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Conversations Between Communities: UMass Boston Archaeology for and with the Nipmuc Nation & the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation

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Conversations Between Communities

UMass Boston Archaeology for and with the Nipmuc Nation & the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation

Hassanamesit Woods Archaeological Field School

Professor Stephen A. Mrozowski (Anthropology)

Objectives of Hassanamesit Woods Archaeological Field School
1. Illuminate part of the Nipmuc past through a collaborative program of consultation and research that focuses on the Hassanamesit community of what is today Grafton, Massachusetts.
2. Provide a robust picture of the Sarah Philips/Sarah Boston farmstead using archaeology, documents, oral history, material culture, environmental archaeology, and tribal consultation.
3. Train undergraduate and graduate students from UMass Boston and other institutions in interdisciplinary archaeology including excavation techniques, environmental sampling, and geophysical testing within a collaborative framework.
4. Develop better methods of consultation and collaboration between UMass Boston and the Nipmuc Nation in meeting their broader heritage preservation and community education goals.

Community and Scholarly Outcomes
Preservation of the 203-acre Hassanamesit Woods Field training for more than 100 university students Research for 6 UMass Boston masters theses More than 20 presentations at professional and local meetings

Six publications in journals and edited books Research for 1 UC-Berkeley Ph.D. dissertation

Reflecting on Collaborations, Sharing Experiences: 2003-Present
In November 2013, tribal leaders from the Nipmuc and Eastern Pequot communities came together with their university partners for the first time. They participated in a public dialogue, exchanged experiences, and celebrated the photography and artifact exhibit.

“[There was] information that I could see...I asked myself, do I have this right, the permission of the ancestors...to dig into their past in this way?...A constant ongoing dialogue, that has been super super critical...Our story is a lot richer...”
- Rae Gould, Nipmuc

Eastern Pequot Archaeological Field School

Professor Stephen W. Silliman (Anthropology)

Objectives of Eastern Pequot Archaeological Field School
1. Assist with locating historical cultural sites on the Eastern Pequot reservation, established in 1683 and still occupied, and provide historic preservation and archaeological services at low to no cost.
2. Study Eastern Pequot house sites to understand the persistence of this Native American community in the colonial world of southern New England.
3. Train undergraduate and graduate students from UMass Boston and other institutions, as well as tribal community interns, in archaeological techniques, heritage preservation, Native American history, colonial studies, and collaborative research methods.
4. Improve archaeological fieldwork and interpretations with the addition of indigenous perspectives and participation as part of a deeply collaborative relationship.

Community and Scholarly Outcomes
Extensive mapping and study of cultural features Field training for more than 100 university students Research for 16 UMass Boston masters theses

College credits to two Eastern Pequot students Seven publications in journals and edited books Faculty participation in Civic Engagement Scholars Initiative, Cohort 1

Native American scholarship from Society for American Archaeology

Reflecting on Collaborations, Sharing Experiences: 2003-Present
In November 2013, tribal leaders from the Nipmuc and Eastern Pequot communities came together with their university partners for the first time. They participated in a public dialogue, exchanged experiences, and celebrated the photography and artifact exhibit.

“We would offer our traditional tobacco offering any time the earth was penetrated and say a prayer and blessing to Mother Earth...in that way, we would be honoring our tradition...It has been a rewarding experience for both of us but I think in order to get to this point it had to be a give and take, and we wanted to make sure our traditions and cultures were respected along the way.”
- Katherine Sebastian Dring, Eastern Pequot