

### **Jane C. Waldbaum Scholarship Report**

On the cusp of 2023, I was a soon-to-be college graduate who loved anthropological theory, but lacked the practical experience necessary to ground myself in its application. This produced an all-consuming fear that made a clear path past my degree's receipt hard to discern. This concern was by no means new, however. It first blossomed at the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, when, suddenly, the time I thought I had to refine my interests; to explore the field, evaporated. Life became more complicated and more unpredictable. A clear shot at research seemed far out of reach – until late 2022.

At the fall semester's end, a scrambled search for field research yielded an optimistic opportunity in the Caribbean. I was on one hand excited by the project's goals, its colonial temporal-spatial focus, its emphasis on decolonial theory; the wide range of skills available for acquisition, and on the other, daunted by its sizable price tag. Despite my insecurity, I applied anyway, and, to my surprise, secured a position in the programme. Still, the issue of tuition loomed, and so I began the search to reduce my financial burden. Fortunately, I found a solution in the American Institute of Archaeology's (A.I.A.'s) Jane C. Waldbaum Scholarship, and so swiftly started my application.

Courtesy of the Jane C. Waldbaum Scholarship, I was able to cover the travel costs associated with enrolling in the Institute for Field Research's Colombia: Providence Island 2023 field school session. There, I spent a month participating in an ongoing historical anthropological archaeology project aiming to promote, conserve and uplift Raizal heritage in collaboration with the island's Raizal population. In this process, I was exposed to various archaeological and ethnographic research methods, gained new skills and received valuable mentorship across field and lab settings. Research activities included:-

- Data collection – excavation (rapid recovery/reconnaissance, units, augering), full survey (foot, exploratory, EMI, shovel test pit, metal detector, photographic, surface collection), ethnographic interviewing (audio-visual recordation), other artefact recovery techniques (sifting, Munsell soil categorisation, GPS route marking and object/feature geotagging, utilising LiDAR);
- Laboratory analysis – washing, sorting, drying, artefact identification and analysis (Spanish, English, Dutch, Maroon, pirate/privateer colonial artifacts and ceramics, novel colonoware, zooarchaeological remains), cataloguing, curating, re-organising previous collections;
- Documentation and data management – completing standardised data collection forms (excavation, survey, lab), feature and site mapping and drawing;
- Community engagement – attending cultural events, working alongside the local community and receiving culturally specific lectures on bush medicine, art, ethnohistory, culture, marronage, piracy, food, farming, language, data collection, etc.;
- Leadership, administrative and operational work – leading field and lab teams, career-oriented research organisation and career management, research design mentorship.

My experience on Providence Island has been invaluable to the streamlining of my research-based and academic interests, especially within the realm of Caribbean anthropological archaeology. I am deeply grateful for the assistance that the A.I.A.'s Jane C. Waldbaum Scholarship has given me, and look forward to the ways in which the opportunity it afforded will continue to impact both my thinking and my goals.

**Photos:**



*Field team walking to a site*



*Me digging my first shovel test pit*



*Field team*



*Field teams members excavating a unit*



*Artefacts sorted from a site*