Message from the Department Head, Ellen Gruenbaum

The 2011/2012 year is shaping up to be a time of dynamic development for our young department. In anticipation of the state’s tight budget, Purdue made some difficult reductions, but with support from the College of Liberal Arts, we have been able to hire two new faculty members and acquire some additional lab space. Joining us this year are cultural anthropologist Su’ad Abdul Khabeer, who holds a joint appointment with African American Studies, and Bryce Carlson, a biological anthropologist whose work on the evolution of human diet will be strengthening our department’s offerings and linking us with the interdisciplinary nutrition program.

As a few gifts from alumni and friends and some revenues from faculty research grants have begun to arrive, we have been able to provide modest professional development opportunities for our graduate students with travel funds to conferences, to sites of pilot projects, or for special training needed for their dissertation research. In addition, our undergraduates majors—whose numbers have continued to grow—have benefited from a new College of Liberal Arts internship program that allows them to compete for small grants to work with our faculty on research.

This year we also were fortunate to capture some vacated space in Stone Hall. We have new space in the Basement for graduate student offices, research project and post-doc offices, and a new Bioarchaeology Lab that has allowed Dr. Michele Buzon and her students to bring the Nile Valley skeletal materials over from their temporary space. We have also obtained a grant to cover much of the cost of remodeling space on the main floor to provide an additional Biological Anthropology Lab and a new dedicated classroom for anthropology course, which we hope to occupy later in 2012.

I hope you will enjoy this short newsletter with just a few of the many things going on our Department of Anthropology. Our goal is to provide our alumni and friends with more frequent updates with photos and news on our website. We hope you will go there often and keep in touch. We would love to know what you are doing—send us information on your careers and activities, and check our Facebook page. And as always, we would love to have you visit, attend brown bag lectures, and participate in the life of the department!

Professor Brian Kelly has been studying the emerging methamphetamine epidemic in China. His project is focused on how the rise of methamphetamine is influencing China’s HIV epidemic. Dr Kelly has studied drug abuse and the HIV/AIDS epidemic for over a decade. Here he is pictured with physicians and nurses at a drug treatment facility in Changsha. We are pleased that our faculty are able to contribute research like this to promote a better understanding of global social issues.

http://www.cla.purdue.edu/
We are proud and delighted to feature some of our students and faculty who have made great strides in their work during the past academic year.

Literary Award: Department of Anthropology Award for an Ethnographic Essay

This year's recipient of the Ethnographic Essay Award was Jaime Kruis, who wrote about her participant observation of a shabbat service on campus. Her award was presented at the annual Literary Awards Banquet on April 21, 2011.

O. Michael Watson Outstanding Graduating Senior Award

This year’s recipient of the O. Michael Watson Outstanding Graduating Senior Award, Donald Pattee, poses with his parents and the Anthropology Department Head, Ellen Gruenbaum. He graduated with his Bachelor of Arts in May 2011.

Recently Awarded Graduate Degrees:

MS:
Christopher Herrin (Summer 2011)
Blair Daverman (Spring 2011)
Kyle Jones (Spring 2011)
Elizabeth Wirtz (Spring 2011)
Sili Law (Fall 2010)
L. Ryan Plis (Summer 2010)
Sarah Schrader (Spring 2010)
Diana Howell (Summer 2009)
Kira Foerster (Summer 2009)
Stacey Enslow (Summer 2009)
Nicole Frigiola (Spring 2009)
Verity Whalen (Spring 2009)

PhD:
Kalliopi Christodoulaki (Spring 2010)
Katja Pettinen (Fall 2010)
April Callis (Summer 2011)
Lesley Daspit (Summer 2011)
Richard Weld (Fall 2011)

Andrew Buckser has been named an American Council on Education Fellow for 2011-2012. The fellowship involves a placement at another university to study key issues in higher education administration. Dr. Buckser is spending the year in the Provost’s Office at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY, where he is focusing on the administrative dynamics of interdisciplinary programs. While there, he presented a paper on The Anthropology of Tourette Syndrome at the Cornell University Anthropology Colloquium Series.
Ian Lindsay recently represented Purdue’s College of Liberal Arts at the 2011 Chicago Humanities Festival. He presented a talk entitled “Can you Dig It?: Technology in the Archaeological Record.”

At the American Anthropological Association’s Annual Meeting in Montreal, Quebec in November, Evelyn Blackwood was awarded the AQA’s 2011 Ruth Benedict Book Prize in the category “Outstanding Monograph” for her book *Falling into the Lesbi World: Desire and Difference in Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010).

Graduate students Elizabeth Wirtz and Diana Steele Jones staff a table at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, to recruit applicants for our Master’s and Ph.D. programs. We also held a graduate recruiting Open House on campus in November 2011.

Dr. Abdul Khabeer joined us Fall 2011, and she holds a joint appointment with the African American Studies Program. Her latest research examines how Chicago Muslim youth construct their religious, racial and cultural identities at the intersection of hip hop and Islam. She is also interested in identity and subjectivity, diaspora and gender studies, performance ethnography, Islamic thought and practice, Arabic and Spanish language and literature.

Bryce Carlson received his PhD in Anthropology from Emory University, specializing in biological anthropology. His research focuses on the role of nutrition in human and primate evolution, and his current research utilizes stable isotopic analysis of wild chimpanzees in East Africa. He teaches courses on the biological basis of human social behavior, human diet and human evolution.

New Faculty
Anthropology teams with History to host “Wiping Away the Tears Symposium”

Professor Kory Cooper worked with others to organize and host a 3-day symposium on campus entitled “Wiping Away the Tears: The Battle of Tippecanoe in History and Memory.” The symposium, which was held Nov. 3-5, 2011, marked the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Tippecanoe, which occurred just a few miles from here. The event was well attended by archaeologists, historians, members of Native American groups, community members, students, and others from the campus community. They shared their knowledge of the historical events and consequences of the battle that had such a profound impact on the history of this region. Purdue students from the Native American Educational and Cultural Center participated in a poster session and cultural event.

PhD student, Sarah Schrader, is pictured here doing fieldwork on Dr. Michele Buzon's NSF-funded archaeological research project in Tombos, Sudan. Last season, Sarah and the team were busy excavating Egyptian-style pyramid tombs and Nubian-style tumulus tombs that date to the Napatan Period (~700-300 BC). Exciting finds include infants buried in baskets, many intact figurines and a horse burial.

Support Anthropology

Gifts to Anthropology enable us to enrich the experiences of our students through research support, teaching materials, and recognition of student accomplishments. Looking forward, we would like to support student field trips to museums and research sites, and scholarships in Anthropology.

Make a gift online at www.donate.purdue.edu.