

The Archaeological Institute of America's Jane C. Waldbaum Scholarship provided me with opportunities that would have otherwise been out of reach. The generosity of this scholarship provided me with numerous possibilities as a student. I was able to attend the Poggio Civitate Archaeological Field School in Vescovado di Murlo, Siena, Italy, thanks to the funding I received from the Waldbaum Scholarship and the AIA. I was able to cover a portion of my travel and tuition costs with the money granted to me.

Field school can be very expensive, but the money from this scholarship gave me the chance to take the required steps towards my future career by getting practical experience in a variety of archaeology-related disciplines. The Poggio Civitate Archaeological Field School's season-long investigation focused on the non-elite and domestic lives of the former inhabitants of Poggio Civitate, the Etruscans. Excavations were conducted in the Early Early Phase Orientalizing Complex Building 4 (also known as EPOCH, a palazzo from the late 8th century BCE), the OC2 (Workshop) area, two spaces referred to as Civitate A and Civitate B (which have been proposed as non-elite areas of habitation). Excavations attempted to better illustrate the social organization of the Etruscan community, as well as explore the relationship between the remains of monumental structures and domestic/ non-elite portions of the population.

Second-year or graduate students, a team of qualified archaeologists, and field school professionals assisted with the excavations. In fields including conservation, documentation, and trench surveying, I had the opportunity to collaborate with experienced archaeologists. As a building block for my future career path, taking part in this project has helped me to improve and strengthen my skills in cataloging, conserving, and field work techniques. I was able to learn pick axing and pick passing, sifting, hand sifting, and brushing within the EPOCH trench, as well as learning about meticulous record keeping, storage methods, and data entry for bulk and special finds with the head conservator. The largest portion of my time was spent in the laboratory (called the Magazzino), where I was able to learn how to properly clean, wet and dry brush, swab, adhere, consolidate, assemble and disassemble, and fill artifacts, special finds, and bulk finds such as non-diagnostic bone, pottery, ceramics, and slag. I was also given the opportunity to work closely with the site databases and catalogs in investigating a particular type of ceramic spool (textile tool) found at Poggio Civitate, called rochetti.

In my free time, I was able to further explore the Commune of Murlo and other cities in Tuscany, making trips to Florence and Siena, as well as experiencing the annual Palio di Siena horse race. Without the funds offered to me by the Waldbaum Scholarship, I would never have been able to gain hands-on foundational knowledge in fieldwork, conservation, and research that are necessary for my future, or had the opportunity to build the relationships that I have with my teachers, peers, and the community of Vescovado di Murlo. I am unbelievably grateful for the funds and opportunities presented to me with the aid of this scholarship, and I will carry the experiences I gained at Poggio Civitate with me for the rest of my life.



(Vescovado di Murlo town sign on the walk to the Magazzino)



(A collection of special finds saved in a the Magazzino)