

Summer Fursca Report

Title of Project: (RE)Discovering Albions stolen culture:New Archaeological Research at the Whitehouse Nature Center

My name is Tynayia George and I spent some of my summer working doing research in FURSCA. I spent eight weeks working on an archeological site located at the Whitehouse Nature Center with the supervision of Dr. Bradley Chase (Anthropology and Sociology). My project is a small part of a bigger project known as The Manoomin Initiative which is a partnership between the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi (NHBP) and Albion college. Centered on research and restoration of manoomin, a sacred plant and food that is historically, culturally, and ecologically central to Potawatomi people in Michigan. The site was discovered by Dr. Elizabeth Brumfiel in the late 1970's. Dr. Brumfiel did various excavations on the site that lasted for about twenty years. The goal of my project was to locate the site and develop maps that construct a useful GIS model for archaeological research. The maps would play a big role in helping with future archaeological survey strategies to (re)discover the Late Woodland archaeological site at the WNC. I also wanted to organize the archives in Robbison Hall. Over the eight weeks I was able to locate the site and find all the artifacts that came from the excavation. I also was able to locate many archival records from previous research on the site.

Unfortunately by the end of the FURSCA experience I wasn't able to locate the site. However I was able to figure out a proximity area using old maps and notes. Second I organized and found artifacts and archival materials that are associated with the site. I hosted community based digs, and gathered data for a future map. Lastly, I spent six weeks taking pictures of the artifacts and putting them in a data set that would link them to the excavation unit it came from once placed in Arcgis. I spent at least two weeks working with a camp of kids on a community based archeological dig. This experience explained what archaeology is and why it is important to acknowledge people's history. One way I did this was explaining the technique known as flint knapping and how it produces stone flakes and tools. Which played a significant role in the lives of Anishinaabe peoples during the Late Woodland period. We then did a dig to see if anything may have turned up and have the characteristics of a flake.

Although I accomplished most of my goals I did run into a few obstacles. My advisor and I found that there were many things wrong with the data that was collected from the site. For example the exact coordinates of the site is unknown and there are two different coordinate systems that were being used. However we were able to overcome these minor issues. We began correcting the data and making a new data set. Due to the coordinate system being all out of order we were not able to make the maps. Instead I was able to accomplish taking photos of all the artifacts associated with

the site. I also was able to help with other projects that were related to my project. For instance, I was able to be a part of the documentation between the NHBP and Albion college. I also assisted with locating and recording where manoomin beds are along the Kalamazoo river.

Thanks to this experience I have gained so much knowledge on Anishinabe culture and lifeways. Also, I am able to distinguish the difference between a rock and a flake. I have gained experience working with archival things and handling them correctly. Furthermore, I've gained so much more knowledge and skills with working with a camera and lighting. This opportunity has helped me take a step closer to becoming an expert on Native American culture. I would like to humbly thank the FURSCA committee for selecting me to be a part of this experience and Richard L. and Barbara J. Meyer Student Research Endowment for making this opportunity real. Also my advisor Bradley Chase for not only being a great mentor but also an amazing teacher.

Resources

https://www.canva.com/design/DAFjzOSUABw/b-Z954VFCuFzzve83iDr_A/edit?utm_content=DAFjzOSUABw&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton