

Blair Katherine Betik

Jane C. Waldbaum Scholarship Recipient Report

18 August 2017

I completed a five week field school with both IFR Global and the Mohegan Tribe in Uncasville, Connecticut, under the instruction of Dr. Craig N. Cipolla of the Royal Ontario Museum. Also instructing were Dr. Cipolla's field assistant Kelly Ferguson, Mohegan Tribal Historic Preservation Officer James Quinn, Mohegan Deputy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Elaine Thomas, Mohegan THPO staff member Jay Levy, and technician Renee Petruzelli. The field school ran from June 22 to July 28, 2017.

The practical training I received during this five week period on the Mohegan Reservation was rigorous, mainly due to the soils of New England and their high rock content. Pedestrian survey was conducted, shovel test pits were dug, and excavation was performed. I was also trained in total station mapping.

The site we excavated was an 18th century site on Mohegan land, a site that had previously uncovered the corner foundations of a cellar or storage building. We continued the work that had been conducted in at previous year of the field school, opening up units to find the other corners of the foundation.

The field school also included laboratory, lecture, and discussion elements. In the laboratory, we were exposed to FLOT techniques, ceramic identification, mean ceramic dating, pipe stem dating, and soil color and texture identification. Our lectures were conducted by Dr. Craig N. Cipolla as well as members of the Mohegan Council of Elders, and focused on postcolonialism, Mohegan history and culture, and Native American archaeology. Discussions were centered around particular readings, including writings by Sonya Atalay and Stephen Silliman, and primarily discussed the methodologies we were participating in, and how to decolonize archaeology and create an ethical and academic indigenous archaeology that serves Native American peoples.

The program was an excellent opportunity to examine archaeological practices and theories, and how to have a critical eye to the ethical threats such practices and theories can pose to indigenous populations. The program, which garnered credit through UCLA, had program fees of \$3,100, including room and board. The \$1,000 from the Archaeological Institute of America's Jane C. Waldbaum Scholarship went towards those fees.



Myself in the bottom of the cellar, excavating downward, where I found an 18th century horseshoe fragment, pictured here.



Field school participants with instructors Dr. Craig N. Cipolla and Jay Levy in the 18th century cellar moments before back-filling.



Above the site, where students are opening up units around the previously opened cellar unit in the bottom of the photo. Tribal Historic Preservation Officer James Quinn is pictured at the center of the photo, supervising.