

Anthropology & Sociology Department Newsletter 2017



Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the 2017 newsletter for the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at Western Carolina University!

It has been several years since the department put out a newsletter, and we would like to begin the tradition anew in an effort to expand our constituent engagement. We plan to have one newsletter per academic year in which we profile current students, faculty, and alumni, as well as highlight department activities, honors, and awards. In addition to following this newsletter, a great way to stay up to date with our department and the related disciplines of anthropology and sociology is to like and follow our Facebook page, [WCU Anth and Soc](#). Find us on Facebook!

Department News

Dr. Marilyn Chamberlin

Dr. Chamberlin left WCU at the end of the Fall 2016 semester for an opportunity to pursue her long-time commitment to non-profit and community engagement work full-time. She is now working as the Director of the Family Resource Center at the Southwestern Child Development Commission. We thank Dr. Chamberlin for her service to our students and wish her all the best in her new position.

The department welcomes two new full-time faculty members in 2017



The Department of Anthropology and Sociology is happy to welcome Dr. Yiqing Yang (pictured left), our new assistant professor of Sociology. Dr. Yang comes to WCU from the University of Utah, where she earned her Ph.D. in Sociology with an emphasis on Population and Health. Her research and teaching interests include: aging and the life course, social demography, family sociology, and contemporary Chinese society.

The department is also delighted to announce that Dr. Sara Snyder (pictured right), who served as a visiting assistant professor of Anthropology in the 2016-2017 academic year, is now in a tenure-track position as an assistant professor of Anthropology and director of the Cherokee Language Program. Sara earned her Ph.D. in ethnomusicology from Columbia University in 2016. She spent five years working for the Kituwah Preservation and Education Program as the music and arts teacher for New Kituwah Academy, the Eastern Cherokee language immersion school. This work was the subject of her doctoral dissertation, *Poetics, Performance, and Translation in Eastern Cherokee Language Revitalization*. At WCU, Sara is teaching Cherokee language classes and linguistic anthropology.



Summer program updates

The final Kenya Study-Away trip occurred during the summer of 2016. Reflecting back on his experiences, Dr. Hickey said:



"Taking students to Kenya for the past 8 years has been one of the most rewarding teaching experiences of my career. Over 60 students accompanied me and Dr. Nyaga Mwaniki to study grassroots development and found a second home in Wongonyi. We met wonderful people, made great friends (thank you facebook), saw things that we couldn't have imagined.....and did a bunch of walking. Our leaders in Kenya, Ronnie, Serah, and Isaiah were terrific guides and mentors. TIA."

While Dr. Hickey's summer program in Kenya is winding down, Anthropology and Sociology students are taking advantage of other summer courses close to home and farther afield. In the summer of 2017, Dr. Katie Zejdlik directed a group of 19 students on a bioarchaeology field school whose work focused the excavation of an abandoned medieval church cemetery in the Transylvanian village of Patakfalva, Romania. Meanwhile, just outside the Hunter Library on the WCU campus, Dr. Ben Steere led an archaeological field school focused on mapping and recording an archaeological site that will be affected by the construction of the new science building. His group of 10 students recovered artifacts including 600-year-old ceramics and projectile points made by Cherokee ancestors.

ANSO Adopts A Highway

As of Spring 2016, WCU's Anthropology and Sociology Department are proud caretakers of a two-mile stretch near campus on State Route 1002, also known as Old Cullowhee Road. The ANSO Department now organizes routine highway clean-ups 3-4 times a year. If you have any interest in helping out, feel free to contact Dr. Kathleen Brennan at kbrennan@wcu.edu.



Above: Intrepid Anthropology and Sociology Faculty clean up along Old Cullowhee Road. From left to right: Dr. Peter Niecarz, Dr. Jane Eastman, Dr. Nick Passalacqua, Dr. Tony Hickey, Dr. Ted Coyle, and Dr. Katie Zejdlik.

Dr. Jim Veteto is awarded tenure and promotion



In Spring 2017, Dr. Jim Veteto was awarded tenure and promoted to associate professor of anthropology at WCU. Dr. Veteto specializes in ethnobiology, directs The Appalachian Institute for Mountain Studies (AIMS), and routinely organizes local Seed Swap events. In the course of his applied research, Dr. Veteto has worked with many local farmers and traditional Cherokee gardeners. You may learn more about his work on the [AIMS Facebook page](#).

Above: WCU students, faculty, and staff join Dr. Veteto at the Spring 2017 Seed Swap.

Congratulations to our 2016-2017 Department Student Award Winners!

ANSO Department Outstanding Senior Award – Anthropology: **Lauren Reinman**

ANSO Department Outstanding Senior Award – Sociology: **Tristan Clodfelter**

College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Scholar – Anthropology: **Windy McKinney**

College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Scholar – Forensic Anthropology: **Audrey Pelve**

College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Scholar – Sociology: **Kajol Patel**

Congratulations to our recent graduates!

Anthropology

Ashley Bostian
Sachiya Brown
Alexandria Baynes
Brittany Callahan
Matthew Cook
Krista Craig
Lacey Crawford
Jessie Edwards
Michaela Gunter

Austin Hendrick
Brianna Horney
Alexa Keefe
Joshua Jordan
Kajlie Kennedy
Tori Kennedy
Shani Kitchen
Keana Lowe
Julia Metscher

Julia Millard
Brianna Murray
Rebecca Olson
Audrey Pelve
Madeline Ormand
Lia Plankenhorn
Nobuaki Suzuki
Patrick Turner
Gianna White

Sociology

Dylan Bayliss
Allison Beeson
Jamie Bigby
Victoria Blount
Chandler Carson
Christopher Connell
Jasmin Conley
Bryant Crews
Seth Curtis
Alphonso DeGraffenreid
Amanda Dudley
Jeremy Gaddy
Clarissa Gay
Christon Gill
Emily Gustafson

Lakmali Gunawardena
Tremaine Kernes
Angelia Leatherman
Erika Liljeberg
Jessica Maready
Krissia Martinez
Stephanie Mason
Blythe McNeely
Tiffany McSwain
Tabitha Moore
Joshua Mosteller
Kelsey Myers
Christopher Newsome
Kajol Patel
Jennifer Perry

Cecelia Powers
Kelsey Rodriguez
Autumn Scherman
Carissa Snedden
Chad Stamey
Alana Starnes
Kimberly Stansfield
Markie Lynne Studnický
Payton Talford
Emily Teich
Patrick Toomey
Garrett Whitener
Michaela Williams
Manuel Zenquis

Profiles: Get to Know Our Students, Alumni, and Faculty

Lacey Crawford – Anthropology student

What is your major / minor?

Major: Anthropology - Forensic Anthropology concentration
Double Major: Criminology & Criminal Justice

How do you plan to use your major / concentration?

I am continuing my education beyond a bachelor's degree. My hopes are to obtain a Ph.D. eventually and make contributions to forensic anthropology.

What are some things you're interested in related to ANSO?

I was and still am interested in trying to be a part of as many opportunities as possible to gain more experience. I believe that is very important for a student and I wish I had been able to participate more than I have due to working outside of class. Some of these interests would be joining the anthropology club, helping a teacher on a project, and going to more events sponsored by the department.

What is your most meaningful ANSO-related story?

I don't necessarily have a story. I just have enjoyed the last four years here at Western Carolina University. It has been an experience of a lifetime and just the beginning of a long journey. I have learned many things I never thought I would have learned within my major. My viewpoints and values have changed as I have progressed through college and I could not have done it without the help of amazing professors in the department.

Why did you choose your major?

I came into WCU a forensic science major but was overwhelmed by the advanced math and science classes. I switched to anthropology my sophomore year, then added my second major (CJ) since the minor was half the classes of the actual major. I liked the idea of graduating with two degrees instead of one. I found that anthropology was where I was supposed to be; that I loved it and I wish I had switched sooner.

What are your plans for after graduation?

My plans are to find a job to gain some experience in my field just until August of 2017 since I plan to begin graduate school then.



What is one of the most important things you learned outside of the classroom while attending WCU?

Managing time is very important. I have made many mistakes in class due to time. Unfortunately, being a student with 6 classes as well as about 32 hours at work each week, time does escape you. But also sometimes you just need time to stop and relax a little.

What is something you recently read that made you think differently?

I am currently reading a book called, *The Other Wes Moore* for a Criminal Justice class and it makes you think a lot differently. There could be someone out there with almost the same starting path but you both end up on complete opposite sides of the road. It makes you think: "What if roles were switched? What if I had done the same thing they did, where would I be now?" It is an eye-opening book that churns your mind.

Anything else you'd like to add?

I would say not to give up. Things happen but more doors and opportunities open. I've made many mistakes coming into college classes that I regret. But I've done the best I can since and will be graduating soon with an extra degree that I never considered or thought about before freshman year. Also explore as many opportunities as you can as an undergraduate, these last 4 years have flown by and before you know it, it's over.

Anthropology alumnus: Beau Carroll (2012)

What was your ANSO major / specialization?

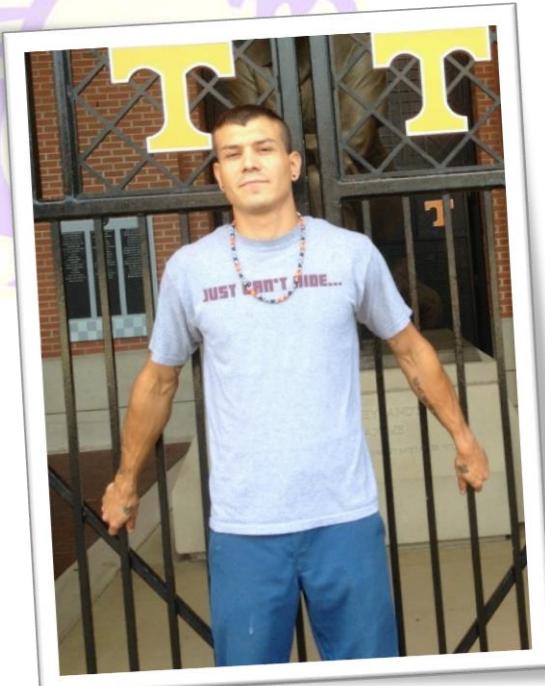
Anthropology with a focus in Archaeology, Cherokee Studies, and Language.

What are you doing now?

Currently, I serve as the Archaeological Technician for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians' Tribal Historic Preservation Office. I am also completing my thesis to earn a master's degree at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

What is your most meaningful ANSO-related story?

My most meaningful ANSO-related story happened the summer I spent working with Dr. Jane Eastman at the Spike Buck Mound Site for my first field school. I remember the feeling of finding my first artifact, which was a pottery sherd. The range of feelings I experienced was amazing. It went from excitement, which I imagine a gold prospector might feel, to curiosity at what the sherd could have been and who had made it, to feeling connected to my heritage and



my traditional Cherokee beliefs and interests, to a feeling of sadness at the history of the Cherokee people. I knew that day that I wanted to be an archaeologist and I wanted to contribute to the surge of cultural preservation that is happening within the Cherokee tribe and throughout Indian Country.

Why did you choose your major?

I chose my major because of my interest in history, but the more I learned about Cherokee history the more I realized that it is often one-sided. Archaeology gives me the chance to decide for myself what I think actually happened and relay that to the people in my tribe who have questions about their past. I also love the outdoors and I enjoy physical labor, so archaeology is a natural fit for me.

What did you do the summer after you graduated from undergrad?

Actually, two days after I graduated I started working for the Tribal Historic Preservation Office for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians doing contract work. My first assignment was to assist Dr. Brett Riggs, who was with the University of North Carolina at the time, in a dig in Tellico Plains, TN. The project was located at a military fort site that had also been used as a removal site for the Cherokees and other natives during the Trail of Tears.

What is one of the most important things you learned outside of the classroom while attending WCU?

One of the things that I learned while attending WCU was how to manage my time studying along with my duties as a husband and a father. My professors were very helpful in giving me guidance in this area. This has carried over into other endeavors and allowed me to hold a full-time job and commute to Knoxville to get my graduate degree. I have learned that, regardless of background or situation, anyone can be a successful non-traditional student. Things can be rough for students, and there were times I wanted to quit, but I continued pushing forward each day. I discovered that the things that most people, including myself, thought were impossible became achievable goals. Today, the professors in the Anthropology and Cherokee Studies programs at WCU continue to be supportive even though I am no longer a student. They continue to help me and encourage me to be the best person I can be both personally and professionally.

What is something you read recently that made you think differently?

While conducting thesis research I read so much material that it blurred together and became hard to separate. One thing that has resonated with me, though, is the fact that hardly any research has been done on the Chickamauga Cherokees and Sequoyah, which formed a large part of my thesis. These topics are extremely important in understanding a particular time period in Cherokee history and are often misinterpreted. In the future, I would like to explore these topics in more detail. The material I collected on both Sequoyah and the Chickamauga varied a great deal, making it difficult to correctly interpret their history. This will continue to be my basis of study in the future.

What advice do you have for students just starting out in your field today?

If you are looking to be rich and famous, you are not going to find it in anthropology or archaeology. If you want to work hard, discover something new regardless of how old it is, and work with people who are passionate about what they do, then anthropology and archaeology are good places to experience those things. My advice, and one of the keys to my success, is to volunteer on any sites that you can. I met people while volunteering who have become lifelong friends and colleagues. Through these relationships, doors have opened for me to continue to do the job that I love. I also feel a personal responsibility to record aspects of traditional Cherokee culture before they are destroyed. Without this knowledge of the past the Cherokees will lose their identity—and that is what makes us who we are. If you feel that these things are important and you enjoy being dirty all the time, then go for it.

Anything else?

Working alongside Native American tribes has been one of the most important aspects of my archaeology. My research has benefited from my interactions with tribal members. I truly feel that there are things I have learned that I would have missed without these connections. Tribal members are genuinely interested in their past and have many questions. I feel it is my duty as an archaeologist to include the tribe that I am studying into my research, and I continue to maintain these relationships for future work.

Anthropology faculty: John A. Williams

What was your ANSO major / concentration?

Physical Anthropology: Forensic Anthropology and Bioarchaeology

What are some things you're interested in related to ANSO?

While I am a physical anthropologist I have always felt myself to be a Boasian. I take the holistic concept to heart. My first professor used to say that “anthropologists were the jack of all trades and the master of none.” At times I feel I was born a century too late as I love all aspects of anthropology. That said, I have always been attracted to the biological side of the human species (I minored in biology as an undergraduate). Even though my current teaching and research interests are elsewhere I have always been intrigued by the human-microbe interaction. I think that I would have been an epidemiologist if I had been given that as an option during graduate school.

What is your most meaningful ANSO-related story?

Three summers ago I travelled to Ecuador to evaluate two summer field schools offered by Florida Atlantic University. At the time Dr. Nikki Jastremski was an instructor with our department and was an instructor with one of the field schools. I went down to focus primarily on the bioarchaeology field school, but found myself spending most of my time with the cultural anthropologist. I remembered why I became an anthropologist in the first place. Ethnography was wonderful; I couldn't stop asking questions about the local village. Plus there was a four hour bus ride to and from the field location to the airport. That, too, was quite an experience, especially given what little Spanish I know. I would go back to Ecuador in a heartbeat.

Why did you choose your major?

I had to take a social science course as part of my liberal studies. A friend of mine told me to take Introduction to Anthropology.

He said I would like it. Of course, like many of us I had no clue what anthropology was. He was right I did enjoy the course. What caused me to major in anthropology was the professor, Dr. Gerald Broce. After the first exam he pulled me aside and said "You should major in Anthropology, you think like an anthropologist." He was right, I did, and have never looked back (I should add that prior to this I was an electrical engineering major. Talk about shifting gears).



What did you do the summer after you graduated from undergrad?

Right after graduation I married my wife (of 42 years) and we moved to Columbus, Ohio. In September I was to start in the MA program in Anthropology at The Ohio State University. Neither of us had jobs. I found myself working at a Pizzeria. The manager was quite flexible about hours and I kept working there into graduate school until I was offered a teaching assistantship.

What is one of the most important things you learned outside of the classroom?

After my wife was diagnosed with cancer, colleagues, friends, and neighbors stepped in to help in any way they could. I have thought about this, I wonder how people without a social network survive. The microcosm I live in is like a small band where survival hinges on mutual support.

How do you define good teaching?

This is now my 37th year as a professor. I still continue to strive to improve myself. I don't know if I have a definition but I know in class when the students are one step ahead of me that I'm doing it right.

What research are you currently working on or interested in? Why?

I am currently working on the analysis of saw cutmarks as a product of dismemberment. I recently came across the use of GIS in atypical applications. I have a book chapter forthcoming on the use of GIS and the interpretation of saw cutmarks. Currently, I am expanding on this and have a research design in progress to compare opposite side of a saw cut to determine whether the same information can be derived from each side.

What advice do you have for students just starting out in your discipline today?

Be flexible, that is what anthropology is all about.

Sociology student: Carissa Snedden

What is your major / minor?

I am a sociology major with a minor in creative writing.

How do you plan to use your major / minor?

The simple answer is that I want to use sociology to help veterans. Sociology has the ability to explain how culture and community is affecting individuals and with current issues, such as twenty veterans a day committing suicide, it is abundantly clear that the problem is more than just mental health concerns.

What are some things you're interested in related to ANSO?

In sociology I am most interested in understanding what unites people. As a veteran I saw that a highly regulated environment forced strangers from different walks of life to come together and work towards a common mission. I am seeking to find a way to motivate civilians to form those closer-than-family ties and figure out what it will take for them to get involved in their community. I want to help bridge the gap between military culture and civilian culture so that veterans can find a sense of belonging and purpose after their time in service.



What is your most meaningful ANSO-related story?

I am a very sentimental person and my belief in caring for others is what spurs on my unquenchable desire to reform communities and make sure that everyone is included and working toward a common goal. This semester Dr. Nieckarz recommend the book *Tribe: On Homecoming and Belonging* and I ordered the book and read it the day it came in the mail. I know he probably just thought of me due to my focus on veterans and community. However, the book used studies that I had used in some of my papers and I felt like the author completely understood what I am always attempting to explain. Since Dr. Nieckarz recommended it to me it felt like he supports my passion to help veterans, and that is the type of concern for our fellow man that I am always looking for in any environment.

Why did you chose your major?

The honest answer is God, but since metaphysics does not have much weight in modern science instead I'll say that sociology is life. I was going to study nutrition and dietetics because I wanted to help people but that would not have a big enough impact. What people are putting into their bodies is determined largely by the economy, their income, and their access to healthy options. Sociology addresses the bigger issues of why people are not making healthy choices instead of focusing on what they are eating.

What are your plans for the summer after graduation?

Life after graduation seems extremely overwhelming right now, but I have been looking into Master's programs and veteran-related internships. I think the loose plan so far is to move back to my hometown (Pittsburgh, P.A.), get involved with a local American Legion chapter, and find internships in the area just for the experience. Then after a year of having a hands-on look at what problems our veterans are facing, I would like to continue my education in a sociology graduate program where I can focus on military sociology.

What are your long-term plans for the future?

This question makes me feel as if someone is plotting to thwart my future goals. I honestly enjoy learning. I am a nerd. So my bachelor's degree and any further education will not just be checking a box to earn a higher paycheck. I feel that my time at WCU has expanded my mind and allowed me to grow as a person and that is what I will do in graduate school or a doctoral program as well. I want to advocate for and aid homeless veterans and I think the more knowledge I gain, the better I can help them.

What is one of the most important things you learned outside of the classroom while attending WCU?

I feel like this has been a real step in independence for me. I got out of the Air Force and lived with friends and family for a few months. I had already been accepted to WCU and knew I was coming to WCU, so I drove down and got a hotel room for three days until I found an apartment. It is an extremely challenging experience to move to a foreign part of the country, have no idea what to expect of a college environment, and then find your place in this new, scary civilian world. I did it with the help of organizations like the Student Veteran Association, many advisors, and

stellar professors. After this, I bet that being required to move for a job or furthering my education will be much easier.

What is something you recently read that made you think differently?

Goodness, I feel like I'm supposed to respond with Plato's Republic and give a really academic answer. *Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri. It's a fictional story but when I read it I couldn't help but apply the sociological imagination. I am fairly certain that the author was heavily commenting on American culture. I mean, every time I think of it I have new revelations on what Lahiri is attempting to draw attention towards and I am fairly certain it is not the story of an Indian American vacationing in India. At one moment I really just sat back and thought "Wow, I am such a sociology major."

Anything else you'd like to add?

I know this may sound a little like flattery but I sincerely mean it when I say that my professors are the reason I succeed. My parents never went to college so this was a journey that I could not seek their advice on. My professors were encouraging, open-minded, and allowed me time to talk with them outside of class to better understand the material. I am truly thankful that they were more than just teachers; they were mentors.

Sociology alumnus: Keith Tyburski (2006)

What was your ANSO major / specialization?

Sociology major, Psychology minor

What are you doing now?

Head Golf Coach, Colgate University

What is your most meaningful ANSO-related story?

The marriage and family class I took with Dr. Chamberlain had great group discussions, regardless of what topic we discussed.

Why did you choose your major?

I wanted to learn about how people interact with one another, why we act the way we do, and how to better understand other people's beliefs/point of views/cultures/customs.



What did you do the summer after you graduated from undergrad?

Turned professional (golf).

What is one of the most important things you learned outside of the classroom?

How you respond from your shortcomings says more about you than how you respond to your successes.

What advice do you have for students just starting out in your field today?

Continue to keep an open mind as you choose your classes and utilize the wonderful professors in the department. They are resources!

Anything else to add?

You are not who you think you are.
You are not who others think you are.
You are who you think others think you are.

Sociology faculty: Anthony Hickey

What was your ANSO major / concentration?

My undergrad was in Rural Sociology and my Ph.D. is in Development Sociology.

What are some things you're interested in related to ANSO?

My primary focus has been concerning change in rural communities, particularly here in the Appalachian Mountains.

What is your most meaningful ANSO-related story?

Maybe the time that I was driving a state car, interviewing farmers in NY and took a shotgun blast in the trunk. I had a hard time explaining this to the motor pool and my Department Head.

Why did you choose your major?

I took a class that involved action research regarding mechanization and farm labor. I was hooked.

What did you do the summer after you graduated from undergrad?

Tended bar and got ready to leave for graduate school.



What is one of the most important things you learned outside of the classroom?

That all social structures, community to global, inevitably involve winners and losers. I find myself thinking about those who have been on the losing end of things.

What is something you recently read that made you think differently?

Two books: *Evicted* and *Hillbilly Elegy*.

How do you define good teaching?

Connecting students with the academic material about a subject so that they have a new framework to understand the world around them.

What advice do you have for students just starting out in your field today?

Broaden your horizons...there is a lot of work to be done outside of the context of academia.

Anything else you'd like to add?

This is my third university over 40 years. Western Carolina University is the best environment for teaching and learning that I can imagine.



Please Keep in Touch!

Don't hesitate to contact us with your questions, queries, and suggestions! [SEND US YOUR NEWS!](#) We are always interested to hear from alumni and learn what you are doing. We want to include more alumni news in future newsletters so please keep us informed! If you have specific comments, suggestions, or information we should include in future newsletters, or if you are a previous graduate of our department and interested in being profiled in one of our future newsletters, please contact our newsletter editor, Dr. Ben Steere, at basteere@wcu.edu or contact our department head, Dr. Brennan, at kbrennan@wcu.edu.

Your WCU Anthropology and Sociology Legacy

The Department of Anthropology and Sociology has kicked off a fundraising campaign aimed at offering need-based scholarships to our students. Cornerstone Scholarships, named by Richard Starnes, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, are endowed, which means that funds are awarded to students from the interest generated by a large sum of money. Our goal is to raise a minimum of \$10,000, but the larger the endowment, the more students we can fund. Thanks to generous contributions from the Bryan and Haney families and donations from 100% of the faculty of the Anthropology and Sociology department, we are making great progress, but we need your help to reach the remainder of our goal.

Consider donating directly to the Cornerstone Scholarship Fund for the Department of Anthropology and Sociology. You can make a gift online by clicking [this link](#) or typing "alumni.wcu.edu/anthropologysociologyscholarship" into your web browser of choice.

For more information, or to make a donation, contact:

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Dr. Anthony Hickey, hickey@wcu.edu, 828-227-3832

Co-Chairs, ANSO Fund Raising Committee

