

# ANTHROPOLOGY

## NEWSLETTER



### Faculty and Graduating Class Photo

(Kington Plaza and Christiansen Outdoor Learning Spaces)

(back, left to right) Prof. Jon Andelson, Prof. Owen Kohl, Prof. Monty Roper, (middle, left to right) Delaney Owens, Eleanor Hedges Duroy, Hamilton Peacock, George Matthes, Prof. Lily DeMars, Prof. Emily De Wet (front, left to right) Maddie Hartog, Audrey Deligan, Evie Redding, Prof. Brigittine French, Prof. Laura Ng, Yurie Okumura

### Not Pictured:

Alyssa Argent, Zee Nechin, Prof. Cynthia Hansen, Prof. Kathy Kamp, Prof. Tess Kulstad, Prof. Maria Tapias, Prof. John Whittaker



## 2025 GRADUATES



### Hamilton Peacock

This fall, I will be moving to Washington, DC, where I will work as a communications consultant at the Penta Group. In the meantime, I am going to Maine to spend time with family and take a few long walks in the woods.

### Yurie Okumura

After graduation, I will be going back to Japan to start working. I will be working for Bloomberg starting in August, but before I do, I plan to find an apartment and (hopefully) travel around!



### Delaney Owens

I will be working on climate adaptation as a NOAA Coastal Resilience fellow at Virginia Tech's Coastal Collaborator in Hampton, VA. I look forward to supporting listening sessions and other programming in coastal agricultural communities. After the fellowship, I hope to explore grad school or other opportunities in climate resilience.





## 2025 GRADUATES



### Audrey Deligan

After graduation, I'll be returning to Seattle to spend the summer with friends and family while applying for jobs—ideally in the Washington, DC area. I'm hoping to begin a career in legislative work, with the goal of working for one of Washington State's senators for a few years before pursuing graduate school.

### George Matthes

I will be moving to Virginia to work at James Madison's Montpelier Estate, where I will be working on an archaeological excavation of the Walnut Hill site on his original property. I will be working there for about a year. After that, I plan to attend graduate school, possibly a Master's or Ph.D. Program in Archaeology.



### Eleanor Hedges Duroy

I am planning on attending graduate school in France pursuing a degree in European and International Studies or Political Geography. After graduate school I would like to work for the EU on policy focused on environmental issues or immigration. For the summer I plan on traveling to see family in France and continuing to do independent research.



## 2024 GRADUATES



### Maddie Hartog

After graduation, I'll be heading up to Camp Echo Lake in the Adirondack Mountains, where I'll spend the summer working as the Head Counselor for the Senior Village Girls. In this role, I'll be responsible for overseeing the overall experience of the 13- to 15-year-old campers, as well as supporting the staff who work with them. After three months I'll return home to New York where I'm looking forward to spending quality time with family, reconnecting with friends, and allowing myself some much-needed rest. In the longer term, I envision moving to Seattle. I plan to work for a while, gaining experience and exploring different opportunities before potentially graduate school.

### Evie Redding

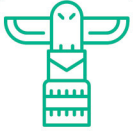
I am graduating with a degree in Anthropology and Studio Art. Post-graduation I am staying in Grinnell for the summer to teach workshops at the Stew Makerspace and afterwards hope to go to Minneapolis to pursue art opportunities there. I also intend to keep pursuing my anthropological studies where I have focused in biological archaeology. My dream would be to go back to Greece having studied abroad in Athens in Spring of 2024. I plan to apply to the American School in Athens Agora dig next summer. Within the next few years, I also plan to build my artists portfolio to apply to a master's program. I hope to be able to incorporate and combine my artistic and anthropological interests moving forward.



Alyssa Argent and Zee Nechin not pictured

**Congratulations 2025 graduates!**





# SENIOR THESIS PRESENTATIONS

## Maddie Hartog

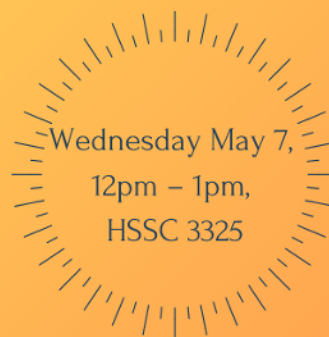
*Kvetching, Kvelling or Otherwise: Navigating Identity, Politics, and Performance in Jewish Comedy*

My thesis looks at how Jewish comedians reflect the current state of Israel-Palestine in their comedy. It explores the intersection of identity, politics, and performance ultimately claiming that Jewish comedians are willing to talk about Israel-Palestine if they have any of the following: a stable audience, an affinity towards lineage, a lack of fear of consequences and a strong sense of identity. It explains each of these factors in depth using interviews, comedy shows, and sketches posted on social media as data. The thesis concludes with a Palestinian case study that parallels much of what the Jewish comedians spoke about.



## Senior Thesis Presentation ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Maddie Hartog  
"Between Kvetching and  
Kvelling: Navigating Identity,  
Politics, and Performance in  
Jewish Comedy"





## FACULTY NEWS



**Jon Andelson:** The Grinnell Historical Society has been working for a couple of years on fundraising to build a new exhibit museum to add to the MacMurray “house museum” it has managed for many years. It acquired a building at the corner of West Street and First Avenue, a former furniture store, to remodel into a museum (architectural drawing appears above).

In my work with the Meskwaki Nation, specifically the tribal historian, Johnathan Buffalo, on other projects I have learned about the significant role that State Legislator J.B. Grinnell played in winning approval by the state legislature for the Meskwaki to remain in Iowa even though they signed a treaty in 1842 with the federal government that would have relocated them to a reservation in Kansas. When one visits the Tribal Historical Museum, one sees a photograph of J.B. Grinnell and an expression of thanks for the way he helped the Meskwaki.

I lobbied the Grinnell museum board to include an exhibit about the Meskwaki in the new museum. I am pleased to say that they saw the importance of this, and it has been my privilege to work with Johnathan to develop a new Meskwaki exhibit for Grinnell’s new museum, which is planned to open in the summer of 2025.

**Monty Roper:** Though my USDA funded Build Better Grinnell community visioning project ([www.buildabettergrinnell.org](http://www.buildabettergrinnell.org)) officially wrapped up last October, I continue to work with members of the community to distribute the results and encourage action planning. This has included a couple community wide presentations on the summary findings as well as presenting the findings of the final racism report to the Grinnell Alliance, an organization of leaders and volunteers who are working to identify ways to ensure a welcoming community for all. I have also been working with student research assistants to process useful data that was not part of the summary report or the seven prioritized issue reports and to make it available to the community.

This summer I am dusting off my Costa Rica research and returning to El Silencio for two weeks in June with a summer MAP student, Julia Smith '26, to explore perceptions by members of the community to the opportunities and challenges posed by the rapid growth of the regional tourist industry. This will be my first return to the community since Covid.





## FACULTY NEWS

AMERICAN CHRONICLES

### TRAGEDY AT ROCK SPRINGS

*In 1885, white rioters killed dozens of Chinese immigrants. The story of the atrocity is still being unearthed.*

BY MICHAEL LUO

The town of Rock Springs sprouts out of a vacant landscape of sandstone cliffs and sagebrush in southern Wyoming. It is a fading former mining town, where herds of deer now meander through the streets. A century-old sign overlooking the rail-

piles are full of clues about daily life. Ng's team was also searching for a pancaked stratum of black charcoal—a "burn layer"—which would signal that they'd found the remnants of an atrocity carried out by inhabitants of the town.

On September 2, 1885, in one of the

likely the remnants of a Chinese dwelling. Meanwhile, George Matthes, an undergraduate at Grinnell, found himself with the archeological equivalent of a fish on the line. "He kept finding stuff," Ng told me. A coin, a piece of glazed stoneware, a fragment of bone.

**Laura Ng:** Professor Ng attended the Association for Asian American Studies conference in Boston, MA and presented on "An Archaeology of the Rock Springs Chinatown in Wyoming: Everyday Life, the Built Environment, and Memorialization." Professor Ng also attend the Society for American Archaeology conference in Denver, CO which was focused on Training Community-Engaged Undergraduates in the Archaeology Lab and Field at a Small Liberal Arts College. In addition Professor Ng and George Matthes '25 were cited by the New Yorker (pictured above) about their work with Chinatowns in Wyoming.



**Owen Kohl:** Professor Kohl will be attending two conferences this summer, one at the University of Rijeka in which he will be talking about his research on HipHop documentaries on post-Yugoslav spaces and issues of solidarity. The hosts are part of research group MEMPOP (affiliated with the University of Rijeka and Ljubljana) of which Professor Kohl has an affiliation as an outside researcher and collaborator. He will also be attending a conference in Mikkeli, Finland which will be focused on memory, war, and social coherence.



## ALUMNI UPDATES

**Rob Schwaller** (class of '03) was promoted to the rank of Professor in the Department of History at the University of Kansas. He is a co-editor of *Ethnohistory*, an interdisciplinary journal focusing on Indigenous and subaltern histories in the Americas. He also co-edited a volume entitled *Overlooked Places and Peoples: Indigenous and African Resistance in Colonial Spanish America, 1500-1800* (Routledge, 2024). This volume includes an article he wrote entitled, "The Spanish Conquest of Panama and the Creation of Maroon Landscapes, 1513-1590." He will also be taking over as chair of the KU Department of History in Fall 2025.

Rob writes: The photos I am including come from some fieldwork I did visiting regions in which maroons were active in the 16th c. One is me in the Bay of Portobelo which was once home to a community of African maroons about two decades



before the Spanish moved the Atlantic Port of Panama to the bay (1596). The other photo is of me in front of the Lago Enriquillo of the Dominican Republic. It is named after an early Taíno maroon named don Enrique (d. 1535). The mountains in the background were a refuge for indigenous and African maroons throughout the colonial period.



Congratulations to **Nelson Goering** '10 and Erika Graham '10 (History) who welcomed their son Roan Emeric Graham-Goering in March! He came into the world at 3.26 kg and 50 cm long. They live in Oslo, Norway, where Nelson notes Roan can get an early start on comparative cultural studies.

**Alumni, we'd love to hear from you! Please reach out to [roperjm@grinnell.edu](mailto:roperjm@grinnell.edu) to share updates on your lives!**





## SEPC NOTES



SEPC members 2024-25: Jorge Salinas '26, Delaney Owens '25, George Matthes '25, Hamilton Peacock '25 (not pictured: Nicole Mlynski '26, Molly Wilcoxson '26)

### **Ask the SEPC: What did you enjoy in the world of Grinnell Anthro this year?**

Hamilton: I most loved the moments where I got to sit around and yap with people—the wandering conversations in Profs. French and Kohl's offices, the semesterly "Tea & Tea" events where I talked with younger students about their anthropological hopes and fears.

Nicole: Grinnell Anthro was wonderful this year! Some of my favorite parts had to be going to student talks—it is really fascinating to hear our peers talk about their experiences! I also love a good "Tea & Tea", after all, anthropologists love to talk!

Delaney: I loved hearing all the alumni's wonderful and winding career paths at our alumni panel event! It was a great reminder to believe in our skill sets as anthro students.

George: I most enjoyed being a course tutor for Dr. Ng's Archaeological Methods course. It was lots of fun to be able to see a class from the other side of the experience. Assisting with labs, holding office hours, and helping students with their learning process really made me appreciate the hard work that our faculty do each semester!

Jorge: Being able to facilitate the arrival of the Hostile Terrain 94 exhibit to Grinnell College has been one of my favorite memories this year. With the ongoing stigma around immigrant identity (now more than ever), it has been extremely rewarding to advocate for change and progress.

### **SEPC election**

Welcome to our newly elected 2025-26 members: Clara Chaput '26, Julia Ghorai '27, Natalie Ng '27, and Avajane Lei '28!



## EVENTS

Pictured below are posters advertising Anthropology department events from the spring semester.

### Challenging the STEM pushout of Minoritized Asian American College Students

Dr. Matthew Wolfgram

Associate Researcher and Principal Investigator, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Matthew Wolfgram, Ph.D., is an anthropologist of education and education researcher at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research. His research employs ethnography, participatory action research, and other qualitative research methods to study factors that impact the educational experiences of minoritized college students.



This presentation will discuss an action research collaboration between college student activists and education researchers in Wisconsin, to study and address the problem of STEM pushout and redirection for minoritized Asian Americans, particularly HMoob (Hmong) college students.

Co-sponsored by the Education Department, Education Studies Concentration, the Department of Anthropology, and the Policy Studies Concentration

Wednesday  
HSSC

### Death on the Border: Forensic Investigations, Accountability, and Theories of Change

Dr. Gabriella Soto (ASU)



In 2023, the UN's International Organization for Migration named the US-Mexico border as the world's deadliest land border, where undocumented border crossing comes with deadly risk. This has been the case for decades, represented by both deaths and disappearances that collectively number in the tens of thousands in the southwestern United States alone.

This talk represents an overview of my forthcoming book, *Border Afterlives: Migrant Deaths, Forensic Investigations, and the Politics of Haunting*. Its focus is the official and unofficial practices that happen in the aftermath of border crossing deaths. This includes investigating deaths and pursuing the difficult process of forensic identification for unknown remains often found outdoors and subject to long-term postmortem exposure. It includes counting the dead and missing and seeking accountability for the deaths that one border jurisdiction has officially resolved this year constitute the US government's "knowingly killing immigrants." It involves civil society's theory of change in the face of these deaths, and the activism and scholarship with which I have been involved over nearly two decades. Though localized on the border, the book makes the case that migrant deaths expose the limitations and biases that pervade existing systems of care for the dead both nationally and internationally, provoking broader questions of what it means to seek justice on the dead's behalf—especially as migrant transit deaths continue and border enforcement characterizes such deaths as accidental.

Sponsored by the Anthropology Department and co-sponsored by the Center for the Humanities and Sociology Department.

### FEEDING ANCIENT CITIES What we can learn about early urbanism by studying ancient foodways in Jordan

Hanna Erftenbeck, PhD

Thursday April 3, 4pm HSSC s1330



Dwelling foundations unearthed at Tell es-Sultan in Jericho.



This talk will explore early urbanism in what today is Jordan and the southern Levant more broadly through the lens of daily food practices. Food is central to daily life, connecting to both the larger economy of communities, as well as traditions and identity. By investigating early urban foodways we can gain nuanced insights into how people's daily practices and actions built urbanism from the ground up.

Department of Anthropology





## EVENTS

Pictured below are posters advertising Anthropology events hosted by the SEPC from the spring semester.





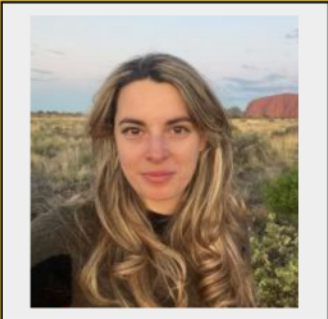
## EVENTS

Pictured below are posters advertising Anthropology events hosted by the SEPC from the spring semester.

# **ANTHRO ALUMNI PANEL**

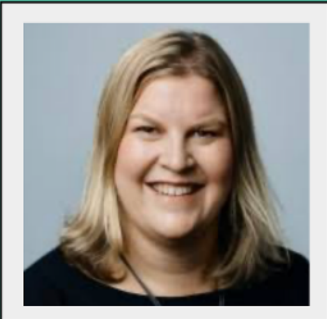
## **How YOU Can Use YOUR ANT Degree**

**COME AND LISTEN TO THESE 4 ANTHRO ALUMNI TALK ABOUT HOW THEY USE THEIR ANTHRO DEGREES IN THEIR CAREERS!**



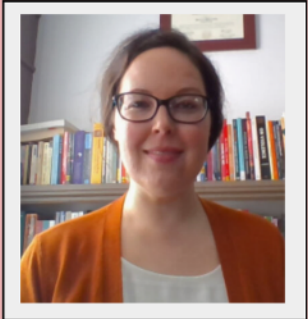
**Jo Palazuelos-Krukowski '09**

Jo Palazuelos-Krukowski is the Cultural and Public Art Coordinator for the city of Durham, NC. She recently completed a doctoral program in theatre at UC Santa Barbara, and has, among other pursuits, completed a Fulbright in Australia, served as a producer for The Moth radio hour, and worked at Google—all since graduating from Grinnell in 2009.



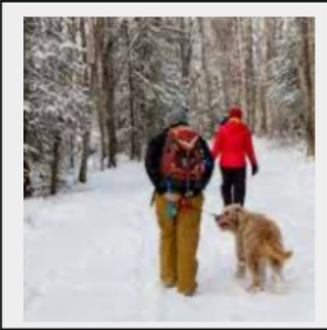
**Jocelyn Wyatt '99**

Jocelyn Wyatt '99 is the CEO of Alight, a global NGO serving refugees. She is also the cofounder and former CEO of IDFO.org, a design studio for NGO innovation. Her career in social entrepreneurship and humanitarianism has taken her around the world. Jocelyn also holds an MBA in International Business from the Thunderbird School of Global Management.



**Laura Brady '06**

Laura Brady '06 is a Grants and Research Compliance specialist at Colorado Mesa University. She previously worked on health disparities as a researcher and project administrator at the University at Buffalo and the Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center. She holds an MA and PhD in cultural anthropology from the University at Buffalo.



**Jenny H. Blanchard '02**

Jenny H. Blanchard is an Archaeologist and Cultural Resource Program Manager with the Bureau of Land Management in Anchorage, Alaska. Her work focuses on archeological fieldwork and partnering with the UAA to provide proactive research for prospective archaeology and natural/cultural resource students.

**WHERE: S1220 WHEN: 2/27 4:00 PM**





## EVENTS

### Retirement Reception

Around thirty alumni joined the department on May 31st as part of alumni reunion to celebrate our retiring faculty: Jon Andelson, Kathy Kamp, John Whittaker, Vicki Bentley-Condit, and Katya Gibel Mevorach. Vicki and Katya were unable to attend.

Alumni mingled, shared memories with Jon, Kathy and John, and toured our relatively new anthropology spaces in the Humanities and Social Studies Center (HSSC). Each faculty member spoke briefly, reflecting on their time at Grinnell.







## CLASS ACTIVITIES



Many of the students in **Prof. de Wet's Living with Animals class** visited the Iowa Farm Sanctuary in Oxford (photos above), IA this semester. While touring the farm and meeting the residents, they were able to play chase with young cows, snuggle with a recently rescued lamb, and dance an Irish jig with a turkey! This trip was part of the section of the course on eating animals, when the class read extensively about the violence's of industrialized animal farming. Many of the residents at the sanctuary have come there from the dairy and meat industries across the mid-west and the country. The class visit was a chance to learn more about their lives and understand the impacts of the industry on animals in general and on the particular animal beings we had the pleasure of spending time with.



**Prof. Ng's Archaeological Methods** classes (two sections) took a field trip to Wickiup Hill Learning Center (photo to the left). In addition to visiting exhibits on Iowa's Native American history, the group hiked a nature trail that passed by a Native American mound site.





## STUDENTS AT CONFERENCES

### AvaJane Lei

During winter break, I was given the opportunity to present at my first conference at the Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) annual conference in New Orleans, Louisiana. For the conference, I presented at a symposium celebrating the 15th anniversary of Archaeology In The Community (AITC), a non-profit, DC-based organization that focuses on archaeology education. In 2019, I participated in AITC's Youth Archaeologist Club (YAC), which introduced me to anthropology and archaeology. AITC Founder Dr. Alexandra Jones invited me to co-author a paper on my experiences in YAC with my former instructor, Thomas Cuthbertson. Our paper, Young Archaeologists Club: A Discussion of Archaeology Science Communication and Youth Education, discusses the YAC from both the student and instructor perspectives and our visions for how it can continue to inspire youth in archaeology in years to come.

In addition to my presentation, attending the conference provided me with many new connections, potential field school, internship, and academic opportunities, and insights into the many ways I could pursue my career in archaeology/anthropology. When I attended a Society for Black Archaeologists meeting, I was inspired by how the discourse of representation, identity, and community within the field is bringing change to it. By participating in a Collections and Curation round table, I gained a better understanding of the current issues that are being addressed within that area and what work in that field looks like. At the SHA Student Reception, I was able to talk to many professionals about the different career tracks in archaeology, each one providing me with ideas of how I can fuse my interests in museums, historical archaeology education, and community archaeology later down the line as I build my career in the field.



AvaJane showing off her conference badge.



AvaJane with mentors  
Prof. Ng (rt) and Alexandra Jones (left).



## STUDENTS AT CONFERENCES

(Avajane cont.) My biggest takeaway from this conference was the community I connected with during the few days I was there. I am incredibly thankful that I was able to build my relationships with both AITC and those in the Grinnell Anthropology community while also connecting those two groups who have been instrumental to my passion for archaeology throughout different chapters of my life. I hope the connections will provide future Grinnellians with opportunities with the AITC community and vice versa. At the conference, I also connected with individuals who identify as Asian/Asian American, and I didn't realize until that moment how much it meant to me personally to see others who looked like me succeeding in this field. Finally, I was humbled by the general instinct of those I met to support young people in the field, whether that was done by giving me honest feedback, professional or academic advice, or offering to stay in touch. The archaeology community may be small, but at this conference, I learned that it is also a strong one.

I would like to sincerely thank my advisor, Professor Ng, the Grinnell Anthropology Department, and alumni donors for making my first conference experience possible.

### Eleanor Hedges Duroy '25 and Delaney Owens '25

Eleanor (left) and Delaney (right) presented posters of their senior theses, completed during the fall semester, at the 2025 Iowa Human Rights Conference held at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls on April 12. Eleanor presented on "Examining the Potential Value-Action Gap between Young and Old in Bretagne France" and Delaney presented on "Shifting Frames, Cultivating Rights: Ideology in Land Contests of Northern Thailand." Professor Roper, who mentored both theses served as one of the discussants for broader poster session.







## SUMMER RESEARCH FUND RECIPIENTS

### **Natalie Ng '27 & Adella Catanzaro '27**

Support to attend Koobi Fora Field School for paleoanthropology in Sibiloi National Park in Kenya.

### **Parikshit Roychowdhury '26**

Support to research local perceptions of climate change on the Marshall Islands in preparation for fall senior thesis.

### **Mariposa Condron '27**

Support to visit northeastern Oklahoma for preliminary ethnographic research at Tar Creek Superfund Site in preparation a for fall independent research project.

### **Luis Lopez '26, Avajane Lei '28, & Jorge Salinas '26**

Support to purchase field gear to participate in archaeological summer MAP research with Prof. Laura Ng.

Coming in the fall newsletter: details and photos from all our fund recipients.

Thank you to all our donors who make these experiences possible!



## END OF YEAR AWARDS

### **The Rachael M. Asrelsky '89 Anthropology Paper Prize, for an outstanding paper written in Anthropology**

#### Excellent paper written in the introductory course, Anthropological Inquiries

- ▶ Abraham Haxhi (Bridging Disciplines: The Role of Anthropology in Combating the AIDS Epidemic)
- ▶ Brock Lange (Fighting for Land and Culture)
- ▶ Cici Xie (The Evolution of Sichuan Boiled Beef: A Family's Migration Story Through Food)

#### Excellent paper written in a non-introductory course runner-up awards

- ▶ Ilya Sniff (The Piltdown Man and What He Taught Us)
- ▶ Marley Pozniak (Anthropological Theory in the Linguistic and Cultural History of Spanish Roma)

#### Rachel M. Asrelsky '89 Memorial Paper Prize in Anthropology co-winners

- ▶ James Snyder (A Comparative Study of the Counterintuitive Characteristics of Supernatural Agents)
- ▶ Parikshit Roychowdhury (Climate Change as a Cultural Threat: The Marshallese Landscape and Seascape)

### **The Ralph Luebben Prize in Anthropology**

Awarded to the graduating senior(s) who best exemplifies the ideal anthropology student including meritorious scholarly work, breadth in the discipline, field experience, and an anthropological viewpoint on life.

George Matthes

Hamilton Peacock

(Honorable Mentions: Maddie Hartog, Em Huss-Lederman)

### **Honors in Anthropology**

Alyssa Argent  
Audrey Deligan  
Eleanor Hedges Duroy  
Maddie Hartog

Delaney Owens  
George Matthes  
Yurie Okumura  
Hamilton Peacock

Evie Redding  
Em Huss-Lederman  
Alyson Won





## DONORS

### January - March 2025

- ▶ Mr. Jonathan F. Cox
- ▶ Berger Phinney DAF
- ▶ The Austin Family Fund (Julie and Edwin Austin) gift to Anthropology Emeritus Professors' Student Research Fund
- ▶ Ms. Lara E. Szent-Gyorgyi recurring Gift to Rachel Asrelsky '89 Prize
- ▶ Paul Simmons and Michele Clark (Paul Simmons '79 and Michele Clark International Research and Learning Fund)
- ▶ Sallee Garst Haerr (The James M. Garst '79 Memorial Endowed Fund for Anthropology)

**A huge THANK YOU to all our donors.  
Your generosity and support enable us to provide many of  
the experiences we share in our newsletter.**

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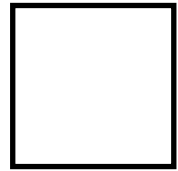


Many thanks to our  
Anthropology Department  
assistants and newsletter  
editors Eleanor Hedges Duroy  
'25 and Ava Rodriguez '27!



**Grinnell College**

1226 Park St.  
Grinnell, IA 50112



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