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**Stony Brook
University**

College of Arts and Sciences

Spring 2024 Department of Anthropology Newsletter

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Greetings from the [Department of Anthropology](#)! I hope that this newsletter finds you well.

It has been busy spring as we're working to grow our faculty and add to undergraduate and graduate offerings! We have been involved in exciting new campus programs in Native American and Indigenous Studies and human response to climate change, enabling our students and faculty to contribute to urgent societal and global issues. I hope you enjoy catching up with us!

With best wishes,

Surita Bhatia, Professor and Interim Chair
Department of Anthropology

As always, send us your updates so we can include them on our forthcoming Alumni News web page! We would love the opportunity to connect and tell your story — let us know if you have news to share for our next newsletter!



Alumni News

Jonah Ratsimbazafy '02

Congratulations to alum Jonah Ratsimbazafy '02, PhD, who was recently awarded the 2023 Seacology Prize! Dr. Ratsimbazafy was recognized for his dedication to protecting the endangered lemurs and other species of his native Madagascar. The Seacology Prize is awarded to an islander for exceptional achievement in preserving island environments and culture. Dr. Ratsimbazafy completed his PhD with Professor Patricia Wright.

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Catching up with Alumni:

Benjamin Utting '16

We welcomed alum Benjamin Utting '16, BA Anthropology, back to campus to give a seminar to the Undergraduate Anthropology Society (UAS), and we were excited to hear what he has been up to! He received an MPhil and PhD in archaeology from the University of

Cambridge, and moved back to the U.S. as a Peter Buck Postdoctoral Fellow at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Utting is a Palaeolithic archaeologist who explores the complex relationship between humans and the environments they live in through time and space. Southeast Asia is one of the most exciting regions in the world for this type of research. New discoveries in that region, like the oldest cave art in the world, the oldest evidence for surgery, and the earliest evidence for long-distance seafaring, have ignited research interest among anthropologists.

Dr. Utting's research specifically explores the ways that humans first entered Southeast Asia, relationships between ancient hunter-gatherers, tropical rainforest landscapes, and marine ecosystems, and how we can synthesize archaeological records and paleoenvironmental archives to help inform modern-day responses to climate change. He has worked at field sites in northern Vietnam (Tràng An UNESCO World Heritage Landscape Complex) to explore how the end of the last ice age affected people living in tropical environments and will co-direct a project in eastern Indonesia (Raja Ampat archipelago) to

investigate the earliest human settlement of Oceania this summer.



Student News

Amanda Rowe

Congratulations to Amanda Rowe, PhD candidate in the Interdepartmental Doctoral Program in Anthropological Sciences (IDPAS)! Amanda was named as a finalist for support by the **Life Sciences Research Foundation**. Only 50 finalists were selected from more than 750 applicants nationwide. Amanda is co-advised by Professors Andreas Koenig and Patricia Wright and is also a recipient of the Rohlf Fellowship.



Mason Hintermeister

Mason Hintermeister, an undergraduate double-majoring in Anthropology and Human Evolutionary Biology, received the Department of Anthropology Undergraduate Research and Conference Travel Award! Mason works in the laboratory of Professor Gabrielle Russo and will travel to the annual meeting of the American Association of Biological Anthropologists to present a poster, "A fossil galagid from the middle Miocene of Napudet, northern Kenya." Congratulations, Mason!



Faculty Spotlight

Christopher Percival

Congratulations to Professor Percival, who received the American Association for Anatomy (AAA) Early Career Publication Award! Professor Percival was recognized for his innovative research approach that blends morphometric quantification, genetic analysis, and tissue-level developmental biology to understand craniofacial variation.

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John Shea

Professor Shea is featured in a new documentary, *Little Sapiens*, an Ideacom International production, that recently aired on the Canadian Broadcasting Company's (CBC) *The Nature of Things*. [Click here for a preview](#), featuring a glimpse of John teaching kids to make stone tools. The U.S. version of the documentary will be released later this year.

Professor Shea was also featured in *Discover Magazine* for his depiction on whether humans and Neanderthals coexisted without violence.

Giving Day - March 27, 2024

The Department of Anthropology participated in SBU's recent Giving Day - a great opportunity for areas across the University to raise funds for important initiatives! A big thank you to everyone who made a donation to our fundraising effort. We are very grateful!

While this year's Giving Day effort has passed, we certainly appreciate your support of our Department. We depend on

GIVING DAY

MARCH 27, 2024

#SBUGivingDay

our alumni and friends to expand field opportunities for our students, provide seed money for senior honors theses and summer research experiences, and hire excellent new faculty! Please consider a gift to the [Anthropology Fund for Excellence](#).

If you would like to discuss other opportunities to invest in our faculty and students, please connect with Michael D'Ambrosio, Senior Director of Development, at michael.dambrosio@stonybrook.edu or (631) 632-4061.

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