peoples of the South include *The Forgotten Centuries: Indians and Europeans in the American South, 1521-1704*; *The Catawba Nation; Four Centuries of Southern Indians and Black Drink: A Native American Tea*. Hudson published sixteen books throughout his lifetime.

Upon receiving his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina in 1964 Hudson came to UGA, where he spent his entire academic career until retiring in 2000 and returning to his hometown of Frankfort, Kentucky. In 1994, Hudson was made a Josiah Meigs Distinguished Teaching Professor; the award is the university’s highest recognition of a faculty member’s commitment to the learning experience. So that the legacy of his scholarship should not overshadow his respect for the vital role of instruction, the UGA Department of Anthropology created the Charles Hudson Teaching Award. This yearly award commends excellence in teaching by a graduate student serving as a teaching assistant.

Professor Hudson is survived by Joyce, his wife of 45 years, his daughter and son, and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Vast museum donation also benefits zooarchaeology work

The Georgia Museum of Natural History houses and works collaboratively with the anthropology department’s Zooarchaeology Laboratory, which is directed by anthropology professor Elizabeth Reitz.

The museum, whose collection is often a resource for archaeology students, was already a nationally significant collection of animal and plant specimens. Museum director Bud Freeman estimates that some areas of the museum’s holdings have now tripled in size, thanks to a generous legacy.

The collection—comprising actual tons of specimens—had been that of Gwilym Jones, now-retired director of the Center for Vertebrate Studies at Northeastern University. The assistant curator of vertebrate collections at the UGA museum, Nikki Castleberry, had stayed in touch with a former Warnell School of Forestry student, who relayed the news that the Jones collection was available. Delivery began in May and continues throughout July.

Zooarchaeology is the study of faunal remains, including everything from bones and shells to DNA. The field interprets many of the questions about cultures that archaeologists now ask, such as a people’s diet, what technologies were developed to access food sources, and other uses for animal products. Environmental questions may be addressed from site remnants of fauna.

How will this expansion of the museum’s holdings impact zooarchaeology at UGA? Professor Reitz responds, “The donation to the Museum is a significant improvement to the Zooarchaeology Laboratory’s research because it contains several series of mammals and birds skeletons representing single species. The zooarchaeology collection is weak in birds, so the addition of the bird skeletons, in particular, is important. Not only do we now have access to age and sex series of mammals and birds, but many of the specimens have data such as capture locality and capture date, which makes them particularly valuable for research.”
Don Nelson research addresses inequity in Brazil and environmental stress

Don Nelson is involved in two vital projects. On the first, taking place in 2013, Nelson is Principal Investigator for a multi-institutional grant-funded project that addresses inequity in a region of Brazil: Projeto Voz de Todos (PROVOZ) is funded for $65,000 by the Ceará Foundation for Science and Technology Development (FUNCAP). This project represents a partnership with UGA, the Universidade Federal do Ceará and the University of Arizona.

PROVOZ is located in Fortaleza, Brazil, the capital of Ceará with 3.5 million people. The city is characterized by extreme inequity in the distribution of resources and access to public goods. Access to resources is largely based on individualized social relationships rather than a sense of rights and citizenship. This project will work to implement democratic practices for the allocation of public goods in underserved areas of the city. Methods, which include ethnography and participatory geographic information systems (GIS), among others, are designed to test the impact of participatory practices on the distribution of resources.

Nelson is Co-Principal Investigator on the second project, which will run from 2013-2018 and is called “Human and Natural Forcings of Critical Zone Dynamics and Evolution at the Calhoun Critical Zone Observatory (CZO)” (The observatory is in South Carolina.) Funded by the National Science Foundation for ~$4,900,000, this work is in partnership with UGA, Duke University, Georgia Tech, Mississippi State University, and Kansas University.

A Critical Zone (CZ) is a near-surface environment in which complex interactions involving rock, soil, water, air, and living organisms regulate the natural habitat and determine the availability of life-sustaining resources. This CZO seeks to understand how Earth’s Critical Zones, especially those that are ancient, deep, and highly weathered, respond to and recover from agricultural erosion and land degradation. It will explore legacies of historical changes in the Piedmont’s CZ and the continued interaction with human management, regional ecosystem services, and governance of these environments.

Alumnus part of organization that charts migrant deaths in Sonoran Desert

Each year hundreds of migrants die in the attempt to cross or recross into the United States from Mexico. In May, a joint effort began to try to reverse the grim numbers of unclaimed bodies found in the harsh expanse of desert along the Border Patrol’s Tucson sector. UGA alumnus (A.B. ’96) John Chamblee, who is also an adjunct assistant professor in the department, plays an integral part in this work.

Chamblee is the research chair for Humane Borders, Inc., a human rights organization in an ongoing multi-year partnership with the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner to create and maintain the Arizona OpenGIS Initiative for Missing and Deceased Migrants. (http://www.humaneborders.info/)

Although each organization operates with a distinct mission, both are committed to the common vision of raising awareness about migrant deaths and lessening the suffering of families by helping to provide closure through the identification of the deceased and the return of remains.

This website is a result of their common vision and partnership. Its purpose is to provide geographic information systems-based tools that use publicly available information to grant access to high quality, frequently updated, and downloadable spatial data regarding migrant deaths. Customizable search tools available through the menu options will allow any user to query data concerning migrant deaths, view the data using on-line maps and tables and download the data for further use. Thus far the database goes back to 2001.

As information manager of the NSF-funded Coweeta LTER (the lab is based in the anthropology department), Chamblee has the expertise, as well as the desire, to contribute.

Since the launch on May 6, the partnership has been profiled in newspapers including the New York Times and the Los Angeles Times. Most recently Newsweek magazine wrote about the project, as did Mother Jones magazine. Both English- and Spanish-language television stations have featured the website.
The National Geographic Society’s Committee for Research and Exploration has awarded $19,150 to archaeologist Victor Thompson, an assistant professor of anthropology, in support of his archaeological project “Mound Key: The capital of the Calusa kingdom.” Mound Key, situated in Estero Bay on Florida’s southwest coast, is an island built more than 2,000 years ago, up from shells, bone and other midden material to become an island of imposing height and great size. Such stature befits the capital of the Calusa kingdom. Thompson and other scholars believe this key to have been the site of Calos, the ceremonial center of a kingdom that extended over much of Florida and its small islands prior to devastation wrought following extended European contact in the 16th century.

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Specifically, Thompson says, this artifact recovery and research “seeks to understand if the tribute system and its concomitant political complexity were pre- or post-Spanish-contact phenomena,” as well as to compare their historical trajectory with those of agricultural groups inhabiting Florida’s interior. There is an engaging interview with Thompson, who traces his first interest in archaeology to UGA’s Mark Williams, on the National Geographic site. Find it at www.nationalgeographic.com/explorers/bios/victor-thompson.

Kristen’s research in Ecuador seeks to learn how indigenous peoples are able to access and negotiate support from transnational institutional and historical bodies supportive of alternative development strategies through the practice of ethnodevelopment, a self determined movement that emerged as a response to structural and place-based historical marginalization. Her previous research has been conducted with the Union of Peasant and Indigenous Organizations of Cotacachi, a labor institution that practices ethnodevelopment. Don Nelson is her major professor.

Doctoral candidate Kristin VanderMolen has received an Inter-American Foundation (IAF) Grassroots Development Fellowship. These dissertation research awards support field research in Latin America and the Caribbean for 2013-2014. The IAF selects Fellows on the strength of their academic record, their proposals and their potential contribution to grassroots development in the regions covered by IAF initiatives. Kristen’s project is “Making development meaningful: Understanding stakeholder interpretations of ethnodevelopment in Highland Ecuador.”

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The dig will provide information about the Mound Key site following the arrival of Spanish explorers in 1513, as non-local artifacts from before and after that contact are discovered and later analyzed. Thompson’s research will provide insight into how the tribute system and other political arrangements evolved among the Calusa.

Thompson’s collaborative research on other Calusa political centers provides a superb background from which to learn from Mound Key. Work began this summer, in research partially funded by the National Geographic grant, in conjunction with archaeologists and students from both UGA and the University of Florida. The immediate goal is to provide baseline archaeological information regarding the functioning of the Calusa capital during the early historic period. The team uses both excavation and geophysical surveying techniques. The Mound Key dig uses UGA’s ground penetrating radar and resistivity equipment. Ground-penetrating radar sends radio waves into the ground; when the waves hit buried materials, they bounce back to the surface, where an antenna records variations in the return signal. Resistivity is a similar process, except that electrical currents are sent into the ground.

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Both Wenner-Gren and National Science Foundation fund Rosinger research

Biological anthropologist and doctoral candidate Asher Rosinger has had his work analyzing shifting health amidst lifestyle changes in the Bolivian Amazon endorsed by two large funding agencies this spring. The Wenner-Gren Foundation has awarded him $19,990, and the National Science Foundation has recommended him for an award as well. The funding details from that organization are still being negotiated at this time. The title for the Wenner-Gren proposal is “Hydration Strategies, Nutrition, and Health During a Lifestyle Transition in the Bolivian Amazon.” The NSF title is similar. In both research proposals, Rosinger recognizes the social sciences truism: When populations undergo lifestyle transitions, health, disease patterns, and body composition are affected. Rosinger’s work makes a significant contribution in that it considers the effect of hydration strategies and their impact upon both nutrition and health of individuals in the midst of such transitions.

His proposed research addresses the rapid lifestyle changes that many Amazonian populations are experiencing as they are subject to increased exposure to and participation in market forces. These include wage labor, surplus production and both the sale and purchase of items. Some common explanations for negative health outcomes include alterations in caloric intake and expenditure and the increased susceptibility to infectious diseases that come with higher population density as workers move into market centers. However, how people meet the water needs in their diet may serve to balance their hydration, pathogen exposure and nutritional status, as well as play a role in their immune activation. It is these hydration strategies that Rosinger will examine among Tsimane’ Amerindians. As he assesses how market participation, human capital, income and cost affect variation in personal water consumption and its effects described above, he will use biological and anthropometric markers, as well as qualitative data including survey, informant and census methods.

The proposed study will make important contributions to three key literatures in anthropology: nutritional anthropology, human biology, and lifestyle transitions. In addition, Rosinger’s documenting how Tsimane’ meet water needs during rapid change will advance knowledge about human flexibility in a region without clean water and the results of his research will be broadly shared with the Tsimane’, as well as published in academic journals.

Results relating to water sources and GI infection will provide important direction for future health interventions. The search for safe water remains an important challenge in the 21st century as more than 1.1 billion people lack access to clean water. This work will inform water intake recommendations, which rely almost exclusively on data from the U.S. and Europe. Because water sources may expose people to pathogens but are also a potential source of energy, this research may help explain diarrheal prevalence and the recent pattern of over-nutrition in Amazonia with implications for the public health of millions in developing countries.

The primary investigator on both the Wenner-Gren and the NSF research projects is Rosinger’s major professor, Susan Tanner.

Chapman and Rosinger win significant teaching awards

Susannah Chapman has won the UGA Graduate School’s Excellence in Teaching Award. Only five graduate students throughout the university are accorded this honor.

Both Susannah Chapman and Asher Rosinger were selected for the Center for Teaching and Learning’s Graduate Student Teaching Award. This university-wide award recognizes excellence in teaching by a graduate student serving as a teaching assistant.

In addition, Asher Rosinger also received the department’s own Charles Hudson Teaching Award, which celebrates excellence in teaching by a graduate assistant.

Chapman’s major professor is Virginia Nazarea. Rosinger’s is Susan Tanner.
Smitha Ganeshan, a rising senior Honors student majoring in anthropology, is the only recipient from Georgia of the prestigious Harry S. Truman Scholarship. This award recognizes juniors with exceptional leadership potential who are committed to careers in public service. The scholarship foundation provides up to $30,000 in support for graduate education, while affording students leadership training and a community of likeminded scholars.

Smitha is already an agent for positive social change. A Foundation Fellow, she’s participated in the UGA chapter of the Roosevelt Institute since her freshman year and currently directs its health policy center and its environmental policy center.

“Roosevelt” is a national student-run think tank whose members collaborate with their peers and with faculty to identify and address social issues that can be ameliorated through public policy.

Smitha plans to pursue both an M.D. and a master in public policy degree, and is effective now in both healthcare and public policy initiatives both here and around the world. She volunteers at the Athens Nurses Clinic, has interned at the Athens Health Network and is a co-founder of the Lunchbox Garden Project, an afterschool nutrition education and obesity prevention program.

Beyond Athens, Smitha has interned at the Greater New York Hospital Association, studied at Oxford University through the UGA at Oxford program and interned at the World Health organization’s M.V. Hospital for Diabetes in Chennai, India. She has assisted a physician in Nigeria and worked at a mobile health clinic in Lima, Peru.

Her study of anthropology informs her perspective as she works toward realizing her goals for improved healthcare quality and access. She says, “Introduction to Medical Anthropology” with Dr. Jennifer Thompson was one of the most influential classes I have taken at the University of Georgia. The class introduced me to the growing field of medical anthropology and taught me to conceptualize health as psychosocial well-being as opposed to an absence of disease. As a physician policymaker, I will utilize the anthropological lens I have gained through my major to help sculpt a health system that is cost effective and delivers high quality mental and physical healthcare.”

Sub-Saharan “land grabs” eradicate livelihoods, shows study by German

A study recently published in the journal World Development by faculty member Laura German and co-authors examines the rapid expansion of large scale land acquisition in sub-Saharan Africa, as emerging economies seek fertile land and natural resources. The authors compared legislation and practice in four African countries (Ghana, Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania). Their case studies show that although legislative differences in protecting customary rights to land and regulating acquisition processes significantly affect the four countries, the results in practice were similar: a vast loss of customary land holdings. “We found that in most cases, meetings held to consult affected communities about the land acquisition and related investments were very poorly done, and people were losing their land and livelihoods often in the absence of any real benefits,” said German, in an interview with the Athens Banner-Herald. Yet a simple call for increased governmental oversight of land governance cannot challenge the many factors limiting legislative effectiveness, including the need for greater personal accountability within both community groups and agencies tasked with land protection.

In both types of organizations top-down authority structures and decision making can contribute to conflicts of interest leading to land right allocations —often permanent— that benefit only a few. Enhanced international awareness of the current disparities in land acquisition and leasing might mitigate the impact of far-ranging “land grabs.” However, the negotiating process between local communities and outside investors remains weak, and threatens further loss of livelihoods dependent upon the land. Observing myriad shortcomings in legal frameworks and common practice, the authors “presume that customary rights and rural livelihoods in the context of large-scale land acquisitions are equally or more vulnerable elsewhere.” Such implications for further depredation prompt consideration of alternatives to such investments.

German’s coauthors are George Schoneveld from Utrecht University in the Netherlands and Esther Mwangi from the Center for International Forestry Research in Bogar, Indonesia.
Publications and Presentations

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS AND BOOK CHAPTERS


JOURNAL ARTICLES


**Virginia Nazarea named 2013 - 2014 UGA Service-Learning Fellow**

Virginia Nazarea was named a 2013 - 2014 Service-Learning Fellow by UGA’s Office of Service Learning. The fellowship program includes a $2500 fellowship award. Twelve Fellows were selected for this academic year.

Nazarea will incorporate service learning into two of her courses, “Anthropology of Roots and Rooting,” and “Transnationalism and Practices of Memory,” to engage students in exploring anthropological concepts through work with community outreach organizations.

Service-learning is the application of academic skills and knowledge to address a community issue and to enhance student learning while integrating two core aspects of UGA’s mission—teaching and service.
In 1949 Arkansas jump-blues legend Louis Jordan sang “Beans and Cornbread.” This fall you might hear the song streaming out of Julie Velásquez Runk’s ANTH 3541 classroom to spark classroom discussion considering either the economics of southern foodways and their effects on obesity or whether certain beans and corn should be labeled as GMOs. Velásquez Runk’s proposal to enhance the already-popular “Anthropology of Eating” course has won a 2013 Summer Innovative Instruction Faculty Grant.

The grant provides $5,000 for leading-edge approaches to instruction. Among other aims, the award promotes exploration of new teaching techniques, integration of interactive technology and curriculum redesign of established courses. The proposal was selected, among others, from a competitive field by a cross-college review.

Velásquez Runk will “make [the course] more locally engaged and interactive,” by introducing key objectives whose overlap enriches the intellectual experience. She’ll integrate student-led deliberative discussions on the obesity epidemic and its causes and also the pros and cons of producing genetically modified organisms into the syllabus. Velásquez Runk chose these two topics to “highlight UGA’s multidisciplinary strengths and the research of its faculty.” Thus another key objective of hers, using team-based learning, becomes integral. Students who assemble into teams of four-to-six students will, through readings and thoughtful interaction, engage with the research of faculty members, and recognize “topics that are relevant to their everyday lives.” Campus faculty whose research is selected for study will be invited into the classroom to participate in talks with students. The team-based approach generates student exchanges that become even more fruitful during an encounter with a researcher from another discipline.

Sam Boring, who received his Masters of Arts degree in 2013 and was Velásquez Runk’s teaching assistant, is working with her guidance on some of these changes.

Throughout the term, Velásquez Runk will incorporate thematic audio and video clips and music into each lecture, with attention to how food issues are reported in the news media, and expose students to the region’s enjoyably rich tradition of music about food.

Now in its second year, the Innovative Instruction Faculty Grant is funded by the Office of the Vice President for Instruction, in collaboration with the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.

Department student worker—and major—ranked third in 2013 UGA award

Charles Hicks, in his second year as a department student worker, took third place in the 2013 UGA Student Worker of the Year competition. This year it drew 144 strong candidates from across campus. The achievement is more impressive in light that Charles maintained many extracurricular activities yet graduated summa cum laude this spring with a dual degree in public affairs journalism and anthropology. His supervisor, business manager LaBau Bryan, noted that “Charles wore many hats, including unofficial ambassador for the department as one of our majors.”

Including expressions of support from four faculty members, as well as from Department Head Ted Gragson, Bryan’s letter of nomination categorized Charles’ duties. Among them were department greeter, faculty assistant, filing streamliner and reception assistant. In addition, Bryan emphasized his flexibility and willingness to go out-and-about completing tasks, whether he was in jeans hauling outmoded items to surplus, or in Argyle running correspondence to the Dean’s office. “I wish we could clone him,” Bryan said at our end-of-term recognition gathering. She wasn’t joking.

See news, honors and awards as they occur at http://anthropology.uga.edu
Alumni move into university, college and non-profit positions

Christine Beitl (Ph.D. ’12) will join the faculty of the University of Maine as a tenure-track assistant professor this fall. The university was attracted by her research establishing frameworks for the study of sustainability, complex adaptive systems, and environmental governance.

Jessie Fly, (Ph.D., ‘12) joins the faculty of Eckerd College, a liberal arts school on the gulf coast of Florida, as the cultural anthropologist. She was hired specifically to bridge the anthropology and environmental studies programs. The school also has a very strong emphasis on international education. Most Januaries from now on will find Fly all over the world with Eckerd students.

Maria Ruth Martinez Rodriguez (Ph.D., ’09) has joined a non-governmental organization, Conservation International, as Manager of Climate Change Adapation in Farming Systems. Conservation International is a U.S.-based NGO that partners with governments on local, regional and national levels around the world to enlist nations in a common goal of preserving natural resources. The organization works from six bases around the globe, including North and Central America: Martinez Rodriguez will be based in Costa Rica and will travel often to Guatemala and Honduras.

Maureen Meyer (M.A. ’95) assumes a tenure-track position as Associate Professor at the University of Mississippi this fall, in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

Junior Faculty Research Grants awarded to three scholars

The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) has awarded $10,000 each to three anthropology faculty members researching the phases of remote civilizations. Victor Thompson, Laurie Reitsema and Jennifer Birch have received Junior Faculty Research Grants to promote significant research projects that are in their earlier stages. These awards support scholarship by early-career faculty by providing resources that permit these projects to mature into competitive proposals. These proposals can then gain further investment via external grant funding by private or government agencies.

Jennifer Birch’s successful proposal is called “Multi-scalar perspectives on the Late Woodland-Mississippian transition: Community organization and regional settlement distribution.” Her project will investigate the transition in sites across the state of Georgia. She hopes to yield a more nuanced understanding of how Mississippian cultural traits and institutions were adopted by or introduced to Late Woodland populations in specific local contexts.

Victor Thompson’s collaborative project, “Mound Key: The capital of the Calusa kingdom,” amplifies an aspect of his long-standing archaeological research on inhabitants of the southeastern U.S. coasts. The Calusa exercised power in the region for centuries, creating a strictly hierarchical society that constructed Florida’s imposing Mound Key from shells and other materials over 2,000 years ago.

Laurie Reitsema’s project, a continuation of work with colleagues from the University of Northern Colorado and the University of Tennessee, is titled “Colonizing the Mediterranean: Bioarchaeological evidence for human migration to ancient Greek colonies.” The OVPR grant will fund some of the skeletal strontium and oxygen isotope analyses that will reveal who is buried at ancient Greek colonies—Locals or non-locals.
Three doctoral candidates from the department have been selected to receive the prestigious UGA Graduate School’s Dissertation Completion Award. These competitive assistantships are awarded each year following a highly qualified student’s nomination by their major department or school. A faculty panel evaluates each nominee. Awarded to doctoral students in the final year of their study, these assistantships permit the student time to devote to their dissertation’s completion.

Ramenzoni considers herself a cognitive ecologist, who studies how cognitive skills are shaped by evolution and environments. Her work focuses upon decision-making skills in foraging behavior, with a special interest in fishing techniques and weather estimation. Her dissertation research was conducted among Endehnese fishermen in the Island of Flores, Indonesia.

Tilghman’s dissertation research investigates rural to urban migration in northeastern Madagascar. Her project explores the rural linkages that migrants maintain with kin in their villages of origin, asking two main questions: First, how do contemporary factors such as changing gender roles, entrenched urban poverty, the rising popularity of Pentecostal Christian faith groups, and market integration change the kinds of rural ties that migrants maintain, or the frequency and strength of these ties? Second, how essential are rural ties for the economic survival of migrants in a developing city that is characterized by high unemployment and lack of basic social support services?

Chapman’s dissertation research in the Gambia focuses on Mandinka farmers’ understandings and perceptions of the concepts embedded in intellectual property right law for plants as it is currently drafted under international law. In her research, she explores farmers’ own ideas of rights, ownership, benefits, value, innovation, and access to and exchange of plant resources and associated knowledge. Through her work she seeks to provide a more nuanced understanding of farmer management, perceptions, and meanings of biological resources and associated knowledge amidst the World Trade Organization’s expansion of intellectual property law.

Bram Tucker is both Ramenzoni’s and Tilghman’s major professor. Virginia Nazarea is Chapman’s major professor.

Center for Integrative Conservation Research studies attitudes to biofuels

Co-investigators Peter Brosius and Sarah Hitchner of the Center for Integrative Conservation Research and John Schelhas of the U.S. Forest Service are working together to gather opinion from local stakeholders as biofuel production soars in the Southeast. Listening to diverse perspectives may prove crucial to the adoption of biofuel use by both the public and industry. This two-year research project is funded by a $347,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which funds research projects on sustainable bioenergy through its Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI).

The project is titled “Social Acceptability of Bioenergy in the U.S. South,” and the three project co-directors will examine the social acceptability of bioenergy development in the U.S. South using a framework designed to integrate different perspectives and accommodations. Because of the multiple values at play across the Southern landscape, the research will analyze bioenergy development broadly, taking into account diverse values, governance processes, and equity concerns. An ethnographic approach allows the researchers to gain detailed and nuanced social data, as opposed to single-visit surveys or behavioral modeling techniques.

The project’s initial focus is within three communities where bioenergy facilities are currently operating, or will be, in Georgia and Mississippi. The researchers will also study other sites in Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana; these facilities use a range of different feedstocks and produce different energy products and co-products. Ascertainling local perceptions and beliefs around the issue of bioenergy development, as well as the socioeconomic dynamics of the communities in which bioenergy facilities are located, will help guide managers and policy makers by suggesting ways to negotiate mutually acceptable compromises regarding the production and use of biofuels.

Three earn UGA Graduate School’s Dissertation Completion Award
Sara Black, majoring in both anthropology and ecology, is a 2013 Udall Scholar. The Morris K. and Stewart L. Udall Foundation provides funding to students engaged in protecting our national heritage through their focus upon environmental and Native American issues. Black, from Birmingham, Alabama, will graduate in 2014. In just three years, she’s packed in considerable scholarship, activism and advocacy for human respect of environmental resources.

Black intends to work in the non-profit sector promoting either environmental awareness or food justice. She has held national leadership positions in prominent grassroots organizations, including the Real Food Challenge, the Greenhorns, the Sierra Club and the Sierra Student Coalition, where she currently works to coordinate trainings on grassroots organizing skills for young people. She is also a co-founder of Real Food UGA, a campus organization working with Food Services on sustainability initiatives.

Her thoughtfulness is evident as she relates why the study of anthropology is crucial to her development as an organizer who must choose among competing claims as to what course of action is just.

I think the anthropology department has, more than anything else, made me a more critical thinker. This sounds like a cliché until you think about how important critical thought is in environmentalism. Not just swallowing every conservation agenda, not being afraid to problematize the strategies of your colleagues, not being satisfied with the end of “sustainability” if the means involve disempowering local communities — this is what it takes to enter something like the non-profit advocacy sector and actually try to do some good. And I’m glad I get to try to wrap my brain around that in and out of class.

The self-awareness within modern anthropology is one of the most useful things for an organizer. Being able to identify your own assumptions, contexts, positions, and power within relationships between individuals and communities is paramount for an organizer hoping to contribute to bending that long arc towards justice. And building that frame for yourself starts with critical thinking, trying on lenses, reading, stepping outside yourself. That’s being an anthropology major in a nutshell.

As Sara Black enters her senior year we look forward to learning more about her integration of coursework and involvement in progressive environmental and social issues.
Department of Anthropology presents internal 2013 awards

Allie Brown, a senior anthropology major, was accorded the Head’s Award, whose winner is determined by Department Head Ted Gragson. In determining the award recipient among many worthy entries by stellar undergraduates, the quality that stood out in Brown’s work was her commitment to working toward a sustainable society, as exemplified by her work here now on campus, as head of a team awarded a UGA Campus Sustainability Grant. Allie’s faculty mentor was Laura German.

Three first-year graduate students have been selected to receive the 2013 Melissa Hague Field Study Award. Aaron Lenihan, Michael Lonneman, and Jonathan Hallemeier will be provided funding to conduct field work.

Lenihan’s research will examine the ways in which historical ecology shapes conservation in the context of a recently established biosphere reserve in eastern Uruguay. By both reconstructing the historical ecology of the region where the reserve is now located, and by learning how “knowledge of the past” may link local behavior and intentionality to complex human-ecosystem interactions in the future. Such knowledge would contribute to more effective sustainable development policy. Lenihan’s major professor is Don Nelson.

Lonneman will conduct predissertation research within agricultural communities in Cuba this summer, building relationships as he begins to explore how the distribution of socioeconomic inequalities and access to resources will likely affect livelihood outcomes. Cuba’s economic and environmental conditions are rapidly changing. This work is important to understand how current households’ adaptations as well as economic behavior, viewed through the relation of decision-making and risk, operate in a state experiencing simultaneous market integration, climate change, and a communist economic structure. Lonneman’s major professor is Bram Tucker.

Hallemeier will apply his award funding to explore how various stakeholders in novel participatory governance strategies experience and understand the social dynamics and power relations within their specific group. His fieldwork in Morocco will focus on a particular participatory adaptation or resource management project, in conjunction with those involved. Hallemeier’s major professor is Don Nelson.

The Melissa Hague Award is endowed by her parents.

The Brian Daniel Gumbert Memorial Fund for Archaeological Undergraduate Research provides funding for either students pursuing individual field research or joining the UGA Field Schools in Archaeology. This year there are four winners, two from each field school site. The awards for participants of the Singer-Moye/Raccoon Ridge field school went to Abi Rowe and Travis Jones. Chris Destiche and Isabelle Cantin of the Sapelo Island field school were awarded the Brian Gumbert funding for their participation there.

The Robert E. Rhoades Pre-Dissertation Travel Award allows second-year students to develop or determine future dissertation field sites, as per the wishes of its namesake, the late Distinguished Research Professor Robert Rhoades. The 2013 awards go to Deborah Sadler and Jennifer DeMoss.

Sadler’s research evaluates complex factors affecting human migration patterns in possible response to conditions worsened by climate change. Her field research site is the Brazilian state of Ceará. She will spend the summer in seven different-sized towns there, representing a range of different climatic zones and economic development. Despite a record drought in the region in 2012, locals note that fewer people seemed to leave the area than in the past. Sadler’s work will consider what adaptations or coping methods may mitigate the effects of drought, as she explores the relationship between environmental change, socioeconomic changes and migration patterns. The Rhoades Award enables her to develop contacts and logistics early in her program. Sadler’s major professor is Don Nelson.

DeMoss is investigating the claim that personal engagement through guided experiences with local environments translates into awareness and environmental advocacy in everyday life. The environmental social movement seeks to remedy people’s disconnect from nature; leaders of the nature connection movement (NCM) have designed methods to facilitate interaction between people and natural environments. The Pine Project, in Toronto, Canada, is an NCM where Jennifer will do participant observation in May. Her dissertation research examines NCM values, and whether program participants internalize them. The Rhoades-funded work this summer will allow Jennifer to assess whether the Pine Project is a suitable urban field site for future research. DeMoss’s major professor is Julie Velásquez Runk.
Student documentary highlights threatened coastal culture

It is easy to decry perceived injustice, but less common to actively advocate against it. Anthropology major Terese Gagnon (A.B. 2013) and her collaborator, Kati Braswell, a telecommunications major who also graduated this spring, learned of one such situation and created a documentary, *Hog Hammock*, to highlight the issue. Using funding provided by the UGA President’s Venture Fund, Gagnon and Braswell produced a documentary presenting a potential crisis facing the Hog Hammock residents on Sapelo Island.

These people, who self-identify as saltwater Geechees, are the largest community of Gullah Geechee in the southeast. These coastal groups of slave descendants have been present for over two hundred years and have created a culture that is bonded by a creole language and is centered on their relationship to their land: a dotted path of settlements traced from North Carolina to Florida. These communities became the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor, designated by an act of Congress, in 2006. Unfortunately, this status does not protect Hog Hammock from cultural erasure by a dramatic tax reassessment on their land.

Gagnon and Braswell’s 23-minute film details a crucial turning point in the enduring history of Sapelo Island’s Geechee. Bound together by many generations of kinship upon the island, their community is slated to be taxed out of existence. McIntosh County plans to raise taxes ten-fold upon residents of Hog Hammock—who receive few if any municipal resources—up to the levels paid by resorts and expensive seasonal homes upon Georgia’s Sea Islands. Should this happen, residents say they will have to leave the area behind, losing their distinct culture to both time and distance as they scatter to more affordable sites on the mainland. Interviews with residents note that there is historical precedent for displacement in favor of tourism elsewhere. The saltwater Geechees of Sapelo were themselves moved to the marshes when R.J. Reynolds acquired their original holdings. At the film’s end, the audience is invited to contact McIntosh County officials to propose alternate solutions for the people of Hog Hammock.

Interest in the documentary continues to grow since its March debut. An April screening as part of the Atlantic Archipelagos Research Project 2013 State of the Art Conference at the university’s Willson Center was followed by showings at the Moore Center and local Athens art house theater Ciné. “Hog Hammock” was also included in the film showings at AthFest, the town’s art and music festival, as part of a program showcasing independent movies made by Athens area filmmakers.

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Increased awareness of the impending fallout from the taxation measures seem to have paid off: a new McIntosh county tax assessment, taking into account the unique character of the history-rich population, is currently being prepared. Cornelia Bailey is a local historian interviewed in the film. Regarding the reassessment she says, “We’re keeping our fingers—and toes—crossed!” While the result won’t be known for months, Gagnon and Braswell are pleased to have played a part in prompting attention to the threatened loss of cultural coherence among Sapelo Island’s saltwater Geechee.

See the *Hog Hammock* documentary on YouTube by doing a search for the film name and “UGA.” Gagnon and Braswell’s “Georgia for Hog Hammock” Facebook page is at facebook.com/UGAHogHammock.