Dear IMS friends and colleagues,

It is with sadness that I write you this year due to the passing of Robert DeCormier in November. He was such a creative and caring man who touched the lives of so many people, including us in the IMS community. It has been an honor to spend time with Bob and Louise DeCormier, as well as their daughter Robin and son-in-law George Timko, every year during the IMS DeCormier awards ceremony. The ritual of this May ceremony, when IMS honors and supports student research, is framed around the DeCormier/Timko visit to present students with the “Christopher DeCormier Scholarship” since 1978. Born from the pain of losing their son Christopher, Bob and Louise established the scholarship to help promote research in the region that Christopher loved—Mesoamerica. The tangible results of this legacy during the past 39 years are remarkable. To date, the DeCormier Memorial Scholarships have provided sixty-nine grants to graduate students that have supported the research of nineteen of our students who have gotten teaching and research jobs where they can devote themselves to studies the cultures, languages, history and prehistory of Mesoamerica. Bob’s presence will be sorely missed by all in the IMS community and we send our warmest wishes to his beloved family.

Many events were undertaken by IMS over the past year. Last spring we hosted Dr. Scott Anderbois (Brown University) who spoke of his research on Yucatec Maya linguistics, Dr. Veronica Heredia Espino (El Colegio de Michoacan) who presented her archaeological results from Jalisco, Mexico and IMS Board Member, Dr. Joanna Dreby who updated us on her research on social class and food practices among Mexican migrant households. In April 2017, IMS also sponsored the 4th annual Day of Triqui Culture together with friends from Triquis sin Fronteras. This fall, IMS co-sponsored the viewing of the film The U Turn: A Transformational Journey and a question and answer session with producer and director Luis Argueta as well as a lecture by Dr. Elsa Redmond (American Museum of Natural History) on her research in Oaxaca, Mexico on the development of the early Zapotec state.

IMS board members have been engaged in research and fieldwork over the past year and have won a variety of awards. Heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Carmack for the much-deserved lifetime achievement award presented to him from the American Society of Ethnohistory. Dr. Dreby is spending the Fall 2017 semester on Fulbright Fellowship in Costa Rica and Dr. Schwallier spent the summer as a Dumbar-ton Oaks fellow in Washington, DC. Drs. Burkhart, Carmack and Rosenswig each had new books published in 2017 and Dr. Justeson had a major article published—the result of three years of research and analysis. In addition to their respective scholarly endeavors, this past year Drs. Burkhart, Burrell, Clemens, Little and Perez have each been actively engaged in outreach with the peoples of Mesoamerica who they study in Mexico, Guatemala and New York.

One of our core missions for IMS is to support student research. This year’s DeCormier Memorial Scholarship allowed Rebecca Mendelsohn to disseminate results of her now-completed doctoral dissertation project to the local community at Izapa in Chiapas, Mexico. A First Encounter Award allowed Aphizele (Aphi) Lemus Medina to travel to West Mexico and assist with laboratory analysis of archaeological remains in Jalisco as well as begin some archival research in Jalisco and Nayarit. Becky and Alphi have begun new phases of their respective careers and we expect great things from both of them! Please take the time to read updates on six other IMS student associates who each report on their research activities during the past year. I am proud of our students’ accomplishments.

I wish you all a tranquil holiday season and all of the best for 2018.
In Spring 2017, IMS hosted three speakers. In February, Dr. Scott Anderbois from Brown University discussed his research entitled, *Yucatec Maya Discourse Particles and the Structure of Speech Arts*. In March, Dr. Verenice Heredia Espinoa from El Colegio de Michoacán, A.C. presented her research entitled, *The Segmentary State Model and its Application to the Teuchitlán Tradition of Jalisco, México*. In April, IMS Board Member, Dr. Joanna Dreby presented her research in a talk entitled, *Social Class and Children’s Food Practices in Mexican Migrant Households*.

In Fall 2017, IMS hosted two events. In September, IMS co-sponsored the viewing of the film *The U Turn: A Transformational Journey* produced and directed by Luis Argueta. This film narrated the transformational journey of the immigrant workers who broke the silence about the abuses they endured at the Agriprocessors meatpacking plant in Postville, Iowa and the community that would not abandon them. In November, Dr. Elsa M. Redmond from the American Museum of Natural History presented her and Dr. Charles Spencer’s on research that they have carried out in southern Mexico on the development of the early Zapotec state. Her talk was entitled, *Recent Research on Early State Formation in Oaxaca, Mexico*.

In April 2017, IMS co-sponsored our fourth annual Day of Triqui Culture together with our friends from Triquis sin Fronteras. This year the event was held on the UAlbany campus in the Ballroom of the Campus Center. The three Oaxacan restaurants (*Oaxaqueña Triqui*, *Viva Cinco de Mayo*, and *Cocina Vasquez*) in Albany graciously catered the event. The food, as always, was delicious! Monica de Jesus Ramirez gave a wonderful presentation, where she described the Triqui communities found in both Mexico and Albany. She also mentioned future goals of the community, in which one is the creation of a Copala Triqui – English – Spanish dictionary app that is based on the existing online dictionary. There were also beautiful dances that were performed by members of the Triqui community. We look forward to next year’s celebration with the Triqui community!
I was saddened upon learning of the death of Robert DeCormier, who has so generously supported IMS and many students doing fieldwork in Mesoamerica. This all began when his son was one of my students, and who accompanied me to Guatemala several times to learn about the peoples there and to serve them. With my permission, his son also did fieldwork in Guatemala for two semesters, before leaving our department for studies elsewhere (and where he passed away).

The DeCormiers have provided funds for IMS. They faithfully attended our meetings and spoken about our research projects. They were most faithful in their help to students studying in Mesoamerica. They honored our students receiving funding thanks to their generous contributions.

A better, smarter, and kinder man I have never known, and this also holds for Robert’s dear wife and children. IMS has been greatly blessed to have received so much love and support from Robert and his wife and family.

Bob will never be forgotten by IMS and each one of us.

With love and sadness,
Robert Carmack

Robert DeCormier (left) and his son, Christopher DeCormier (right) in 1976.
Thanks to the DeCormier scholarship, Rebecca returned to Izapa to disseminate the results of her dissertation project with the community.

Spring 2017 marked Rebecca’s final semester in the program at UAlbany. She completed her dissertation “Resilience and Interregional Interaction at the Early Mesoamerican City of Izapa: The Formative to Classic Period Transition” and graduated in May. Her dissertation combined economic data recovered from household excavations undertaken in 2014 with settlement, and ritual data to explain why Izapa’s population survived at a time (AD 100-250) when many early cities struggled or collapsed.

In November, an article outlining the chronological contributions of this project was released for early view with the journal Latin American Antiquity. This piece would not have been possible without a 2014 Christopher DeCormier memorial scholarship funding carbon dates for Rebecca’s Izapa Household Archaeology Project. This summer Rebecca used her funds from the 2017 Christopher DeCormier memorial scholarship to return to the site of Izapa on the Pacific coast of Mexico and disseminate the results of her dissertation project with the community. She distributed pamphlets highlighting the most exciting finds from the excavations and summarizing new information about the ancient people who lived at the site. The pamphlet is available to download in English and Spanish on her website. While she was there, Rebecca also scouted the next part of the site where she plans to undertake excavations, a causeway recently discovered on Rosenswig’s lidar map of the site, that links the Early (1900 BC-250 AD) and Late (AD 100-1000) ceremonial centers.

In September, Rebecca moved to Panama for a postdoctoral fellowship with the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI). She is spending the year working at STRI’s Center for Paleoeconomy and Archaeology, studying microscopic plant remains (phytoliths and starch grains) she recovered from domestic artifacts during her excavations at Izapa. The project is designed to determine which plant foods, beyond maize, played a role in the diets of people living in this coastal lowland environmental zone. Of particular interest are the dietary patterns following the eruption of the Tacaná volcano, when muddy floods may have impacted maize agriculture at the site.

Example of phytoliths recovered from artifacts from Izapa
Over the summer (May 22 to August 21), thanks to the First Encounter Scholarship, Aphi was able to travel to West Mexico and familiarize himself with the material culture of the ancient inhabitants of the region. He was able to visit the core areas of Mesoamerica’s West, which included the modern states of Colima, Jalisco, Michoacán, and Nayarit. He visited every archaeological site that was open to the public, as well as the museums that housed archeological material from these ancient groups. The scholarship enhanced his opportunity to see and begin to understand material culture across this extensive and diverse geographic region over a few millennia.

Besides exploring Mesoamerica’s occidente, he was able to conduct laboratory work at the Centro Interpretativo’s archeology lab, which is located within the archeological site of Los Guachimontones. While there, he assisted Dr. Venenice Heredia Espinoza (Director of the Proyecto Arqueologico Teuchitlan) conducting lithic and ceramic analysis. This gave him an opportunity to become familiar with the archeological material of Los Guachimontones site, which is the best studied site in the state of Jalisco. He also began to look through excavation reports to familiarize himself with the archeological work previously conducted at the site and at nearby areas.

His stay in Mexico also included preliminary archival research in Jalisco and Nayarit. The aim was to gather information on the site of Cerro de la Cebollas and the region. He was able to locate and visit the Cerro de la Cebollas site, which is found on private land currently being used for agriculture. While there, he unfortunately noted clear and observable evidence of destruction of this site due to clearing of the land for agricultural use by local farmers. Although looting is a major issue for archeological sites in Western Mexico, he did not observe any obvious signs of looting at Cerro de las Cebollas.

He is already making plans to return to Jalisco and Nayarit next summer, to continue fieldwork at Los Guachimontones and learn more about the state of archaeological research in this region. He is currently working to form his PhD committee, and he is also working with Dr. Heredia Espinoza to develop a research proposal for his dissertation, which will involve his archeological research at Los Guachimontones. Aphi attributes much of the success of his learning and exploration of el occidente over the past summer to the assistance provided by the First Encounter Scholarship, and would like to thank the Department of Anthropology and the Institute for Mesoamerican Studies for their support.

The archaeological site of Los Guachimontones

The First Encounter Award

2017 Recipient: Aphizetl E. Lemus Medina

The First Encounter Award allowed Aphi to travel to West Mexico to familiarize himself with the material culture of the region’s ancient inhabitants.
In November 2017 from the University of Warsaw is In Citlalmachiyotl/The Star Sign: A Nahuatl Drama of the Three Kings. Part of a series of publications edited by Justyna Olko and John Sullivan, aimed at language revitalization and literacy among contemporary Nahuatl-speakers, this is a new presentation of an Epiphany play first published in Nahuatl Theater Volume 4. For this publication, I wrote a new introductory study and, along with University at Albany anthropology doctoral student Abelardo de la Cruz de la Cruz and John Sullivan, prepared a second transcription of the text, placing it in the standardized Andrews-Campbell-Karttunen (ACK) orthography. This book will have a monolingual Nahuatl companion volume featuring some of my introductory commentary translated into contemporary Huaxtecan Nahuatl by Abelardo de la Cruz de la Cruz and presenting the two versions of the play in Nahuatl. “The Star Sign” is the first work of colonial Nahuatl indigenous literature ever published in this standardized orthography. We hope this will be followed by more work that helps to support contemporary Nahuas’ access to the literary production of their ancestors.

Since January 2017 I have returned to business left unfinished at the end of the Nahuatl Theater publication project: the corpus of eighteenth-century Passion plays, only two of which Barry Sell and I were able to include in Nahuatl Theater Volume 4 (2009). I have embarked on a long-term project fully exploring this corpus of (at least) six Nahuatl plays along with the Mexican Inquisition and other documentation relating to the suppression of this performance genre. The Inquisition files include four plays written in Spanish in an attempt to continue the practice when Nahuatl performances were outlawed. In the earlier work I observed that plays from different communities overlap in some scenes and differ in others, suggesting that pieces of scripts circulated among Nahuas and were pieced together into a complete play based on local preferences and availability. I seek to map these interconnections and sketch out a full view of the options available to Nahua speakers when they set about staging this narrative, possibly compiling these analyses in a print volume while publishing texts and translations (Nahuatl into English and Spanish, Spanish into English) online. Collaborating on this project is Professor Daniel Mosquera of Union College, who has studied the Spanish-language texts extensively and also carried out an ethnographic film project among Passion play performers in communities represented in the Inquisition files. IMS research associate Nadia Marín-Guadarrama will also be involved in the translation projects.
Jennifer Burrell

Dr. Burrell commenced a new research project this year. While finishing research on security and development in Guatemala in 2016, Burrell and Mounia El Kotni (UAlbany PhD 2016 and 2013 DeCormier Award winner) met and interviewed several grassroots anti-corruption activists. Funding from UAlbany’s Faculty Research Award made possible a return trip in June and July 2017 to visit the activists, learn about the steps they had made in the intervening year, and to begin preliminary ethnographic research on corruption and political life in Guatemala. The activists are excited to collaborate with Burrell and El Kotni and to work with them on generating publications about their growing movement.

Dr. Burrell gave a number of papers this year. In April, she was invited to Princeton to present a paper at the workshop “Boundary Matters: Intimate Engagements with Ethnic Difference,” a 2-day event that gathers former fellows of the university’s Institute for International and Regional Studies. Her paper at the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) contributed to rethinking refugee policy on the panel “Rollback, Repeal, Retrenchment: Anthropology and the Dismantling of Public Policy.” She also gave an invited lecture on “Human Rights, Health and Structural Violence” for the Global Institute of Health and Human Rights at UAlbany.

Dr. Burrell continues to serve on the Committee for Human Rights of the American Anthropological Association, to which she was elected in 2014. The committee has been especially active in advising the AAA Executive Committee and membership on human rights crises throughout the world, preparing responses to these crises and releasing statements on them, and advising members on how to contribute their expertise. In January, she was appointed to the Rapid Response Network of the AAA, which investigates attacks on anthropologists’ academic freedom and advocates for the academic freedom of all scholars. More information on the network can be found here: [http://www.americananthro.org/ParticipateAndAdvocate/AdvocacyDetail.aspx?ItemNumber=21041](http://www.americananthro.org/ParticipateAndAdvocate/AdvocacyDetail.aspx?ItemNumber=21041). Dr. Burrell also organized and chaired a roundtable session (co-moderated with Richard Wilson) at the American Anthropological Association meetings in Washington DC that put DC-based human rights defenders from UnidosUS (formerly NCLR), ACLU, AAAS and Farm-worker Justice into conversation with anthropologists, providing insights, experiences and thoughts on doing advocacy work in the first year of the Trump administration. Some of the suggestions from this session can be found on the AAA’s Human Rights Day blog: [https://blog.americananthro.org/2017/12/10/human-rights-in-an-age-of-immorality-and-unreason/](https://blog.americananthro.org/2017/12/10/human-rights-in-an-age-of-immorality-and-unreason/).

The two pictures above are of a workshop from the NGO PCI with women leaders on health and food. (Photos taken by Mounia El Kotni)
Robert Carmack

Robert Carmack (Professor Emeritus) has recently published a new book entitled, The Indigenous Peoples of Mesoamerica and Central America. The cultural groups his book focuses on are the K’iche’ Maya of Guatemala, Masayan peoples of Nicaragua, and the native peoples of Buenos Aires and Costa Rica. This book draws upon his extensive ethnographic fieldwork and analyzes how indigenous peoples shaped their social and natural worlds from the long pre-Hispanic era to the present.

He also received the “Lifetime Achievement Award” by the American Society of Ethnohistory (ASE) at their annual meeting held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, for outstanding achievements in the field of Ethnohistory. This award was presented at the ASE Annual Banquet on October 14, 2017 by the president of the ASE.

Lauren Clemens

Dr. Lauren Clemens continues in her work with Mayan languages. Her paper with Dr. Jessica Coon will soon appear in the journal of Language.

Clemens participated in the Symposium on American Indian Languages (SAIL) at the Rochester Institute of Technology in April, by presenting a paper on inflectional change in Copala Triqui with former IMS board member, Dr. George Aaron Broadwell (University of Florida), as well as the initial findings of a semi-naturalistic study of word order in different focus context in Copala Triqui with University of Albany undergraduates Mónica De Jesus Ramírez, Samantha Lefavour, and Zena Zimmerglass. Over the summer, Dr. Clemens collaborated with Dr. Broadwell and University of Florida graduate student Michael Stoop on video documentation of Copala Triqui. This fall, Dr. Clemens along with Dr. Little, Copala Triqui speakers Román Vidal López and Alvino Fuentes, and graduate students Rebecca Dinkel, Alessio Fasullo, and Jamilla Rodríguez have been meeting regularly to continue investigating Copala Triqui’s grammatical structure in practical usage contexts, building towards the development of a pedagogical grammar.

Dr. Clemens also continues to work on Mayan languages. Her paper with Dr. Jessica Coon (McGill University), “Deriving verb-initial word order in Mayan,” is slated to
appear in the journal *Language*. This past October, Drs. Clemens and Coon gave a Keynote presentation on this topic at the Conference on Indigenous Languages of Latin America VIII in Austin, Texas. In the coming year, Dr. Clemens looks forward to returning to Chiapas to continue work on focus intonation in Ch’ol.

Joanna Dreby spent the second half of 2017 in the field in Costa Rica. Funded by a Fulbright Scholar Grant, the project titled “Farm Families and the Modern Food Economy: Markets and Household Strategies in Costa Rica and the United States” compares the experiences of over 30 families that farm in the Central Valley region of Costa Rica to those of 50 families Dreby interviewed between 2015 and 2017 in upstate New York. Dr. Dreby is broadly interested in how processes of globalization shape family formation, gender divisions of labor and childrearing. Comparing families that farm in Costa Rica and New York allows for exploration of

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**Joanna Dreby**

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Funded by a Fulbright Scholar Grant, Dreby has spent her fall semester in Costa Rica conducting field work.
Visiting an organic farm with son Niko in the central highlands.

how different levels of engagement in global food markets impact family level experiences.

In 2017, Dr. Dreby published her first article from her research with farmers titled “At the Nexus of Work and Family: Family Farms in Upstate New York” in the Journal of Rural Studies (49: 151-161) with graduate student co-authors Gowoon Jung and Rachel Sullivan. She also continues to write on public policy implications for children and migrant families. In 2017 she published with Zoya Gubernskaya “U.S. Immigration Policy and the Case for Family Unity” in the Journal on Migration and Human Security and with a number of co-authors on the research report “Charting Directions for Research on Immigrant Children Affected by Undocumented Status” in the Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences. She also continues to give various invited talks and presentations about her immigration work, most recently at the University of Nebraska and at UCSD.

In Costa Rica, Dr. Dreby has been visiting a wide range of farms, both organic and conventional. She has spoken with coffee producers who had done well until about 10 years ago when a combination of climate induced plagas and a drop in coffee prices has made all but the most successful producers move away from coffee production into operations including citrus and hydroponics. Nearly all the family operations she has met hire foreign laborers – from Nicaragua as opposed to the Jamaican, Mexican and Central American farmworkers hired by family operations in upstate New York. Unlike in New York, Costa Rican farmers rarely describe the pressure to “go big or get out” – the dairies she visited, for example, only milk 8-10 cows and are not considering expansion. And yet just like in New York State, many in Costa Rica can no longer make a living farming. Children do not see a future in their families’ farms and look to off farm employment. Family operations feel unsupported by agricultural policies: farmers feel that global food markets demand industrial farming at the expense of small scale operations. And yet – just like in New York State – some families that farm in Costa Rica resist by finding new niche markets, especially in agrotourism. And the role of the family is vital to farm success. In a recent interview, one farmer declared that sustainable farming is viable, but can only be realized through strong family relationships. Returning from the field, Dr. Dreby will continue to consider the connections between family and global food markets.

A hydroponic operation.

Although coffee is king, and still celebrated as evident in this float at the independence day parade, most coffee producers have struggled to make ends meet over the past 10 years, prompting many to significantly reduce their coffee operations.
John Justeson

John Justeson’s research focuses on the intersection of Mesoamerican hieroglyphic writing, Mesoamerican historical linguistics, and Mesoamerican calendrics and astronomy. He has continued his collaboration with Terrence Kaufman on the decipherment of epi-Olmec and Zapotec hieroglyphic writing, built largely on the reconstructed histories of Mixe-Zoquean and Zapotecan grammatical patterns and on calendrical practices associated with each tradition; this work includes continuing research into the histories of these languages. Much of his work over the three years has been devoted to his article in the current issue of *Ancient Mesoamerica*, “A cyclic-time model for eclipse prediction in Mesoamerica and the structure of the eclipse table in the Dresden Codex”. This research focused on understanding how pre-Columbian Mesoamerican daykeepers conceptualized the timing of solar and lunar eclipses that they had observed, and thereby the dates on which future eclipses might be seen. In the article, he applies regularities in the timing of eclipses in the divinatory calendar to determining on which dates daykeepers would have anticipated eclipses; these results are applied to determine the likely historical placement of the table, along with what had previously been puzzling features of its calendrical and visual structure.

The eclipse table in the Postclassic Mayan Dresden Codex. (From Figure 1 of Justeson’s 2017 article on eclipse prediction in Mesoamerica; produced from images provided by the Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Statts- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden).
One of the highlights this year for Walter Little was bringing Guatemalan filmmaker, Luis Argueta to campus on September 29 to show his latest documentary, *The U Turn*, the recently completed third installment of his documentaries on Guatemalan immigrants to the United States. He is the director of the 1994 film, *El Silencio de Neto* (*The Silence of Neto*) and other films. It was also an occasion for members of the Triqui Sin Fronteras community to meet the filmmaker.

Dr. Little also helped organize and participate in a number of different Triqui events of the past year, including the fourth annual Day of Triqui Culture, celebrated on April 23 in the University at Albany Campus Center Ballroom. The event included speeches in Triqui, Spanish, and English, a number of traditional dances, a Triqui textile exhibit, and a variety of delicious foods from local restaurants owned by Triqui community members. Then, on August 20, he accompanied Triqui Sin Fronteras to attend the first Guelaguetza in Staten Island. The event brought together people from various parts of Oaxaca in a celebration of indigenous culture, food, and performances.

Aside from these events, Dr. Little maintained an active research and conference schedule. Along with Dr. Timothy Smith, a graduate of the University at Albany anthropology program and associate professor at Appalachian State University, he organized the Society for Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology Conference in Antigua Guatemala, April 6 to 8, and gave a presentation, “Encontrando una comida tradicional en la ciudad de Antigua, Guatemala: la política de comer patrimonio cultural.” On July 5, he gave a presentation at the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne entitled, “Co-Production and Performance of Authenticity and Aesthetics: Convergences of Built Architectural and Intangible Heritages in a Popular Tourism Site”. Later in July, he participated on a panel, “Oxlajuj Aj: Treinta Años de estudios e investigaciones” and was recognized for his contributions to Kaqchikel Maya language and culture studies at the Casa Herrera. And most recently, at the American Anthropological Association annual meetings, he concluded his term as the president of the Society for Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology, participated on a roundtable, “Fielding Knowledge Not Harassment: Promoting Safer Field Schools”, and gave a paper, “Trading Guatemalan Maya Textiles Transnationally: The Politics of Social Entrepreneurship from Below”, in a session on social entrepreneurship.

Dr. Little’s research this past year has focused on sites of textile production in the Guatemalan highlands. More specifically, he interviewed weavers, exporters, and vendors who specialize in weaving items to be sold in Mexico, among other countries. He is studying the organization of transnational textile production for tourism marketplaces outside of Guatemala. While this last field research was dedicated to the Mayas who make the textiles and those who export them, other field research seasons have been dedicated to understanding how Mexican vendors sell these Guatemalan products and why Mexican and French tourists buy them.
Marilyn Masson

Marilyn Masson spent a sabbatical during the Fall of 2016 readying a new book for publication, “Settlement, Economy, and Society at Mayapán, Yucatán, México.” She translated, edited, drafted figures for, and expanded most of the book’s 18 chapters, written initially by student and international staff members of the Proyecto Económico de Mayapán (PEMY). She is author or co-author on eight chapters, and contributed heavily on the editorial revisions and expansions of four other chapters. The book is co-edited by Masson, Timothy S. Hare, Carlos Peraza Lope, and Bradley W. Russell. This book summarizes the special contributions to survey, excavation, and artifact analysis of over a decade of research (2001-2013) by members of the Mayapán project, with chapters on settlement patterns, household and monumental architecture, chert stone tools, stone tool-making debris, metallurgy, marine shell, multiple chapters on pottery modal and distributional analysis, burials, health from the perspective of human remains, mortuary patterns, ritual effigy censers, soil chemistry analysis of activity areas, LiDAR survey methods, and so on. This book has been accepted by the University of Pittsburgh’s Center for Comparative Archaeology Series, that offers bilingual (English and Spanish) publication.

During the Spring of 2017, Masson completed editorial tasks for another major book project, The Nuts and Bolts of the ‘Real Business’ of Ancient Maya Economic Exchange. This book, submitted for review to the University of Florida Press in August of 2017, has 28 chapters by authors who originally participated in a day-long pair of symposia (of the same title) organized by Masson with David Freidel and Arthur Demarest for the Society of American Archaeology. David Freidel and Arthur Demarest are also co-editors of this forthcoming publication. The book is divided into sections, including 1) theoretical approaches, 2) household and community, economies and resources, 3) agriculture, climate, and land, 4) political elites, wealthy persons, and economic administration, and 5) economic exchange spheres, routes, facilities, and symbolic contexts.

The Nuts and Bolts book project promises a new synthesis on the topic of Maya economies that is nuanced and derived from an empirical, data-rich examination of the institutions (nuts and bolts) that articulated production and exchange activities across time and space. This new synthesis is a timely one and follows up on lively debates in the Maya field that have contributed to paradigm changes, discarding old assumptions of traditional evolutionary anthropological classifications. In place of the latter, the book’s contributors acknowledge complexity and variation in economies of the Preclassic, Classic, and Postclassic Periods in diverse localities ranging from rural farmsteads to royal palaces, yet they also recognize emerging evidence for greater integration and articulation of producers and consumers than was previously assumed. Such integration is observed beyond the household to the community, regional, and interregional scales, and included humble farmers, urbanites whose wealth varied by occupation, merchants, accountants, and political elites. The complexity of ancient Maya economies was also contingent upon dynamic relationships with local natural environments that were progressively trans-
formed by human use and the construction of anthropogenic landscape features. This book significantly revises earlier views of limitations of tropical environments on growth and complexity of urban places and state societies by recognizing heterogeneous resource distributions and strong evidence for tribute and commerce-based exchanges in which non-local resources contributed at various places and times to the amplification of a market economy.

Masson was thrilled to attend the Chacmool conference at the University of Calgary for the first time to participate in a stimulating symposium on urban commerce in Mesoamerica. Most profound was the opportunity to visit UAlbany PHD program alumni (Class of 2012) Dr. Elizabeth Paris, who is now in her second year on the faculty of Calgary’s Anthropology and Archaeology department. Elizabeth is a former winner of the DeCormier Award and is one of our most recently successful Mesoamerican archaeology graduates. Nathan Parrott, who received his BA in Anthropology from our program in 2017, has now joined the Calgary program as a Master’s student (in Mesoamerican archaeology). The photo shows three generations of UAlbany Mesoamericanists at the Chacmool conference. In 2017, Elizabeth Paris spearheaded a high profile journal article co-authored by members of the Mayapán project team, “Violence, desecration, and urban collapse at the Postclassic Maya Political Capital of Mayapán,” Journal of Anthropological Archaeology 48:63-86, (by Elizabeth H. Paris; Stanley Serafin; Marilyn A. Masson; Carlos Peraza Lope; Cuauhtémoc Vidal Guzmán; Bradley W. Russell).

In the summer of 2017, Masson took a break from Mesoamerican archaeology to teach a field school in Albany (the Underground Railroad Archaeology Project). In keeping with the historical archaeology theme, she is waiting to hear from the National Geographic Society about a grant to start a new research project on the household organization and economies of two sixteenth century Colonial Maya towns in Yucatan, in collaboration with Carlos Peraza. On another note, Masson and Jennifer Burrell received a grant to jointly develop and teach two new online/blended courses, to be offered in the Spring of 2018, entitled “The Anthropology of Sci Fi and Fantasy” and “Anthropology through Documentary Film.”

Verónica Pérez Rodríguez

This December, Pérez Rodríguez will be traveling to Santa María Tiltepec to give the community a final public talk on Cerro Jazmín Archaeological Project (CJAP) that she has been directing. For this public talk, there will be large posters of the results of the project. She was also awarded a National Geographic Society grant to start ethnoarchaeological fieldwork in Santo Domingo Tonaltepec. There, she will investigate the town’s surviving ceramic production, document its Prehispanic sites and clay sources to test whether this was the area of Prehispanic ceramic production of the crema wares.
Robert Rosenswig

Dr. Rosenswig spent January and February of 2017 running a UAlbany field school at the site of Las Mercedes in Costa Rica, the capital of a Prehispanic chiefdom that was in operation between AD 1000-1500. As with past field seasons, this was a joint venture with Dr. Ricardo Vazquez (UAlbany Ph.D. 2014) of the National Museum of Costa Rica. The project was a great success, continuing our excavation of large house mounds and discovering a new stone-paved causeway! After returning to Albany, field school participants visited the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) to see artifacts from Las Mercedes that were brought to the US during the late 19th century (see photo).

In collaboration with Dr. Alexander Buyantuev (Department of Geography and Planning), a variety of drone-mounted sensors were used to map the Prehispanic architecture and modern vegetation that covered Las Mercedes during the 2017 field season. As he writes this, Dr. Rosenswig is preparing for the next season of fieldwork in Costa Rica that will begin in January 2018. He received funding for this project from the National Geographic Society.

During the summer of 2017, Dr. Rosenswig was in Belize renewing contact with landowners and officials in anticipation of reinitiating field work in this country after a 9-year hiatus. In 2005 and 2008, he had run field projects at the Maya center of San Estevan but has not been back to the country since. Dr. Rosenswig is currently preparing grant proposals to investigate the development of food production during the second and third millennia BC. Earlier work has documented the remains of mobile peoples in the region that did not live in permanent villages or use ceramic containers but who were already using domesticated plants. This research documented starch grains extracted from stone tools that demonstrate that domesticated maize, beans, squash, manioc and chilli peppers were consumed by these early foragers.

In April, Dr. Rosenswig gave an invited lecture at Yale University on his research in Chiapas at the Formative-period Izapa kingdom. And, at the beginning of December, he provided an invited talk on his Costa Rican work and led museum tour for the Precolombian Society of New York City at the Museum of the American Indian in the old customs house across from Battery Park. His book *Modes of Production and Archaeology*, (co-edited with Jerimy Cunningham) was released by University of Florida Press during the summer of 2017. Currently, a Special Section in the journal *Ancient Mesoamerica* is in production for the Spring 2018 issues and will present new research from the early kingdom of Izapa (800-100 BC) on Mexico’s Pacific coast. Co-organized with Dr. Julia Guernsey (UT Austin), the Special Section consists of nine articles with the latest interpretation of archaeological excavations at the Izapa capital, art historical interpretation of the site’s dozens of carved monuments, regional organization of the kingdom and analysis of a volcanic eruption that may have undermined the authority of Izapa rulers.

Field school students pose with Dr. Rosenswig during a behind-the-scenes visit to the AMNH.
Schwaller spent his summer as a Fellow at Dumbarton Oaks, where his research focused on the month called Panquetzaliztli (The Raising of Banners).

What part of Harvard is furthest from Albany NY? Dumbarton Oaks, a vast reservoir of books, periodicals, illustrations, a splendid garden, and a magnificent museum. The focus of the Dumbarton Oaks collections and the Library is the Byzantine studies, pre-Columbian studies, and, finally, Landscape studies. Uniquely among American universities, the University at Albany had scholars in at least two of these fields, and, indeed, two scholars were chosen as Fellows at Dumbarton Oaks for the Summer of 2017, including Dr. John Schwaller. Dumbarton Oaks offers each scholar an apartment, lunch, travel expenses, and a small stipend during their residency. It is a close community of scholars who are encouraged to interact with one another on a daily basis. The library holdings and museum collections are some of the finest in the world.

Schwaller’s topic for the Dumbarton Oaks Fellowship was a close analysis of the rituals and ceremonies of one month in the Mexica calendar. The Mexica used a calendar of eighteen months of twenty days each, with five unnamed days at the end. Schwaller focused on the month called Panquetzaliztli (The Raising of Banners) that corresponds to approximate Dec. 1-20 in our calendar. It was a month dedicated to the Mexica tribal god, Huitzilopochtli (Hummingbird on the Left). Through his work, Schwaller discovered that the rituals sought to recreate important events in Mexica history. The ceremonies had the effect of providing historical continuity for three critical moments in their history. The fruits of his efforts are in a book on Panquetzaliztli that will be published by the University of Oklahoma Press in Spring, 2019.

In May, Schwaller was one of the organizers of the annual conference of the Northeastern Group of Nahuatl Scholars held at Yale University. The conference was attended by some 50 scholars from around the world who converge on New Haven for a weekend in May to study Nahuatl and compare their research.

The Max Planck Institute for European Legal History held a symposium in June on aspects of ecclesiastical law in colonial Latin America. Schwaller was one of two experts invited to give a keynote address and to serve as featured commentator for the presentations.

In the last year, Schwaller was additionally active as a keynote speaker, providing kick-off lectures at two other international conferences. In August, Schwaller addressed the colloquium: “Devociones católicas en Iberoamérica, siglos XVI al XVIII,” held at the Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico. His presentation was entitled “Detalles de la devoción de la ‘Vía Sacra’ en mexicano por fray Agustín de Vetancurt (1680).” Then in November, he opened the First European Conference on Nahuatl with a presentation titled: “The Toxcatl and Panquetzaliztli figurines.” The colloquium was held in the Faculty of ‘Artes Liberales’ of the University of Warsaw, Poland.

Schwaller published an article: Fr. Agustín de Vetancurt: The “Vía crucis en mexicano,” in The Americas, Vol. 74 (April, 2017). Looking a bit ahead, he will be a Fellow at the John Carter Brown Library (JCB) from May through July, 2018, where he will continue his work on the ‘Vía crucis’ by Vetancurt. There he will study the best-known Nahuatl language manuscripts attributed to Vetancurt and engravings from the press that Vetancurt used in his publications. Although Vetancurt’s ‘Vía crucis’ was published twice in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, no printed copies exist. Schwaller has worked from a manuscript copy of the work. His research at the JCB will focus on anomalies in the Nahuatl found in the text, since the JCB holds several manuscript copies of Vetancurt’s other works in Nahuatl. He will also study the engravings from the
Press to better understand the repertoire of illustrations that might have been available for use in the ‘Via crucis,’ since one feature of the manuscript copy is a series of line drawings.

Schwaller continues as the Latin American reeditor of the journal Ethnohistory and also serves on the Editorial Board of The Americas. For many years, he has been on the editorial committee of Estudios de Cultura Nahuatl.

Jeff Bryant advanced to PhD candidacy a year ago. He has been busy writing for grants to fund his dissertation research into environmental and social change during the introduction of European domesticates. Cores that were taken the previous summer (2016) in Belize are now being processed in Leicester, England. In the spring, he presented a paper on archaeological fish otoliths from Mayapán at the annual meeting for the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) in Vancouver, British Columbia. He is working on preparing two publications on the topic to submit for publication in collaboration with a Mexican archaeologist, Nayeli Jimenez Cano. During the fall, she presented some of their research, co-authored with Professor Marilyn Masson, at the International Council for Archaeozoology (ICAZ) group meeting in Sardinia.

In support of Dr. Jesse Dizard at California State University Chico Advanced Laboratory for Visual Anthropology, Jeff has been composing the musical score for a film on the story of the tragic tale of the historic diversion of water from the Owens Valley, to support the growth of Los Angeles. Jeff also traveled to Reno, Nevada to participate in the field and laboratory work for an NSF funded paleoecology project with Professor Scott Mensing. While there, he constructed a reference collection of pollen to help quantify pollen slides to investigate ancient droughts in the Great Basin, and to prepare for his dissertation laboratory analysis. Additionally, he completed a Graduate Certification in Geographic Information Systems and Spatial Analysis through the SUNY Albany Department of Geography. During the summer, Jeff put his geospatial background to use working with the Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology (BEOE) at the New York State Department of Health. He used GIS to analyze data on pollution exposure and the health outcomes related to Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder. A manuscript he produced in the summer is in the process of review for publication. During winter and summer break from university, he is slated to continue where he left off. This interdisciplinary activity has helped to increase his ability to manage datasets of hundreds of thousands of points and perform inferential statistics with SAS and R code.

Jeff traveled to Reno, Nevada to work with Professor Scott Mensing. There, he constructed a reference collection of pollen to help quantify pollen slides to investigate ancient droughts.
Abelardo de la Cruz

Abelardo’s first year as a PhD student at the University at Albany, where he is working closely with Dr. Louise Burkhart. Abelardo is a macehualli (native nahua speaker) from the Huasteca Veracruzana, in Northern Veracruz. He lived there all his childhood and adolescence. When he was 18 years old, he emigrated to Zacatecas, México, to pursue a Bachelor’s Degree and later his Master’s Degree at the Autonomous University of Zacatecas. During his Master studies, he carried out research about Nahua religion in communities from Chicontepec, Veracruz. Now as a PhD student, he is interested in Nahua religion studies both past and present.

He is interested in colonial studies, particularly how Nahua in 16th century accepted Christianity. His interests also concentrate on the influence of Christian beliefs in the various and distinct sacred Nahua ceremonies that survive today. Occasionally, he works with a team of scholars from University of Warsaw that focus on the revitalization of Nahua language (Huasteca-Veracruz variant) in several communities from his homeland. For this cause, he has contributed as a collaborator on many projects. Among them, he coauthored the first monolin-

Jessica Campbell

Jessica is completing coursework this year. Last fall, with funding support from Dr. Masson, she traveled to the Yucatán Peninsula twice; first, with Dr. Masson to assist with the identification and analysis of shells recovered in salvage operations, and second, with Dr. Serafin, a bioarchaeologist from Queensland University, collecting data on human remains from Maya-pán. She is currently working on several reports, having completed an osteological report on human remains recovered from a survey site. She is completing analysis on the use and distribution patterns of the shells. In collaboration with Dr. Serafin, she is also working on a demographic analysis of remains from various contexts, specifically focusing on age at death and incorporating Bayesian statistical analysis to improve upon older osteological methods. This past spring, Jessica was awarded the Pollitzer Student Award from the American Association of Physical Anthropologists to travel to New Orleans, LA, where she presented her research titled “A Retrospective Correspondence Analysis of a Commingling Event” using data from the 2008/2009 Itzmal Chen field season. In May 2017, Jessica was selected for a position as a Visiting Scientist at the New York City Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, where she was able to participate in Missing Persons Day, a day dedicated to helping families find resources such as searching the NamUs (National Missing and Unidentified Persons) database and familial DNA sampling, to help them find their unaccounted-for loved ones. This work builds on Jessica’s previous history working with the humanitarian organization Beyond Borders, which seeks to identify the unidentified remains of migrants recovered after crossing the US-Texas border.
gual dictionary of this variant entitled tlahtolokitlahcuhtli (2016) and has published educational/didactic material that is used in the community. Most recently, he contributed to Dr. Burkhart’s (2017) In Citlalmachiyotl The Start Sign: A Colonial Nahua Drama of the Three Kings.

Besides his academic interests, he works as an instructor of Nahuatl for the Instituto de Docencia e Investigación Etnológica de Zacatecas (IDIEZ), a non-profit corporation in Mexico, and, since 2013, he works as a visiting scholar for Yale’s Nahuatl summer program. Additionally, he is part of a team of native speakers from Latin America, who work in collaboration with the University of Utah, UCLA, and Stanford University to aid in the development of teaching curricula and methodology, as well as obtain certification from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

Finally, he enjoys participating in different international conferences (i.e. American Society for Ethnohistory (ASE) and Latin American Studies Association (LASA)) where he presents on research that foments Nahuatl culture and the production of knowledge in the indigenous thought. From his participation in ASE, he has recently published The Value of El Cos tumbre and Christianity in the Discourse of Nahua Catechists from the Huasteca Region in Veracruz, Mexico, 1970s-2010s in the anthology Words and Worlds Turned Around: Indigenous Christianities in Colonial Latin America (2017) edited by Dr. David Tavárez. Right now, he is working on an article on indigenous methodology and production of decolonized knowledge. Shortly, this will be published ASE’s journal, Journal of Ethnohistory.

Rebecca Dinkel

Becky is a doctoral candidate in linguistics. For her dissertation, Becky is examining metaphors in pre-Columbian and colonial Mayan texts and art. Specifically, she is examining how metaphors vary over time and space, in visual versus textual media and in different genres. Her dissertation work is divergent from other interpretative approaches of pre-Columbian and colonial Mayan texts because it actively engages linguistic methodologies, specifically corpus linguistic approaches and approaches from metaphor theory. Her research aims to further develop these linguistic approaches as well. Specifically, she is examining how grammatical and discourse features might help identify metaphors and alter their interpretation in a corpus linguistic approach. She is also examining issues in metaphor theory, such as the nature of the relationship between semantic domains in a metaphor and whether the nature of a metaphor differs in visual media and textual media.

Becky also continues to work with the Albany Copala Triqui Working Group, pursuing documentation of Copala Triqui and the creation of pedagogical materials. She is also continuing her research on Copala Triqui’s syntactic causative. She presented her research on Copala Triqui’s syntactic causative at the 2017 Society for the Study of Indigenous Languages Conference in Austin, Texas, who also generously funded her travel. She is currently working on revising her research to be submitted for publication.
During 2017, Yahaira has continued working on her dissertation research in the Central Pacific of Costa Rica. With the collaboration of the aircraft company AERODIVA and the Laboratorio Nacional de Materiales y Modelos Estructurales (Lanamme) at the University of Costa Rica, Yahaira’s project is now utilizing LiDAR technology to produce a highly accurate map of Lomas Entierros site, where she is conducting her dissertation work. The LiDAR data allowed us to map for the first time the settlement architecture of Lomas Entierros. Elevated terraces with retaining walls are clearly visible with the use of this technology. During the Spring of 2017, Yahaira conducted the preliminary groundtruthing of the site, and mapped terraces built with cobblestone with a handheld GPS unit. The inhabitants of Lomas Entierros took advantage of the natural topography and modified or reinforced the natural slopes to reduce the terrain inclination and avoid erosion.

The results of this preliminary work, along with Viewshed Analysis and Least Cost Path Analysis, generated with the aid of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) packages, were presented during the 50th Chacmool Conference in Calgary, Canada. The implementation of such analysis has the purpose of evaluating the strategic location of Lomas Entierros in terms of its restricted access and control over resources, land and trade. Control over travel routes, resources and territory seem to have been key political and economic strategies for chiefdoms established in Central and Pacific regions of Costa Rica. Our current data suggest that Lomas Entierros’ location was strategically selected to oversee the traffic over the Tárcoles River and that the site was located on a defensive and difficult access hill. The upcoming excavations will improve our knowledge about the characteristics of the settlement, the distribution of imported objects, and the role that control over trade and resources played during Lomas Entierros’ occupation. Fieldwork will take place during the Spring of 2018 with funding from the National Geographic Society.

In addition to her research activities in Costa Rica, Yahaira has also been working as a consultant for UNESCO offices in San Jose, Costa Rica, and Habana, Cuba, in projects related to ancestry, memory, heritage, and cultural diversity.
Crystal Sheedy

After finishing a year of ethnographic fieldwork in the Yucatán Peninsula of Mexico, Crystal has been prepping her data for analysis. For the most part, she has been transcribing over fifty hours of recordings that she collected. The bulk of these recordings are of exegetical analyses that she conducted with ten of her female participants on a previously undocumented discourse genre that her participants call u t’āan nukuč màak, which loosely translates as “dichos” in Spanish and sayings in English. Many of these sayings most closely resemble what we, in United States culture, would refer to as superstitions. This genre is important because many of the symbolic topics referenced within these sayings extend back to Pre-Columbian times. This demonstrates the longevity and resilience of these ancient beliefs, and illustrates that the practitioners of this genre continue to pass down this cultural knowledge to younger generations.

At the beginning of the year, she was contacted by Dr. David Schwartz to contribute a chapter to the book entitled Maternal Health, Pregnancy-Related Morbidity and Death Among Indigenous Women of Mexico & Central America: An Anthropological, Epidemiological and Biomedical Approach. Her chapter is titled, “Speaking in Tongues: The Importance of Speaking Indigenous Languages in Maternal Health Care.” In this chapter, she demonstrates that through learning an indigenous language, one also learns how to become culturally sensitive, which has the capacity to empower both workers and indigenous women. It is in press for publication.

In April, she attended the Central States Anthropological Society conference in Lincoln, Nebraska. There, she presented a paper entitled, “‘Lying Roads’: Maya Women’s Work and Cultural Realities in a Changing World.” In this paper she investigated the Maya concept of tusbèel, glossed as responsibilities, through the deconstruction of the term that revealed its cultural significance of its practitioners, then explored how this term is used within the daily lives and discourse patterns of Maya women within Xocén, her field site. In October, she attended the American Folklore Society conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota. There, she presented a paper entitled, “Ancestral ‘Words’ in a Changing World: Maya Women’s Oral Literature.” that examined how Maya women use their daily speech patterns, particularly through the discourse genre of u t’āan nukuč màak, to preserve cultural knowledge as they raise their children in the modern era. In December, she attended the American Anthropological Association’s annual meeting, where she presented a paper entitled, “‘A Woman’s Work is Never Done!’: Maya Women’s Competing Moral Obligations in a Changing World.” In this paper, she explored the nexus of Maya women’s decisions and their implications that are enmeshed within conflicting systems of value through examining their discursive speech acts surrounding the concept of tusbèel.

For the upcoming year, she is hoping to continue the analysis of her data and begin writing her dissertation. During the summer, she hopes to return to her field site to discuss her findings with her participants in order to receive valuable feedback from them about certain concepts she may still have questions about.
The Institute of Mesoamerican Studies

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