

# Archaeology and Children: Educating Our Future Citizens

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## INTRODUCTION

Archaeology in the Community is a community based organization founded by an archaeology graduate student. Its mission is to bridge the gap between the community and how our histories are developed. We believe the key to bridging the gap in our communities is by impacting educational development through program implementation, research and advocacy. The organization was developed to educate youth about the fundamentals of archaeological methods with the goal of promoting the development of **archaeological literate citizens**.



## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of *Archaeology in the Community's* programs is to prepare our youth for the future by developing civic participation through stakeholder participation and increasing their scholarly and academic potential.

To achieve our goal we implement the following objectives:

- Nurture participants through seminars, discussions, and field experience.
- Encourage participants to produce a group project that will be developed during the course of the program.
- Increase participants' awareness of their local and interconnected communities, as well as their sense of history.
- Broaden participants' knowledge of various career opportunities and experiences through lessons learned from the field.

## METHODS

For several weeks students attend classes that have been developed to fit their academic level. These classes teach the students various archaeological skills and expose them to various forms of archaeology, e.g. landscape and historical archaeology. The programs are created to teach the students four main skill sets: basic terminology, archaeological methods, how to conduct an excavation, and how to write a scientific report based on the archaeology.

The students participate in Archaeological Seminars, Interactive Workshops, and Project Development courses all designed to teach the four skill sets.

**Archaeological Seminars** – Twice a week the students meet with a facilitator for tutorial sessions. During these sessions students gain a basic understanding of archaeology and the techniques archaeologists utilize in conducting research.

**Selected Interactive Workshops** – Students engage in various workshops which teach the students how to utilize the various archaeological techniques. During the course of the program, these interactive workshops will provide information that will equip the participants with the understanding of how material culture turns into our history while developing their research and analytical skills.

**Project Development** – As students absorb a wealth of knowledge, they will also apply the knowledge gained in their group projects. Students will have the opportunity to create site reports which are showcased at the end of the program.



Students of all academic levels have to complete a site report at the end of the program. The students in some cases are given the background information and in others they have to research the information about their site. The students write reports where they date each occupation periods, explain what they felt took place at the site and how they came to these conclusions based on their artifact analysis, site analysis, and research.



The highlight of the program for the younger students is the **Day of Excavation!**



High school students conducting research for their landscape archaeology project.

## CONCLUSION

Archaeology programs such as this one and the many others being conducted daily by archaeologists can make a difference. There are numerous highly effective formats and platforms in which archaeology can be taught to children. Ann Kaupp wrote, "Public involvement in archaeological research, including hands-on experience such as excavating and lab work, often leads to support for the value of archaeological investigation and more importantly to a greater understanding of the need to protect vulnerable archaeological sites" (2001). Archaeology education is important if future generations are to understand and value our work.



## Acknowledgements:

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## References:

Kaupp, Ann P. 2001. The Archaeology Education Handbook: Sharing the Past with Kids. *American Anthropologist* 103(3): 844.

"If you learn something you can't help but reflect on it as you move on through life".  
A high school student's reflection on archaeology