

Raymond Hunter  
Jane C. Waldbaum Scholarship Report

Thanks in part to the financial assistance provided through the Jane C. Waldbaum scholarship I had the eye opening opportunity to attend the PIARA Archaeological Field School in the village of Hualcayán, in the Highland Ancash region of Peru. This field school, directed by Rebecca Bria and Felipe Livora, provided me with the valuable opportunity to gain first hand archaeological experience in the Andean region.

The environment in Hualcayán was conducive to intensive study and enabled me to learn an incredible amount in a relatively short period of time. In the six weeks of the field school I developed knowledge on a variety of different archaeological field practices, as well osteological analysis, textile analysis, ceramic analysis and GIS applications in archaeology.

The extensive excavations in Hualcayán provided me with the opportunity to apply the archaeological knowledge I gained in a variety of different frameworks. I was involved in the excavation of ritual sites in use from the Late Formative Andean period to the Late Horizon period. In addition, I was involved in the excavation of one of the numerous tombs discovered in the area. Significant quantities of ceramic, textile, lithic, and human and animal bone artifacts were recovered during my time at the Hualcayán field school.

At Hualcayán, in addition to excavation techniques I was taught how to set up excavation units, use total station technology to develop context maps, draw archaeological profiles while in the field. The amount of information I garnered over the course of my time in Hualcayán is remarkable. By the end of the experience I was confident in my ability to collect and catalog artifacts and mapping data necessary for the exploration of the project.

As well as providing ample opportunity to learn in an archaeological context my time in Hualcayán was unique as I lived for an extensive period of time in a traditional Andean agricultural community. I learned a remarkable amount about the culture of the Peruvian region in which we were living and developed a lasting appreciation for that society. The opportunity to integrate with such a community is rare, and I remain grateful for it.