Indigenous heritage
Passed to Present
The Alliance For Heritage Conservation
THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA at CHAPEL HILL
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InHerit and the Museum of the Southeast American Indian Join Forces to Bring Native American Voices into K-12 Education

By Dylan Clark

We are pleased to announce that InHerit has been awarded a State-Level Systemic Change Grant from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation to support our new collaboration in 2020-21 with the Museum of the Southeast American Indian at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke (UNCP). North Carolina has a large and diverse Native American population, the largest east of the Mississippi River, and the Lumbee Tribe is the largest with over 55,000 enrolled members. While Lumbee people now live all over the world, the interior coastal plain between the Lumber and Cape Fear Rivers that includes Robeson, Scotland, Hoke, and Cumberland counties has been the traditional homeland for Lumbee people since at least the 18th century. There are many Lumbee students and faculty on UNC campuses throughout the state, and this collaboration represents an exciting opportunity for InHerit to work more closely with American Indian people from the very landscape we call home. In her recent book *The Lumbee Indians* (2018), our colleague and Lumbee historian Dr. Malinda Maynor Lowery argues that "any project on American Indian history begins with recovering the words, sentences, and stories that have been erased." There can be no doubt that Native American cultures, experiences, and ways of knowing have been minimized and even cut out of public education, media, politics, and cultural institutions—all of which contribute to shaping the narrative of North Carolina history. Similarly, Euro-American focused cultural heritage sites, historic monuments, and museums have traditionally guided the telling of history in North America. We know, however, that Native American peoples played (and continue to play) crucial roles in making this region what it is today. Both archaeology and education can be mobilized to

Material culture gallery at the Museum of the Southeast American Indian at UNC-Pembroke. Photo: D.Clark

Learning lab at the Museum of the Southeast American Indian, UNC-Pembroke. Photo: D. Clark

challenge colonization, subjugation, and marginalization by foregrounding undocumented stories and expanding explanatory spaces to consider a broader array of experiences and voices often underrepresented in public education. Our shared goal is to bring together the resources and expertise of the faculty, staff, and collections of the Museum of the Southeast American Indian (MSAI), UNC-Pembroke (UNCP), and UNC-Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) to develop culturally responsive, inclusive, and experiential curriculum resources for better interweaving of American Indian studies into secondary education. Working closely with Native American curators and teachers, we are planning a summer institute with teacher workshops at the museum, on-site educational and exhibit programming, and innovative curriculum resources that incorporate local knowledge and traditions, oral history, and archaeology to help students explore Lumbee cultural landscapes. In particular, we want to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for 6th-12th grade students across the state by providing teachers with access to high quality, primary source content related to Indigenous cultural heritage and history. Our objective is to make it easy to merge local cultural content with the new essential standards for public instruction in North Carolina.

Replica of a 19th century homestead from southeastern North Carolina at the MSAI. Photo: D. Clark

We believe that this project will also contribute to reducing significant gaps in outcomes between American Indian students and non-Native students in North Carolina. According to a 2019 report by the State Advisory Council on Indian Education, significant disparities between American Indian students and non-Native students have been documented in SAT scores, high school graduation rates, and college drop-out rates. Ethnographic studies that include direct interviews with students and teachers have shown that certain factors improve self-esteem, graduation rates, and learning outcomes for Native students, including working with teachers with the same or similar cultural backgrounds and blending together traditional knowledge systems, science, and the arts. Experiential education that connects different worldviews and

puts them into dialogue benefits ALL students because place-based studies that link human experiences of struggle and resilience are simultaneously specific (local) and universal, and this has potential to make classrooms places of connectedness and mutual growth.

The MSAI's mission is to educate the public about the history, culture, art and contemporary issues of American Indians, with special emphasis on the diverse Native American communities of Robeson County and the American Southeast. The MSAI is a well-established center for public interpretation of Lumbee art and culture, as well as community events, and it houses significant regional archaeological and ethnographic collections that inform and strengthen the educational materials we are producing together. Museum Director Nancy Fields is a Lumbee community member and brings years of museum curatorial and teaching experience to our collaboration, combined with an extensive background in community engagement. Museum Assistant, Alisha Locklear Monroe, is also an accomplished museum educator who inspires hundreds of students and teachers who visit the MSAI on field trips each year by connecting them with the cultural and artistic resources that help tell the stories of Native American people in Southeastern North Carolina. We are eager to bring together the primary source collections from UNCP and UNC-CH to provide teachers with access to high quality content that will be packaged to be useful beyond the museum through digital interfaces, collaborative workshops, and invaluable professional networks.

Just as exciting are the important bridges we are building through this project with complementary programs and cultural institutions. For example, the MSAI is affiliated with the American Indian Studies program at UNCP, the Lumbee Tribe, Office of State Archaeology, the State Advisory Council on Indian Education, and the NC Humanities Council—each of whose support and advice will contribute significantly to the success of this project. At UNC-Chapel Hill, Dr. Malinda Lowery, Director of the Center for the Study of the American South and Dr. Elizabeth Engelhardt, Senior Associate Dean for Fine Arts and Humanities are guiding an initiative called "Voices of Resilience and Recovery in Robeson County." This collaboration makes up one part of the Coasts, Climates, the Humanities and the Environment Consortium (CCHEC) and is working to personify the data on climate change and flooding impacts in this region. The goal is to elevate community voices and stories that nurture and sustain positive engagement and education around environmental science and community-based approaches to environmental justice. Recognizing several points of intersection between the objectives of both projects centered on the wetland cultural landscape and history of the Lumbee homeland, we are working together to enhance the outcomes of each and bring together participants with a variety of experiences and expertise to help make this a truly community-driven endeavor.

This Grassroots Effort Needs YOUR Support!

Our State-Level Systemic Change Grant covers a considerable amount (about 1/3) of our proposed program costs, but for our shared vision for the museum programming and curriculum resources side of this project to truly take off, we need to raise additional funds to support our activities in 2020 and 2021. We have launched a grassroots campaign with the ambitious goal of raising matching funds of $50,000 for each of the two years of our collaboration with the Museum of the Southeast American Indian. With your support, we can make this happen! You make a tremendous impact with a simple tax-deductible donation of $20 USD or more through our secure site at https://in-herit.org/en/donate-2/. All proceeds will support cultural heritage education, including professional development workshops and curriculum modules for teachers, college-level student internships, and materials for hands-on learning about Lumbee culture and American Indian experiences adapted for online teaching. **We are committed to providing public school teachers with access to these resources and professional development opportunities at no cost to them**. Your generous support is what will make it possible to transform this vision into reality…and we are so close. Please consider donating today!

Coming Soon: A New Collaboratively-Designed Exhibit for the Tahcabo Community Museum

By Maia Dedrick & Patricia McAnany

The entrance to the community museum at Tahcabo, Yucatán (left). A new sign directs visitors to Tahcabo from the neighboring town of Calotmul (right).

In the summer of 2020, Dr. Maia Dedrick, along with PACOY co-directors Dr. Patricia McAnany and Dr. Iván Batún Alpuche, will work with university students and a group of Tahcabo residents to develop and install a new co-curated exhibit in the community museum. Funding for this project comes from an Engaged Anthropology Grant awarded by the Wenner-Gren Foundation, which also provided funding for part of Maia's dissertation research on the archaeology of Tahcabo. The Foundation encourages previous grant recipients to apply for this supplementary grant that facilitates communication of research results to local communities and the public. Maia is working with community members to determine which parts of her dissertation project are of most interest to Tahcabo residents and to devise ways to represent the research and its methods in a museum exhibit. Incorporating ethnographic, historical, and archaeological research, Maia's research focused on the daily lives and livelihoods of farmers who lived in Tahcabo during the Colonial period (ca. AD 1540-1820) and how the agricultural use of rejolladas (sinkholes where soil and water collect) changed through time. As a result of her dissertation research, Maia discovered that Maya farmers in Tahcabo, who were facing violent and extractive colonial policies put in place after the conquest, found ways to maintain household autonomy and promote community resilience by implementing a variety of strategies throughout this period. The exciting challenge for this summer will be collaborating with community members to determine how best to interpret parts of this

Community members of Tahcabo work on archaeological excavations as part of the Proyecto Arqueológico Colaborativo del Oriente de Yucatán (PACOY).

Dr. Iván Batún visits with Sudzal municipal authorities as part of the 2019 survey of cenotes conducted by UNO student ambassadors who participated in PACECCY.

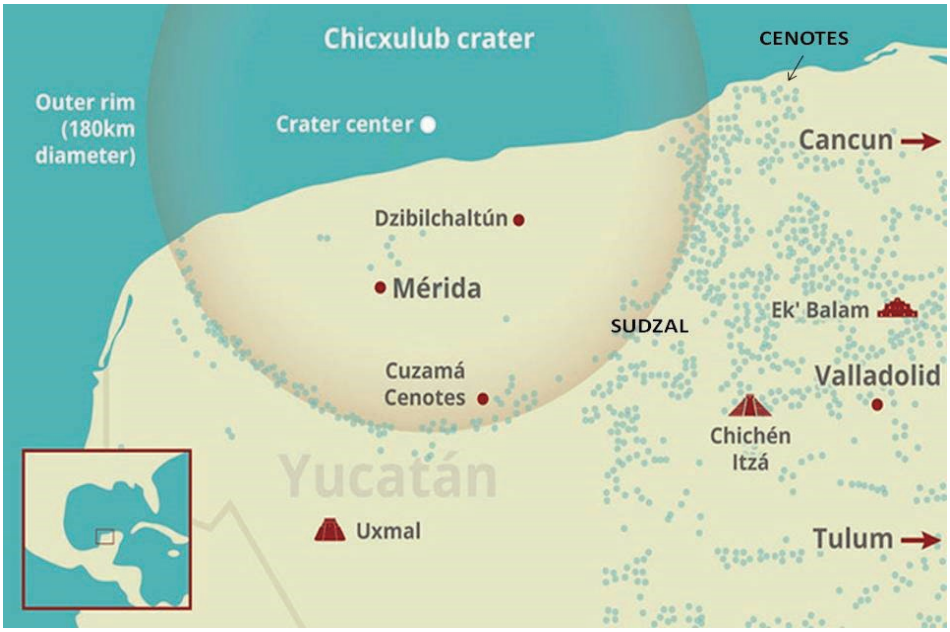
fascinating history for visitors of all ages who experience the Tahcabo museum every year.

With Community Cenotes Survey, UNO Students Advance a PACECCY Initiative

By Iván Batún Alpuche

The Cultural Heritage, Ecology, and Conservation of Yucatec Cenotes (PACECCY) project continues to make an impact in the Maya region of Mexico, inspiring a number of spin-off projects and research and education initiatives sparked by activities we began in 2018. Students from the Universidad de Oriente in Valladolid, Yucatán who participated in PACECCY as student ambassadors have continued working with InHerit researcher and UNC-Chapel Hill Adjunct Assistant Professor Dr. Iván Batún Alpuche to increase awareness about cenote conservation and threats to the health of the Great Maya Aquifer throughout the state. After commencing a preliminary survey of limestone solution sinkholes in the nine towns we worked with to promote cenotes education, the team extended the survey to other communities in the summer of 2019, including Sudzal. The community of Sudzal is located in central Yucatán within the area known as the Ring of Cenotes; this area is characterized by a higher concentration of sinkholes distributed along a geographical pattern in the form of a half-ring running from the north coast through the central part of the state. Geological studies indicate that this ring formed when a meteorite struck the earth where the Yucatán peninsula currently exists. Around 66 million years ago, this impact created what is now known as the Chicxulub crater—the edge of which has a more fractured limestone base, encouraging the erosive processes that form cenotes.

The preliminary survey conducted by UNO students and staff included exploring local cenotes to register their general characteristics and their proximity to sources of pollution, such as industrial farming, community waste management areas, and agricultural zones where pesticides are used. As part of the survey in Sudzal, local schools were also visited, and students and parents given questionnaires in order



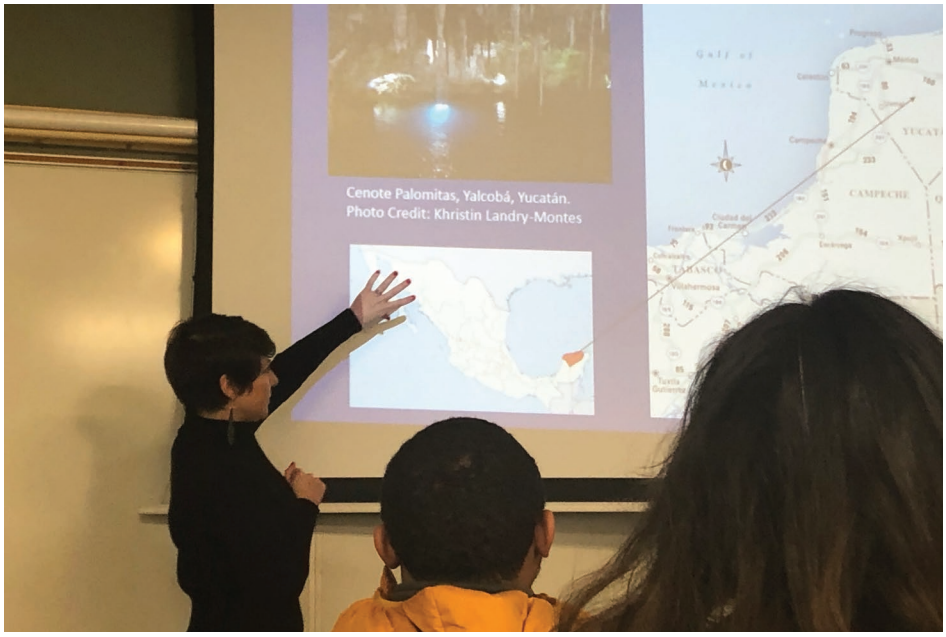
Map showing the Ring of Cenotes and the location of Sudzal in central Yucatán, Mexico.

Carrying forward ideas and activities that began with PACECCY in 2018, UNO students and faculty (Left to Right) Pedro Perales, Dr. Iván Batún, Gabriela Echeverria, and Rebeca Tun Tuz conduct a preliminary survey of community cenotes in 2019.

to assess local knowledge about cenotes and the aquifer in general, as well as to identify current community uses of underground water.

Professor Batún and UNO students Gabriela Echeverría, Rebeca Tun Tuz, Pedro Perales and Fermín Castillo also delivered PowerPoint presentations for local students, their parents, and the wider public about the geological origin and ecology of cenotes in Yucatán, emphasizing the main pollutants that pose the greatest threats to groundwater conservation in the area today.

Both the community cenotes survey and the educational outreach program that initially began with PACECCY will continue in 2020, as we expand our survey to include more communities. This also serves as another opportunity to share the results of our field research and education program supported by the National Geographic Society in 2018-19 and encourage as many community members as possible of all ages to learn about and get involved with cenote conservation.



In February 2020, Dr. Khristin Landry-Montes presented on the topic of cenotes and PACECCY activities at the University of Iowa.

Spotlight Shines on InHerit Programs at Several Conferences in 2020

By Khristin Landry-Montes & Dylan Clark

InHerit affiliated researchers and staff are continuing to spread the word about our collaborative research and education programs with the public through appearances at several meetings and conferences across the country in 2020. Dr. Khristin Landry-Montes, Assistant Professor of art history at Cornell College, who also served as Project Facilitator for the Cultural Heritage, Ecology, and Conservation of Yucatec Cenotes project (PACECCY) was invited to speak about this project for Cornell College's Humanities Interest Group lecture series. Her presentation generated significant interest and support from colleagues across the college, and she was subsequently invited to speak at the Office of the State Archaeologist at the University of Iowa and at Coe College in Cedar Rapids, both in the spring semester. Khristin also represented the PACECCY team with a presentation at the Midwest Conference on

Mesoamerican Archaeology and Ethnohistory in Chicago in March. Two other conferences this spring had to be rescheduled for next year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 16th Multidisciplinary Conference on Sinkholes in San Juan, Puerto Rico resulted in a book chapter co-authored by Khristin Landry-Montes, Patricia McAnany, Dylan Clark, and Iván Batun that will be published later this year in an edited volume through University of Florida Press. The 10th Annual Maya at the Lago Conference in Davidson, NC, also rescheduled for 2021, will honor InHerit's Executive Director, Dr. Patricia McAnany for her contributions to community-engaged archaeology and anthropology. Previous InHerit Program Directors, research affiliates, and colleagues in Maya archaeology will convene to present on the impacts of recent community archaeology projects in the Maya region, including past and present InHerit projects. This year, PACECCY coordinators also co-authored an experiential education workbook on cenotes designed for middle school teachers in Yucatán, Mexico entitled *Ciencia y Saberes de Cenotes Yucatecos.* Published through the Universidad de Oriente, this book will be presented in Yucatán in June and made available for free to teachers in both print and e-formats.

Interested in Supporting InHerit's Projects and Mission?

Please consider making a personal donation to support our current projects, such as our collaboration with the Museum of the Southeast American Indian. Remember that even a small contribution of $10-$20 will help make our projects sustainable and boost the quality of the activities and outcomes that grow out of our partnerships with Indigenous communities. A full 100% of your donations will go toward supporting our mission to work together to unearth hidden histories, document and share untold stories, and conserve the material remains of the past to empower people to reshape cultural narratives and affect positive social change. Donating is easy! Simply click on one of our donation buttons at http://in-herit.org or our InHerit Facebook page. Or, send us an email at inherit.p2p.email@gmail.com and let us know what programs you would like to support. Your generous donations to our 501(c)(3) partner, the Alliance for Heritage Conservation, are tax-deductible. You can also support InHerit by doing your Amazon shopping through AmazonSmile. AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to your selected charity. All you have to do is follow this link (or insert https://smile.amazon.com into your browser) and select Alliance for Heritage Conservation as the non-profit you are supporting. Then, shop till you drop! Thank you for your unwaivering support!

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