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Partnerships 4: Anthropology and Education in the Niles Community

Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project

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WESTERN MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY

Fort St. Joseph Archaeology

Anthropology and Education in the Niles Community

Western Michigan University (WMU) anthropology students have begun working with the Niles school system to identify potential opportunities for collaboration with the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project (hereafter “the Project”).

ANTHROPOLOGY AND EDUCATION

Anthropologists study people and their cultures and have a responsibility to share their findings with the public. Currently, the Project engages with the public through an archaeological field school, archaeology camps, a summer lecture series, and Archaeology Open House. By partnering with an existing network of educators in Niles, WMU anthropologists have another outlet to disseminate their findings. Educators can incorporate the information uncovered about Fort St. Joseph into curricula related to social studies, history, science, language arts and other subjects. Such a partnership would also benefit the educators of Niles by granting them access to information related to local history and archaeology to share with their students.



Archaeology Field School students at work on the Fort St. Joseph site.
Photo by Genevieve Perry.

EDUCATIONAL ADVANCEMENT WITHIN NILES

Niles High School (NHS) students are provided hands-on learning opportunities that are not traditionally available at the high school level. NHS aims to offer a unique and constructive educational experience for its students by offering Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and dual enrollment opportunities in partnership with Lake Michigan College (LMC). NHS's CTE programs allow students to apply their learning, and gain hands-on experience, in the areas of architecture, computer design, automotive skills, and medical studies. NHS is also known for its focus on Project Based Learning which is a learning tool devised to educate students while also allowing them to help others within their community. NHS students are required to complete a set number of volunteer hours before graduation, and are encouraged to engage in field experience within their chosen field of study.



Niles High School scholars.



Archaeology Open House attendees observe wet screening.
Photo by Genevieve Perry.



A young camper learning how to use a sifting screen.
Photo by Genevieve Perry.



The students and staff of the 2016 field school season. Photo by Genevieve Perry.



Archaeology field school lecture series led by Dr. Michael Nassaney. Photo by Genevieve Perry.



An aerial view of the City of Niles.

PARTNERSHIP AND MOVING FORWARD

The Project has the potential to offer many unique opportunities for Niles' educators and students to learn about anthropology and archaeology through the ongoing work at Fort St. Joseph. These opportunities include a dual enrollment course for high school seniors through WMU or LMC for participating in the field school and promoting the Project by creating logos, animations, banners, structures, panels, buttons, t-shirts and other types of souvenirs. Additionally, field studies and volunteer hours could be offered for students within the Niles community. NHS and WMU share many interests that can be pursued collaboratively well into the future.



This exhibit was created and designed by members of the Anthropology in the Community class (ANTH 5030) in Spring 2017 (Jenifer Blouin, Chris Carpenter, Amber Coniglio, Stephanie Flounory, Alyssa Gunn, Stefan Hubble, Hailey Maurer, Jeffrey Nau, Kourtney Potts, Josh Schneider, Kyle Sicotte, Ashley Sussmann, and Meghan Williams under the supervision of Michael S. Nassaney). It was produced with support from the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project, a partnership between Western Michigan University and the City of Niles. Thanks to our community partners who assisted, especially Christina Arseneau, Steve Arseneau, Mary Ellen Drolet, Roger Gregorski, Sharon Gregorski, Christian Johnston, Bob Myers, Sanya Phillips, Ken Sarkozy, Monica Topash, Marcus Winchester, and Michael Worline.