



# TCAEF NEWS

## Stories from the Field

*The Trevor Colbourn Anthropological Endowment Fund (TCAEF) supports student research across diverse areas of anthropology. From bioarchaeology to environmental justice, this year's projects highlight the global impact of UCF Anthropology research.*



Researcher placing limb wrapped in hosiery into a roaster oven for maceration.

### TCAEF 2025–2026 REPORT SUMMARY

TCAEF funding has empowered graduate researchers to conduct impactful research worldwide, from archaeological digs in Sicily and Oaxaca to public health projects in Florida. These initiatives have advanced dissertations, encouraged international collaboration, and made significant contributions to bioarchaeology, environmental anthropology, forensic science, and public health, shaping future anthropological research.

#### C. M. Trent

*Ph.D., Biological - Fall 2023 cohort*

##### Ankara, Türkiye

Trent conducted skeletal analysis at Hacettepe University, collecting data from 60 individuals across three ancient Anatolian sites spanning 5,000 years. The research focuses on childhood stress and health during major social transitions, including the rise of social hierarchies. This work contributes to a broader dissertation examining how environmental and social pressures shaped early human development.



Museum of Anatolian Civilizations: Stone idols from the site of Karataş-Semayük

#### K. Tremblay

*Ph.D., Biological - Fall 2022 cohort*

##### Zagreb, Croatia

Tremblay analyzed skeletal remains from multiple Late Roman sites to examine health disparities across regions. His research explores how war, disease, and social instability impacted early life stress, with preliminary findings showing high levels of physiological stress and differences across age and sex groups.



Overview of limbs decomposing in the protected outdoor environment.

## K. McGehee

*Ph.D., Biological - Fall 2022 cohort*

Florida, USA

McGehee's research investigates how different tools leave distinct marks on bone, improving forensic identification methods. By analyzing trauma on experimental bone samples over time, the project enhances the ability to distinguish between weapons used in violent incidents, supporting both forensic science and law enforcement applications.

## A. Atabas

*Ph.D., Archaeology - Fall 2023 cohort*

Kerkenes, Türkiye

Atabas combined fieldwork, geophysical surveys, and phenomenological analysis to study an ancient Iron Age city. His research explores how architecture interacts with landscape and incorporates machine learning to predict site patterns and enhance archaeological interpretation.



Field site landscape in Kerkenes, Türkiye.



Researcher looking for points for preparing survey grids.



Conducting an electrical resistivity survey on a foggy, cold day in the field.

## P. Mercier

*Ph.D., Archaeology - Fall 2021 cohort*

Oaxaca, Mexico

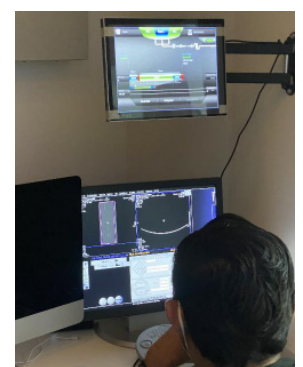
Mercier collected CT scan data from human skeletal remains to create 3D models for analysis. This work advances methods in bioarchaeology while also building international research collaborations and navigating permitting processes for archaeological collections.



Cleaning a pig femur for CT scanning to test scanner resolution and optimize the imaging process before scanning human remains.



First day of CT scanning at Villanueva Diagnósticos Médicos Hospital Reforma.



Observing raw CT data during initial analysis.

## N.Tovar

*Ph.D., Archaeology - Fall 2022 cohort*

### Miami-Dade County, Florida

Tovar's project integrates community-driven mapping and interviews to study flooding and sea-level rise. By combining GIS with lived experiences, the research highlights environmental inequality and supports more inclusive climate adaptation strategies in vulnerable communities.



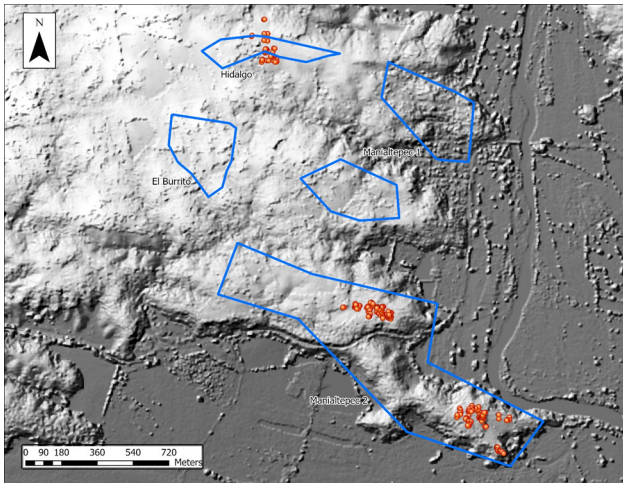
Kimmi (pseudonym) sketching the PGIS flood-risk map

## S. Savateri

*Ph.D., Archaeology - Fall 2024 cohort*

### Oaxaca, Mexico

Savateri's project focused on mapping archaeological sites using high-precision GPS to better understand ceremonial landscapes and preserve threatened cultural heritage. The work also strengthened partnerships with local communities and supported future collaborative research.



Map of Maniatepec 2, Hidalgo, and surrounding archaeological sites displaying raw data points collected during July 2025 fieldwork.



A well-preserved ballcourt at Linda Vista, looking from one of the platforms at the playing area (depression in center) and the opposite platform.

## A. Pffor

*Ph.D., Archaeology - Fall 2023 cohort*

### Sicily, Italy

Pffor participated in excavations at the Villa Romana del Casale, uncovering structures and artifacts that shed light on daily life, infrastructure, and social organization in the Late Roman world. The project contributes to understanding how ancient communities functioned and interacted.



An aerial view of Trench C undergoing excavation.



The site of Villa Romana del Casale.



The ARCHLabs 4 2025 Trench C team.

## A. Shepherd

Ph.D., Cultural - Fall 2022 cohort

### Tampa Bay, Florida

Abigail Shepherd's research examines how communities in the Tampa Bay area work to prevent and respond to drug-related overdoses. Using ethnographic methods, including participant observation and in-depth interviews, she explores how public health agencies, grassroots organizations, and people who use drugs interact within a broader "assemblage of health." Her work highlights both the challenges and successes of harm reduction efforts, including the distribution of naloxone and access to treatment services. By centering lived experiences and community-based approaches, this project contributes to a deeper understanding of how overdose prevention strategies are implemented in real-world settings and how they can be improved to better support vulnerable populations.

Recruitment flyer for interviews with PWUD.



IDEA Exchange Tampa tabling at a health fair outreach event.



A regular setup at the IDEA Exchange Tampa intake table where participants receive safe sex supplies, safe use supplies, drinks, and snacks.

*Together, these projects reflect the depth, diversity, and real-world impact of anthropological research at UCF.*

## What to Expect: 2026–2027 Award Cycle

The upcoming 2026–2027 TCAEF award cycle continues to reflect the breadth and innovation of student research in anthropology at UCF. Proposed projects span global field sites and local communities, from archaeological and bioarchaeological research in Portugal, Peru, and the Caribbean to ethnographic and public health studies in Florida and Puerto Rico.

*We look forward to sharing the next cycle of TCAEF-supported research and its continued impact at UCF and beyond.*