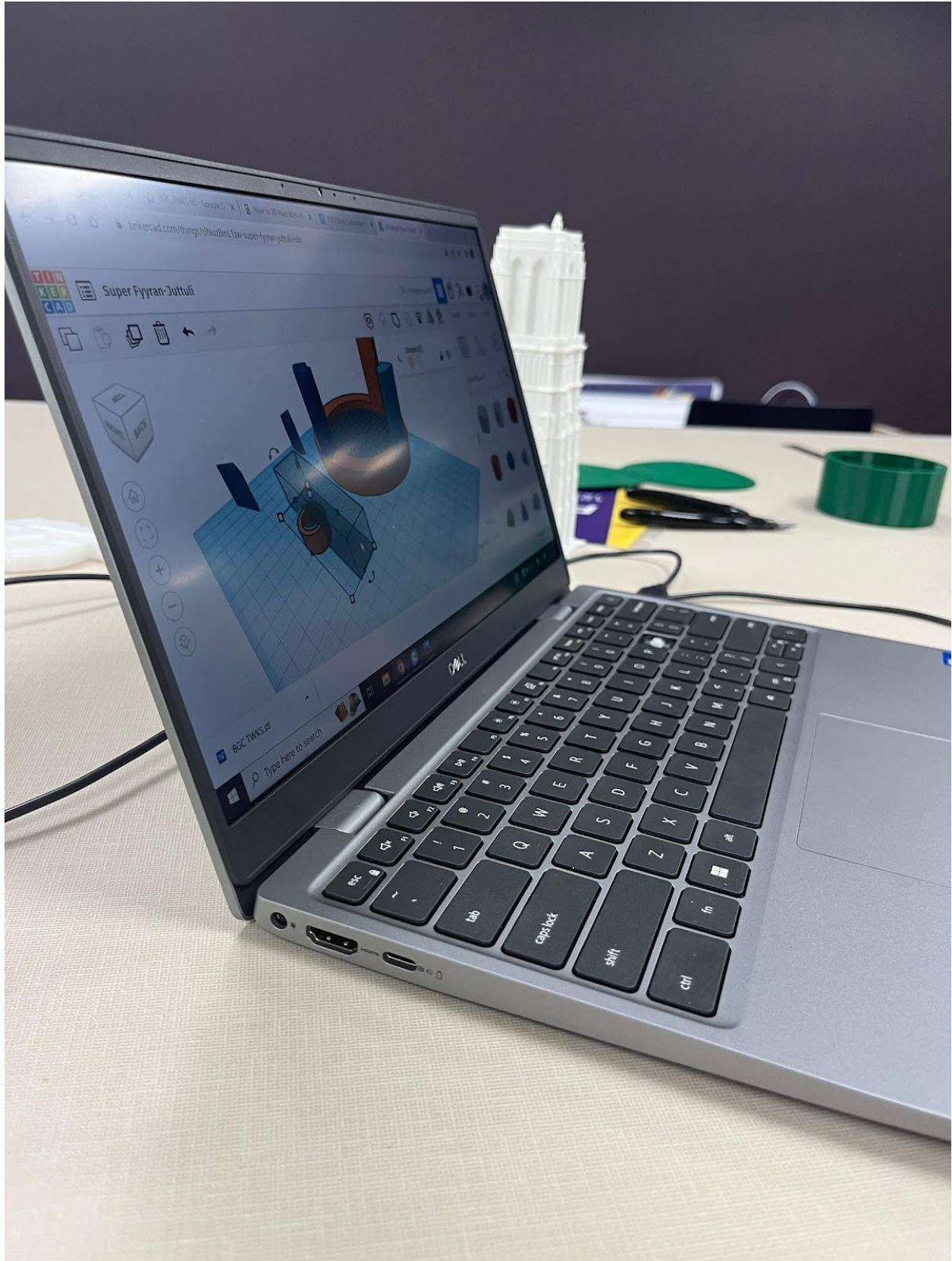


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End of Summer Report: The Relationship Between Albion College and the NHBP

My FURSCA project focused on documenting the relationship between Albion College and the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi (NHBP). The initial relationship between the two groups was established through a project called 'The Manoomin Initiative'. The initiative uses an interdisciplinary approach to understand the growth and restoration of manoomin or wild rice in the Kalamazoo River. My job was to document all of the different aspects of this project through pictures, video, audio, and interviews. Ideally, the end product was an exhibit in the Whitehouse Nature Center that highlighted all of the work going on. This exhibit would have the purpose of being educational, interactive, and introspective.

Throughout the summer I was able to document almost every single part of the project that was occurring. I was able to interview other students and faculty that were a part of the initiative. I used the ethnographic skill of participant observation to partake in understanding the anthropological, biological, music, and educational portions of this project. I completed a multitude of readings about the significance of manoomin and its growth patterns and the complicated history between anthropologists and native people. All of this was used as background information to inform the way I curated my exhibit. I also created a space in Google Drive for all of the videos, photos, interviews, audio, and scripts to stay.



Working with 3D printing software to replicate a past macroinvertebrate collector.



Finished 3D printed plant based macroinvertebrate collectors with birch bark wrapped around.



Extraction of the macroinvertebrate collectors from the Kalamazoo River.



Potential bed of Manoomin found on the Kalamazoo River.



Anthropological test dig in the Whitehouse Nature Center. Pictured is Brad Chase, an anthropology professor from Albion College.

However, I was unable to finish curating the final exhibit. The project focused on Albion College as well as the NHBP. Unfortunately, I was unable to interview anyone from the reservation. The relationship that we have with the NHBP is unprecedented and highly significant. Therefore, it must be handled with the utmost care and respect. I felt that it would be inappropriate to create an exhibit without their input or perspective.

Being a part of this initiative was extremely impactful on me. While doing this work, it forced me to look introspectively at where I came from, where my family came from, our connection to the land we reside on and to those who were here before us. In terms of my education, this allowed me to see just how hands-on an Environmentalist can be. They can have many different roles in many different spaces because environmental work is being done everywhere. I plan to continue my work and finish the exhibit through a directed study, or a future FURSCA term. I will also be presenting this work at the Elkin Isaac Symposium.

I would like to say a huge thank you to the FURSCA administrators, Dr. Allison Harnish, the NHBP, and any donors that made this possible. It has been amazing!