

Exploring the Past: Archaeology in the Upper Mississippi River Valley

**NEH Summer Institute 2010
University of Wisconsin–La Crosse
Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center**

Dear Colleague,

Walking beside thousand-year-old burial mounds, flaking raw stone into usable tools, learning how archaeologists move from broken potsherds to human behavior, and understanding how humans adapt to complex, ever-changing environments—our 2010 Summer Institute features all this and more. We'll provide three weeks of intense, guided exploration into how Native American and Euro-American cultures have adapted to the Upper Mississippi River Valley over nearly fourteen millennia, and how we learn about such cultures through archaeology, the study of past human cultures from the remains they left behind.

Archaeology is an essential topic for K-12 teachers. It links the humanities and the sciences and offers an appealing way to engage students' interest and enhance their content knowledge in a wide range of subject areas. The "Driftless Area" of the Upper Mississippi Valley, with its rich resources and rugged, unglaciated terrain, is a perfect laboratory for applying the process and concepts of archaeology to explore how human cultures have changed and adapted through time. The region's archaeological record reveals a remarkable history of adaptation and growth. When Europeans arrived, the area was home to complex Native American cultures that had adapted to the region's environment over thousands of years. By extending the historic record back through time, archaeology offers a window through which we can see how those cultures lived and evolved. The influx of Europeans into the region led to massive changes and new adaptations for both Native peoples and immigrants, and the resulting cultures continue to evolve today. The common thread linking these disparate cultures, from the earliest mammoth-hunters to today's technology-dependent Web-surfers, is adaptation to the region's rich but challenging environment.

Comparing different adaptations to the same locale is a fascinating way to study the human experience. All societies make choices about how to meet their basic survival needs, and these choices are linked to every other facet of their culture. Through inquiry-based case studies, you'll look at the environment and technological know-how available to the region's residents at different times, think about the choices particular groups might have made to meet their basic needs, and test your interpretations by looking at actual archaeological evidence. This real-world approach will ensure a rich, authentic experience in how archaeology works and give you new insights into the dynamic nature of all human cultures, past and present.

We'll use a variety of learning approaches throughout the Institute, including classroom presentations and lively discussions, hands-on laboratory and workshop activities, demonstrations, field trips, and readings. Highlights include a one-day excavation experience; a hands-on lab day where you'll learn how artifacts are cleaned, processed, and cataloged; and a technology field day where you'll fashion a stone arrowhead and a wooden arrow and try a spear-thrower. Field trip destinations range from an Amish farm to Effigy Mounds National Monument, a cave with fragile Native American rock art, a battle location from the Black Hawk War of 1832, and other sites that complement the course content. Individual projects will encourage you to create ways to bring your experiences and your new perspective on human cultures back to the classroom, no matter what your teaching area.

Staff: The Institute will be led by staff with complementary areas of expertise and extensive experience working together on education-related projects. The co-directors, Jim Theler, Kathy Stevenson, and Bonnie Jancik, have all been active in teacher professional development activities that focus on using archaeology as a vehicle for teaching a variety of subject areas. Theler and Stevenson's knowledge and experiences as archaeologists are complemented by Jancik's background in precollegiate education. Guest presenters will share their own special expertise and viewpoints. All of the staff have broad experience in conveying the excitement and fascination of archaeology to students, teachers, and the general public.

Dr. James Theler has over thirty years of research and teaching experience in archaeology and is known for his dynamic teaching style and his extensive knowledge of human cultures. His specialties include reconstructing and studying past environments, analyzing animal remains, and understanding pre-European cultures of the Midwest. Jim is currently studying the archaeology of the Bad Axe River Valley, a scenic valley in southwestern Wisconsin that will be a focus for Institute case studies and field experiences. He'll take the lead with the Institute's core content and classroom presentations.

Dr. Katherine Stevenson has been active in regional research for over thirty years. Her specialties include the history of regional archaeology, the study of animal remains, archival research, mound and burial sites, and regional caves and rock art. She's also an author and editor of K-6 educational nonfiction, with an interest in how archaeology and Native cultures are portrayed in children's books. Kathy will work with Jim on content presentation and take the lead with activities, case studies, and archaeology-related aspects of participant projects.

Ms. Bonnie Jancik has been involved in formal elementary education and informal K-12 education for over thirty years. She's widely known for her work in archaeology education and professional development for practicing teachers, including teaching numerous undergraduate and graduate classes and workshops for K-12 teachers. She's particularly interested in exploring how archaeology can be used as a vehicle for teaching a wide range of subjects. Bonnie will take the lead on education-related aspects of the Institute, including participant projects.

Mr. Robert "Ernie" Boszhardt has been conducting archaeological research for over thirty years and is widely respected for his encyclopedic knowledge of regional sites and cultures. He works extensively with the public and is an expert on regional rock art, stone tools, and pottery. Ernie will guide a field trip that will include Effigy Mounds National Monument, Larsen Cave, and the Battle of the Bad Axe location, and will lead key demonstrations and activities, including making stone tools.

Mr. Loren Cade is a lifelong resident of the Bad Axe River Valley, and his farmland includes important archaeological sites. Loren has a long-term interest in regional archaeology and ancient technology, and he's an expert at making wooden arrows and hunting with traditional bows. He'll host an excavation experience at his farm, lead activities involving ancient technology, discuss the ethics of artifact collecting, and provide insights on evolving adaptations for local farmers.

Stipend: Participants will receive stipend of \$2,700 for attending all meetings (Monday–Friday, July 12–30, 2010) and engaging fully in the work of the project. Stipends are intended to help cover travel expenses to and from the project location, books and other research expenses, and living expenses for the duration of the period spent in residence. Stipends are taxable. Applicants should note that supplements will not be given in cases where the stipend is insufficient to cover all expenses.

Participants will receive a check for 1/2 of the stipend (\$1,350) when they arrive. Participants will receive the remaining 1/2 of the stipend (\$1,350) on July 30, the final day of the Institute. Payments for the dorms will be due at the end of the Institute. Participants who, for any reason, do not complete the full tenure of the Institute must refund a pro-rata portion of the stipend.

CEUs: Ten Continuing Education Units (CEU) are available for those participating fully in the work of the Institute. Those interested in receiving CEUs must sign the daily sign-in sheet and provide a check for \$15.00. The certificate will be mailed (by the University of Wisconsin–La Crosse Continuing Education) to participants approximately two weeks after completion of the Institute.

Graduate Credits: Three graduate credits are available for participants in the Institute, although participants are responsible for their own registration and all payments. Participants seeking credit will design and complete an appropriate project as part of the course. These will be developed in conjunction with project staff and will depend on the interests and needs of the participants but might include curriculum development, a research paper, or other projects.

The University will allow registration as a “special non-degree seeking student” <http://www.uwlax.edu/admissions/html/nondegree.htm> and participants will then enroll in ARC 598 – Seminar in Archaeology. The cost for three credits is anticipated (actual fees available in May) to be \$1226.19 for Wisconsin residents, \$3053.83 for nonresidents, \$1272.11 for Minnesota residents with reciprocity, and \$1793.85 for Midwest Student Exchange (students who are residents of the states of Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska and North Dakota).

UW-L Visiting Scholars: Participants will have the status of “visiting scholars” at UW-L, entitling them to access to the library, ability to log-on to campus computers, and other campus-based services.

Technology: Portions of the Institute will be offered through Desire2Learn (D2L), an online, Web-based course framework that provides a secure location for posting and downloading class information, conducting discussions, and contacting classmates and instructors. Access is through a standard Web browser.

The La Crosse Area and the Institute Hosts: La Crosse is a great place to spend the summer! Located on the Great River Road, which winds north and south through 10 states, La Crosse (<http://explorelacrosse.com>, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Crosse,_Wisconsin) is the hub of the geographic area known as the 7 Rivers Region. Densely wooded valleys, scenic bluffs, the famous Mississippi River and its tributaries, lush marshes, and native prairies provide prime opportunities for outdoor recreation, including hiking, biking, fishing, camping, and canoeing. Like to shop? La Crosse is known for its historic downtown district, which boasts dozens of specialty boutiques; it also has one of the largest malls in the region as well as dozens of restaurants, a number of movie theaters, and several venues that host concerts and other special events (from <http://www.uwlax.edu/admissions>).

- Information about UW-L can be found on-line at: <http://www.uwlax.edu>.
- Information about the Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center can be found online at: <http://www.uwlax.edu/mvac>.
- Information about UW-L’s Archaeological Studies Program can be found online at: <http://www.uwlax.edu/Sociology/Archaeology/major.htm>.

UW-L Dorm Facilities: UW-L is a residential campus with dormitories, classrooms, and support for over 9,500 students. The project staff is encouraging Institute participants to stay in the UW-L dorms for a number of reasons, including easy access, opportunity for informal interactions, and fostering a sense of community. Arrangements have been made for participants to stay in Reuter Hall, a new residence hall that opened in September 2006 and has a convenient campus location. Reuter Hall provides comfortable suites that meet the demands of students. Each suite has four private bedrooms, a semi-private bathroom, a kitchen area, and a living room. General-use spaces in Reuter Hall include a group kitchen facility, a lounge/game room area, a small-group study area, a mailroom, a recycling room, and multipurpose areas. This new hall provides ADA-compliant living accommodations.

Reuter Hall rates: Motel style (includes once each week: 2 sheets, pillowcase, blanket, towel, washcloth, pillow): \$30 per day or \$180 per week (7 overnights).

Off-Campus Housing Options: We realize that some participants may decide to stay elsewhere. Numerous off-campus housing opportunities are available in the La Crosse area.

Meal Options: A variety of meal options are available. For those staying in Reuter Hall, the kitchens in the individual suites allow convenient meal preparation in the dorm. Campus Food Services and area restaurants are also available.

Participant Selection: In alignment with the selection criteria outlined by NEH, the selection committee will be looking for evidence of the following qualities as they select the 25 Institute participants:

1. More important than the subject or grade level the applicant teaches is that the applicant is a lifelong learner who is enthusiastic about learning and eager to experience new things.
2. We will be looking for a personal interest or a passion for the topic because this translates to excitement and motivation in the classroom.
3. Applicants do not need to teach lessons on the process of archaeology or the region's earliest people; however, they do need to show creativity in adapting the Institute's content to their unique teaching situations. The process of archaeology and the results of archaeological research can be an effective vehicle for hands-on activities that employ an interdisciplinary (science, social studies, language arts, math, visual arts, etc.) approach that engages students in higher-level thinking.

Application Information: In addition to this document, you must also read the *NEH Application and Instructions* document included with this letter. A checklist for application materials is included in that document. Your completed application packet should be postmarked no later than **March 2, 2010**, and should be addressed as follows: Bonnie Jancik, MVAC UW-L, 1725 State St., La Crosse, WI 54601. Successful applicants will be notified of their selection on April 1 and will have until April 5 to accept or decline the offer. Applicants who will not be home during the notification period should provide an address and phone number where they can be reached.

Perhaps the most important part of the application is the essay. This essay should include your reasons for applying to the specific project; your relevant personal and academic information; your qualifications to do the work of the project and make a contribution to it; what you hope to accomplish; and the relationship of the study to your teaching.