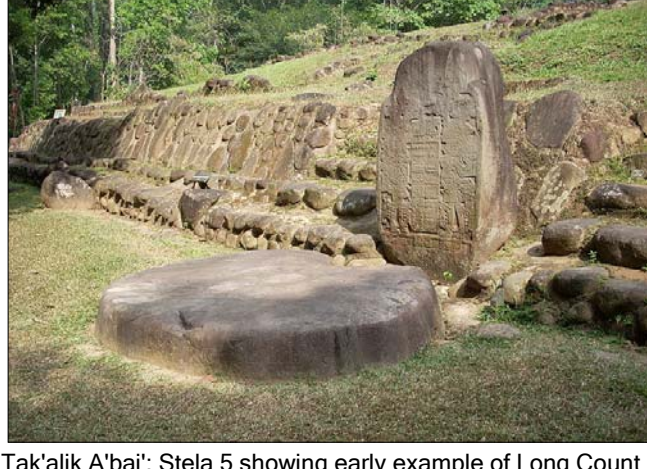




Mentor

Newsletter for UVG's donor community

Archaeology and Anthropology at UVG



Tak'alik A'bij': Stela 5 showing early example of Long Count Date. Altar 8 lies before it. Burchell, Simon.



Students analyze ceramics in laboratory.

The Center for Archaeological and Anthropological Research at UVG (Centro de Investigaciones Arqueológicas y Antropológicas - CIAA in Spanish) is dedicated to supporting research in Guatemala, including the creation of an archaeological information bank for students, and both Guatemalan and foreign professionals, to raise interest in collaboration and increase opportunities for student participation in field work.

The main objective of CIAA is to promote research into Maya culture in archaeology, anthropology, linguistics, epigraphy, cosmogony and other related fields, and to spread knowledge about pre-Hispanic and modern Maya culture. The Center sponsors the publication of work performed by students and professors at UVG. It also provides support and funding for field research that studies or promotes development in Guatemala.

Last year, Dr. Marion Popenoe de Hatch worked in Tak'alik A'bij', a pre-Columbian archaeological site on the Pacific coastal plain. The city flourished between the IXth century BC to the Xth century AD as an important commercial, ceremonial and political center. Dr.

Hatch analyzed ceramic fragments excavated over the last year, as well as an altar which she determined to be a solar observatory. She continues working as an academic advisor on the Tak'alik A'bij' project.

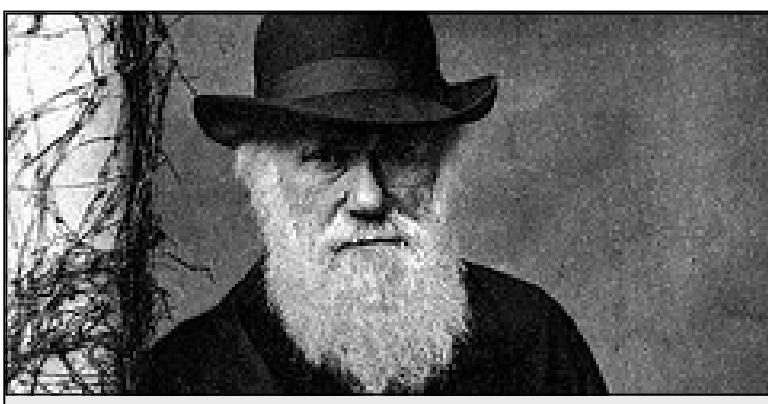
In anthropology, Andres Alvarez Castañeda collaborated with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to study the perception and practices of the use of oral rehydration salts to treat diarrhea in the department of Santa Rosa. The research was performed in partnership with five students and Drs. Wences Arvelo and Kim Lindblade. In their study, they included both formal and informal healthcare providers. In focus groups they surveyed women from villages where diarrhea is prevalent, and they conducted in-depth interviews with midwives, healers, as well as healthcare providers working within the public healthcare system. This collaboration gathered important information and was a valuable learning experience for the students who participated.

For more information about CIAA visit: www.uvg.edu.gt/instituto/centros/ciaa/

Source: "Tak'alik A'bij'". [Wikipedia](http://en.wikipedia.org). May 12, 2009. Keyword: Wikipedia.

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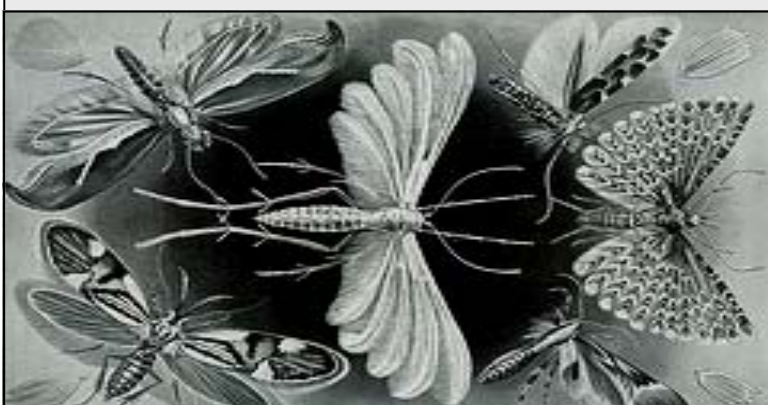
Celebrating Darwin

February 12th was the 200th birthday of Charles Darwin, one of the world's most creative and influential thinkers. His book, "On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection", published on November 22, 1859, introduced the world to the radical idea that evolutionary change is largely driven by natural selection. By this process, organisms most suited to their environment survive and reproduce, passing their advantages to their offspring.

Prof. Matilde Ivic de Monterroso saw this occasion as an opportunity to teach her students the importance of Darwin's contributions to science and society. She organized two educational activities with the collaboration of the Anthropology, Archaeology, Biology and Microbiology departments. The first took place on January 29th and coincided with the visit of ASHA Director George Like, who was invited to follow Darwin's voyage on the Beagle from 1831-1836, using an interactive map. On February 12th, students prepared an exhibition in the library with posters and essays on topics such as the social reactions to the theory of natural selection, Darwin's predecessors and influences, his voyages and observations. Professors Jack Schuster and Enio Cano contributed fossils for the display to illustrate evolution.

This year will also mark the 150th anniversary of Darwin's theory of evolution. Celebrations are taking place around the world with lectures, science and art exhibits, festivals, performances, and other activities.

Source: <http://www.darwin200.org>



ANTHROPOLOGY

Alumni Highlights:

Sergio Romero

My love for and commitment to the people of Guatemala matured at UVG. There, I discovered my vocation as an anthropologist and linguist, and met some of my closest friends. UVG gave me the knowledge and intellectual rigor that later allowed me to take advantage of postgraduate studies abroad. When I completed my undergraduate courses, I worked for a year and a half as a mediator for land conflicts in Q'eqchi' communities in Alta Verapaz. After graduating, I got a master's degree in Anthropology at Tulane University and later, a doctorate degree in Linguistics at the University of Pennsylvania. As an anthropologist, I have had the privilege of working and living in Nahua communities in Mexico, and K'iché, Kaqchikel and Q'eqchi' communities in Guatemala. I am now an assistant professor in the Anthropology department at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN.



Alejandra Colom

After graduating from UVG I got a master's in Applied Anthropology at the University of Maryland, College Park. When I completed my studies, I worked as an ethnographer for a project in Baltimore, MD called Adolescent Treatment Models. In 2002, I returned to Guatemala and taught anthropology courses at UVG and consulted on several environmental and reproductive health projects. Since 2005, I have been working in the Democratic Republic of Congo, documenting rural communities' use of natural resources. In 2006, I also became part of a team of independent observers for the transfer of forestry titles in DRC. In 2007, I began a doctorate program in anthropology at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium (KUL). I will continue dividing my time between my research in Congo, my doctorate degree in Belgium, and Guatemala, where I am collaborating in a health study in the highlands.



Foto: Property of WWF

Madeleine and Alfred V. Kidder Chair



The Madeleine and Alfred V. Kidder Chair in archaeology was established in 1986 in honor of American archaeologist Dr. Alfred V. Kidder (1885-1963). Dr. Kidder received his bachelor's degree at Harvard in 1908 and a doctorate degree in Anthropology in 1914, whereupon he embarked on a series of expeditions to the American Southwest and became the foremost specialist in Southwestern archaeology. His research laid the foundation for modern archaeological field methods, emphasizing a systematic approach to the examination of stratigraphy and chronology to study the development of human culture.

Dr. Kidder's research in Guatemala began in 1929 when he was named Chairman of the Division of Historical Research at the Carnegie Institute. His multidisciplinary approach combined the study of archaeology with social anthropology, physics, linguistics, colonial history, ceramics, medicine, geography, agronomy and environmental studies.

His research in Guatemala focused on archaeological sites in the highlands, with his most important contribution being the excavation and analysis of Kaminaljuyú. This site lies on a broad plain beneath one third of modern Guatemala City. Rich royal tombs, enormous thrones and stelae, eclectic sculptures, and brightly colored murals on the site were essential and formed the basis for future research. His work on the San Agustín Acasaguastlán site and essays describing the ceramics of the South Coast and other areas are equally valuable. Dr. Kidder's publications are important for their interregional and detailed anthropological data and the inferences he made about sociopolitical organization and interregional contact.

When the Kidder family established the endowed chair at UVG, the archaeology department had just recently been formed in 1982 under the direction of Dr. Marion Popenoe de Hatch. The Kidder endowment provided key support for the growing department and continues to do so today, thanks to the generosity of the Kidder family.

Scholar Highlight

Lesbia Esther Chitimul Simón



The degree in Agricultural Export Products that 19 year old Lesbia Esther Chitimul Simón got at ITEC-PROESUR in 2008 opened the door to a brighter future for her and her family. As a senior, she did an internship at La Union, one of the largest sugar mills in the area. This gave her the opportunity to put what she learned at ITEC into practice and show her supervisor that she was qualified for permanent employment with the sugar mill.

Esther interned in the factory laboratory under the supervision of Hugo Vicente Barreras Azurdia. The laboratory is responsible for the monitoring and controlling different aspects of sugar production such as the water used in the cauldrons, the temperature, juices, honeys, bagasse and waste water produced, and the quality of the sugar itself. Esther was entrusted with analyzing samples of sugar for characteristics such as humidity and nutrient content.

For Hugo it was a pleasure to have Esther working in his department. ITEC had prepared her well for her responsibilities and she learned easily. At the end of the internship period Hugo had a potential employee who was already familiar with their internal procedures and had proven her knowledge and capability for the job. It was therefore an easy decision to hire Esther permanently.

The success of our alumni is always a reason for celebration. It is a testament to the transformative power of education on people's lives and the impact that scholarships have for low-income students.



This newsletter was designed and written by Rebeca Frohmader, Coordinator of Local Fundraising, Development and External Relations Office in Guatemala City.

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