

Historic Preservation & Archaeology

Palm Beach County — Past Intern Experiences

Gregory J. Mount, ABD, RPA

Previous/during: M.A. in Anthropology,
FL Atlantic University, 2009

Currently: PhD Candidate, Dept. of Geosciences FL Atlantic University. Fellow, National Science Foundation GK-12 Program, Project ChemBOND, Dept. of Chemistry, FL Atlantic University

The internship was a practical way to gain experience on the governmental side of Cultural Resource Management (CRM) and Historic Preservation. Beyond the day to day experience of working in the public sector, the internship provided for a comprehensive training in all facets of professional CRM work, on the local, state and regional levels. Typical of most degree programs where the academics is stressed rather than the practical, that degree does not make you qualified. The added value of real world experience in any program cannot be measured, and this is what the program delivered. I can say that I was lucky enough to be the first in this program, and it has shaped the work I continue to do today. Furthermore, when I tell people of the opportunities that have changed my career path, this is the one I mention.

Katie Corcoran

Undergraduate: University of Central FL,
BA in Anthropology (2009)

Graduate: University of Tennessee - Knoxville, PhD Candidate Biological Anthropology (2011 - present)

Palm Beach County interns are provided with a series of extremely valuable learning experiences. Throughout my internship I was offered several opportunities for fieldwork, as well as a considerable amount of GIS training (a skill every up-and-coming archaeologist should possess). These experiences and skills helped to prepare me for professional archaeology positions in south Florida, and eventually graduate school.

This internship is a fantastic way of diving into archaeology, but it's not for everyone. Mr. Davenport expects only the very best work from his interns. As is the case with many things in life, what you get from it very much depends on you.

Catherine (Katie) Smith, MPA

Previous: Masters in Public Administration, Florida Atlantic University, (2009)

Currently: MA candidate, Anthropology Department, Florida Atlantic University

Beginning as an exploratory exercise as a potential career shift with minimal background or experience, I am astounded at the vast difference in my knowledge base and abilities as well as the accomplishments and credits that have amassed in such a short time. From Phase I and Phase II excavations on landmark sites to lab management responsibilities, curatorial tasks in cooperation with local museums to authoring formal reports and studies, as well as the identification and documentation of brand new archaeological sites, this experience has provided an unparalleled tour of the scope of this field. In addition, I have been able to train apprentice-style in both human osteology and zooarchaeology. As I look forward to doctoral studies, I humbly recognize that there is absolutely no way that I could have achieved the successes I have thus far without this experience.

Rodrigo Cardenas

Undergraduate: University of Central Florida
(BA 2008)

Graduate: Florida Atlantic University
(MA 2010-present)

The This internship program is a phenomenal way to learn how cultural resource management and local government historic preservation efforts function. Seeing how both sides of the preservation field work to accomplish their goals is truly unique among internship opportunities.

Chris really helps interns get the most from this experience by tailoring tasks to help them complete their degrees. In return, he does expect interns to be punctual and follow their commitments. It is a professional environment and there is a level of responsibility on the intern to do their jobs. You will be credited with the work you do here

Amy Cartwright

Current: FL Atlantic University, BA in History and Interdisciplinary Studies, BPM in Public Admin.

Interning for Chris has been one of the most valuable elements to my entire undergraduate education. Even as a student coming into the Archaeology office without a shred of Anthropological knowledge, I have learned volumes about archaeology and historic preservation just from practical, hands-on experience. As interns, we assist with field work, draft reports and attend events and meetings within the preservation and archeological communities. In addition, we help with community outreach and work on projects specific to Florida history. As an intern you will gain skills that will not only benefit you academically, but professionally as well. This particular internship is special because it is unique and specifically designed for each student, taking into account your goals, your strengths and your weaknesses. The knowledge I have gained from this internship will undoubtedly put me ahead as I pursue my next steps into graduate studies.

Jennifer Green

Undergraduate: Florida Atlantic University
BA in Anthropology (2008)

Graduate: Florida Atlantic University, (MA in progress)

I have been working with Chris since 2011. It all began on a volunteer dig at DuBois Park in Jupiter. This site would become a major part of my life during my development as an archaeologist. After some time I transitioned from being a volunteer to an actual intern. In doing so, Chris was able to help me discover my strengths and weaknesses. Chris picked up right away that I was going to be a zooarchaeologist. Because of this, he had me assist in the identification and analysis of the shellfish remains from the DuBois Park site. Not only did I learn laboratory processes, but I was exposed to the valuable techniques of artifact photography, report writing, and leading a crew of my own. But most of all, by working with a group of interns I learned the value of teamwork in archaeology. I am currently working on my Master's degree by analyzing shellfish remains from that same site in DuBois Park where it all started. I have overcome my fear of public speaking and have gone on to teach undergraduate anthropology classes and public lectures on various archaeological topics. Without a doubt, the internship experience has guided my life in archaeology to where it is today. If anyone were to ask me about whether to try it out or not, I would tell them to jump right in.

Josephine Curtis

Current: University of Evansville,
BA in Anthropology (2010).

Major: Archaeology **Minor:** Anthropology

Interning for Palm Beach County was a priceless experience. I gained valuable hands on skills in the laboratory assisting in a detailed, finer sort of a column sample from a 3000 year old coastal Native America village site. My experiences went beyond laboratory work; I went to public outreach events, assisted with a historical resource review board meeting, and more. Mr. Davenport was not conducting fieldwork when I was there, but he sent me to volunteer with another archaeologist to get field experience and learn more about the culture resource management side of archaeology. Every day was a new lesson on a different aspect of archaeology all the way up to my last day working on documenting historical buildings for the Florida Master Site File.

Yarelis Perez

Current: Florida Atlantic University
BA in Anthropology (2015)

I have been an intern for one and a half years and it has been very rewarding. With advice and guidance, Chris has pointed me in the direction I needed to be headed, and for that I am so grateful. I see him as more than a mentor, I see him as a father figure with much wisdom to offer. I would not pick another person to intern for but him. From this experience I have made professional connections that I never thought I would have. Being his intern is the best thing I have done to date.

Rebecca (Becky) Stitt

Undergraduate: Florida Atlantic University
B.A. in Anthropology (2011)
Graduate: Florida Atlantic University,
(M.A. 2011-present)

Working with the County has been a priceless learning experience as a graduate student. The skills I picked up are practical in nature and often times difficult to apprehend in a classroom environment. No matter what your interests are in archaeology, there is a wealth of knowledge to be found in being an intern. I was fortunate enough to come into the program during an active field excavation. What I learned in field school was supplemented by the training I received under the supervision of County Archaeologist and Historic Preservation Officer Chris Davenport. Needless to say, the majority of archaeological work is not done by digging and the internship also provided abundant opportunities to learn the paperwork aspect of archaeological investigation. No matter what your ultimate goal is in the field of archaeology, being an intern will aid you in your quest to conquer academia, cultural resource management, museum studies, and many other areas.

Nicole Gamboa

Undergraduate: B.S. Candidate, Geography, Florida Atlantic University, (2011-present)

The time spent with Chris has been insurmountably valuable. When I came in at the beginning I could barely expect to contribute much except filing away papers and just killing time until I get enough "experience." This was not the case at all to my delight. He mentored me very skillfully to do sophisticated analysis work that contributed greatly to an important project. Chris also helped me understand clearly what actually happens after graduating with a degree, which will be so helpful when I finally do. I started doing many collaborations with other student interns and employees that I could not even dream of doing while still in my undergrad. The confidence he puts in his interns is just something remarkable. Even the work does not feel like a chore because it is rather more similar to fitting pieces of a complex puzzle together. I would never trade the experience with Chris for anything and for it I am eternally grateful. Plus, if you show good work Chris is always there to recommend you to a number of good people.