Jeff Bryant

Jeff used his DeCormier Award to travel to Leicester University in the United Kingdom to study microbotanical methods under the mentorship of paleoecologist Juan Carlos Berrio. Jeff studied samples he collected earlier this year, during his participation in excavations at Cerro Jazmín in the Mixteca Alta, directed by Verónica Pérez Rodríguez. He learned the procedures for extracting pollen, fungal spores, and micro-charcoal, and was trained on their identification and quantification. He will be presenting a paper on the preliminary results at the Society for American Archaeology annual meeting in spring of 2016. Jeff plans to utilize his new skill set to collaborate with geoarchaeologist Tim Beach in Belize. The project will involve taking sediment cores and surface samples to examine the introduction of cattle on pastures cleared from forest during the 1950s, focusing on fungal spores associated with herbivore feces. The project will help to illuminate formation processes that will provide a foundation for his dissertation involving investigation of environmental degradation during the colonial and industrial periods in Mexico.