

Final Report – Jane C. Waldbaum Archaeological Field School Scholarship

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This summer I participated in a field school where I worked for Proyecto Arqueológico Waka' based in Guatemala. I had the opportunity to spend two weeks at the archaeological site of El Perú Waka' and six weeks at the project's laboratory completing ceramic analysis work under the direction of Dr. Olivia Navarro-Farr and Dr. Keith Eppich. Under Dr. Navarro-Farr and the other archaeologist's instruction, I was able to learn and observe multiple aspects of how an archaeological field project is run. I observed and learned the process for test pit excavation; helped to sort, count, and draw various test pits; contributed to the field lab work by washing, sorting, and labeling bones, ceramics, shells, figurines, and lithics; learned the process for Munsell Testing; observed the excavation process of the tunnels located in M13-1; and learned how to sketch architectural and peripheral archaeological drawings.

During the 6-week ceramic analysis position, I learned the importance of using ceramic types to identify their provenience and build a chronological timeline of the different assemblages for the archaeological site of El Perú Waka'. Dr. Eppich taught us how to identify the ceramic types using the lab's ceramic typology collection, to photograph the ceramics, to use Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom software to transform the photographs into virtual sketches, and to reassemble ceramic vessels. Additionally, part of the field season's work is submitting a yearly government-mandated ceramic informe, which I had the opportunity to help write. I chose one of the ceramic assemblages and studied it based on its provenience to understand where it came from and which group it came from. This allowed me to understand the historical context of this assemblage and build a chronological timeline for it. I combined my written portion with the virtual sketches I created and submitted my section of the informe to be reviewed and approved.

I also had the opportunity to attend the 2024 Simposio de Investigaciones Arqueológicas en Guatemala where I went to numerous presentations of the most current Maya archaeological projects and connected professionally with many of the current Maya archaeologists. This was my first time participating in a field school, being on an active excavation and archaeological site, and completing ceramic analysis work. Proyecto Arqueológico Waka' and the people within the project have taught me so much about what being an archaeologist would entail. This includes the field season, grant writing, administrative tasks, lab work, and publishing requirements. I am extremely grateful for this incredible opportunity and everything it taught me about Maya archaeology and what it means to be an archaeologist in this current era. Furthermore, I am thankful for receiving

the Jane C. Waldbaum grant which helped me tremendously in funding my flights, field materials, and transportation for this field project. I would not have been able to attend field school without the help and I will always be grateful.



