Community Archaeology at the Trowel's Edge

Laurie E. Miroff and Nina M. Versaggi

ABSTRACT

The Public Archaeology Facility's (PAF) Community Archaeology Program (CAP) at Binghamton University began 25 years ago in response to intense community interest in participating in archaeology. Although non-archaeologists have unlimited access to programming and social media about archaeology, there is more limited access to professionally supervised opportunities. PAF developed CAP to provide non-archaeologists with the opportunity to participate in highly supervised archaeological research projects to share in the process of discovery at the "trowel's edge." CAP recognizes the challenges and critiques of community programs and mitigates these by creating a climate of ethical practice. Our goal is to educate individuals about the presence of a rich and fascinating past in their own communities and create the sweat equity that can result in advocates for preservation. We operate under the principles that the heritage story embedded in an artifact is worthy of our respect and protection, and that an educated public is more likely to support the preservation of this heritage. Making a connection to people through artifacts builds not only a deeper understanding of the past but also an empathy for preservation. In this article, we introduce the program and reflect on the 25-year history of CAP and future directions.

Keywords: community archaeology, public outreach, archaeological education, U.S. Northeast, Public Archaeology Facility, Binghamton University

El Programa de Arqueología Comunitaria (PAC) del Public Archaeology Facility (PAF) de la Universidad de Binghamton comenzó hace 25 años en respuesta al intenso interés por parte de la comunidad en participar en la arqueología. Si bien las personas ajenas a la arqueología tienen un acceso ilimitado a ella a través de programas de televisión y redes sociales, existe una limitación mayor cuando se trata del acceso a oportunidades supervisadas profesionalmente. PAF desarrolló el PAC para proporcionar a las personas ajenas a la arqueología la oportunidad de participar en proyectos de investigación arqueológica altamente supervisados, lo que les permite compartir el proceso de descubrimiento que se desenvuelve al mismo "filo de el paletín." El PAC reconoce los desafíos y críticas que se plantean hacia los programas comunitarios y los mitiga mediante la creación de un clima de práctica ética. Nuestra meta es educar a los individuos acerca de la presencia de un pasado rico y fascinante en sus propias comunidades, así como estimular el vínculo que surge del trabajo compartido, que a su vez puede contribuir a formar defensores de la preservación. Operamos bajo los principios de que la historia patrimonial incorporada en un artefacto se merece nuestro respeto y protección, y de que un público educado se muestra más inclinado a apoyar la preservación de este patrimonio. Establecer una conexión con la gente a través de los artefactos no sólo construye un entendimiento más profundo del pasado, sino que también crea empatía para su preservación. En este artículo, presentamos el CAP y reflexionamos acerca de sus 25 años de historia, así como de su desarrollo futuro.

Palabras clave: la arqueología comunitaria, colaboración con el público, la educación arqueológica, el Noreste de los Estados Unidos, Public Archaeology Facility, Universidad de Binghamton

The Public Archaeology Facility's (PAF) Community Archaeology Program (CAP) at Binghamton University developed over the last 25 years from a recognition that not only does the general public want to know more about archaeology than what they see on television programs, they want to participate and get more intimate knowledge of what archaeology is and what archaeologists do (Atalay 2012; Derry and Malloy 2003; Ellenberger 2018; Jameson 1997; Jameson and Baugher 2007; Little 2002; McDavid and Brock 2015). CAP provides non-archaeologists with an opportunity to participate in local research projects and have the experience of touching the past through the discovery of artifacts at the "trowel's edge." Our goal is to involve individuals in researching a fascinating but mostly invisible history that is present in their own communities and to instill a sense of pride and stewardship in local heritage. Joining professionally supervised projects, even for a week, provides participants with the thrill of learning how objects were used by everyday people hundreds and thousands of years ago. Making a connection to people who created the artifacts builds a deeper understanding of the importance of heritage as well as an empathy for preservation through both local and national advocacy. CAP operates under the principle that an educated and engaged public is more likely to support preservation (Copeland 2004; Versaggi 2007). Public archaeology is not without its challenges, however. One of the main concerns for us has been countering the assumption that archaeology is simply about finding artifacts and that it is unrelated to the people who made and used these items on landscapes that today are still linked to their descendants. Related to

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this is the reluctance to conduct community programs that might encourage people to dig on their own to find artifacts. A common critique of archaeology outreach programs and a fear for those who offer them is that participants will use what they learn to go out and dig sites on their own with no supervision (Heath 1997). The saying "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing" could apply. Although this is a valid critique, successfully mitigating this risk rests with how a community program is designed. CAP's approach to mitigation is to create a climate of ethical excavation and emphasize that casual collecting and excavation are destructive to the heritage record. We promote our collective responsibility for stewardship rather than a desire to "find more." We make the preservation ethic prominent, and we guide people who are looking for additional programs or volunteer opportunities at professional excavations, either with us or with museums that sponsor summer research excavations.

Participants spend less than one week a year with us in the field, and understandably, they want to make interesting discoveries. The thrill of discovery, however, is just a part of archaeology, and our goal is to instill an interest in the past that moves beyond the artifact. Although we aim to present a rewarding experience for our participants, we do not select our sites based on their potential for artifact richness. Instead, we select sites for their ability to provide data to answer ongoing research questions for the region. This relates to a key concern in community outreach: how do we keep the focus on the lives of the people who made and used these artifacts rather than the objects themselves? The public often equates archaeology with finding artifacts, and it is our responsibility to address this challenge and build links between the artifacts and how people lived on a particular landscape. Handing a person an artifact and asking simple questions such as

- What do you think they used it for?
- Why did they throw it away (or did they lose it)? or
- Can you visualize what activity areas there were in this community?

puts the focus back on the people of the past and engages the public in the process of interpreting the past (Copeland 2004). This, in turn, can lead to stronger heritage recognition and preservation—the core of CAP.

In this article, we will introduce the program, discuss these challenges, present ways to mitigate concerns, and illustrate the power that an artifact and a site have in building pride in community, connections to the people who came before us, and advocacy for preservation. Finally, we will reflect on our 25-year journey with thoughts on how the program changed through time and why, along with our vision for future directions for CAP.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AT THE PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY FACILITY

Binghamton University's PAF has made public outreach an important part of its mission statement ever since the facility was established in 1972. CAP has fulfilled this public outreach mission by educating people about historic preservation and sharing our research with the communities where we conduct archaeology. Our responsibility to the public is threefold: (1) a personal commitment to engage communities in the research we conduct, (2) a professional commitment stemming from historic preservation legislation requiring community outreach and consultation with Indigenous and other descendant groups, and (3) an ethical commitment outlined by our professional standards that includes inclusive approaches to research.

Through CAP, PAF engages with several types of audiences: individuals who seek an entertaining experience, individuals who want an educational experience for themselves or their children, community organizations and service groups that are interested in local heritage, and descendant communities (Indigenous and Euro-American) associated with the sites that we research. These groups include interested individuals, stakeholders, and strong advocates for preservation. What grabs their attention is the object that was found, the landscape on which it was found, and the people with whom it was once connected.

To accomplish our outreach mission and reach multiple audiences with various interests in archaeology, PAF implements a broad array of initiatives, including week-long summer sessions that provide hands-on experiences appropriate for several age groups. We also respond to requests for programs on archaeology and local prehistory to enhance school curricula. PAF provides speakers for community events, such as Career Days, First Fridays, Heritage Walks, and STEAMfests. These events allow us to present archaeology to large and diverse groups of people and demonstrate that archaeology is something that has local importance (Thomas and Langlitz 2016). We also invite community and school groups to visit our lab facilities and, when possible, visit ongoing excavations. During these programs, the artifact is often the visual centerpiece. Artifacts, however, provide an important means for accessing other topics, such as understanding the people who made the item, their role in local history, their living descendants, and the importance of preserving regional heritage. As communities become familiar with our facility, individuals or groups sometimes contact us and request a collaborative project to help answer questions they have about their property or ancestors.

Our community outreach mission also recognizes the fact that many individuals are only familiar with hyper-fantastic sites and artifacts as seen on television programs (Maldonado 2016). They do not see a personal connection between archaeology and their heritage or that of their communities. This disconnect is illustrated by a 2018 Ipsos poll commissioned by the Society for American Archaeology (SAA), which found that whereas roughly 26% of respondents are interested in archaeology, a similar number (27%) indicated they were not interested. The reason was that they have never had the opportunity to participate in archaeology (https://documents.saa.org/container/docs/default-source/doc-publicoutreach/ipsos_poll2018.pdf?sfvrsn=a1f0921e_4). Television as well as print and digital media play a significant role in a non-archaeologist's exposure to archaeology. The techniques and science behind archaeology, however, are rarely presented in the limited time available. The advantage of outreach endeavors, such as CAP, is the flexibility to highlight the scientific process and how this process allows us to move from the object to the people behind the artifact. Although our participants may not be from descendant communities, we prioritize interpretations that build respect for, and a connection to, the people who created the sites we study.

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Archaeology has the advantage of stimulating both intellectually and emotionally through touchstone objects that connect people today with people and communities that existed many years before us. For most, the appeal of archaeology is holding an object that another pair of hands held and used thousands of years ago. Archaeologists know that artifacts are information-rich packages that can tell us about the lives of people absent from written records. As Lipe notes, "Contact with the authentic things of the past can spark in the general public an empathy with the past that enhances reflection on the meaning of history and on the connections between now and then" (2002:21). Sharing this with the public is key.

Holding a real artifact, and not a reproduction, provides an authentic experience. The person holding the object can visualize the shape, feel the weight, and observe the wear patterns. Uncovering an object in the ground is an experience that cannot be matched by a museum exhibit, or even a lab tour that allows visitors to touch the artifacts. From an educational perspective, the added benefit to the public is that as "active learners, they must use many senses besides the auditory or visual. . . . Participants are much more likely to retain in long-term memory what they have learned through multiple senses than through a single sense" (Heath 1997:69).

Although one-day events are useful for introducing the public to archaeology, our experience has taught us that a more in-depth program is arguably more valuable for stimulating a richer understanding of archaeology and heritage preservation. Based on conversations with audience members following our talks on local/regional/national/international projects, we sensed a need for and public interest in a more hands-on archaeological experience.

To fulfill this need, a core group of archaeologists, led by the authors, designed and implemented an integrated summer enrichment program in 1996 (Figure 1). That first summer, we had 12 participants ages 16 and over. Since then, CAP has grown to include individual sessions for kids (Grades 5 and 6), teens (Grades 7–10), and adults (ages 16 and over) as we realized that we could not adequately address the interests of multiple publics with one program. The addition of kids and teens sessions has allowed for a more age-appropriate educational experience for youth. Over the years, hundreds have participated in one of these three sessions. CAP has filled to capacity in recent years, attesting to the public's interest in opportunities to learn more about archaeology at the trowel's edge. This interest is sustained. Many of our youth and adults return each year for the same or the next age-appropriate session. Often, it is a multigenerational experience with family members enrolled in more than one session. People come from hundreds of miles to participate in our research, and several have built bonds with both one another and staff members that have endured for years. Returnees boast about when they first joined CAP, what their first site was, and how many years they have returned.

THE COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY PROGRAM

Since its inception, PAF has designed CAP to address two main goals: (1) to offer an enjoyable and educational opportunity by providing a full participatory experience that shares the thrill of discovery, and (2) to promote our collective responsibilities for preserving the past through public education and advocacy. Although these goals have remained constant, the content of CAP has changed over the years to sync with current paradigms and practices.

CAP stresses the ethics of our discipline by including case studies on the threats to preservation balanced with local success stories. For instance, weakening federal and state legislation poses a major risk to preservation, whereas local advocacy with developers and politicians can yield successes through project redesign and embedding elements of heritage in new buildings. We have been pleased when a few CAP participants went further and became vocal advocates for local preservation. One CAP veteran became a town historian and created a Certified Local Government, including a town preservation ordinance and a historic preservation commission.

Instructors also teach about the ethics of heritage preservation and the deep history of those who came before us. Through the years, CAP has modified its curriculum to incorporate more Indigenous history and that of other descendant groups, such as Revolutionary War descendants. CAP is successful in encouraging participants to further pursue their education. Many of our young participants have become so interested in archaeology that they have gone on to get bachelor's and master's degrees in anthropology or archaeology. CAP has had other successes. Retired participants who registered for CAP to fulfill a retirement dream have returned year after year, some providing volunteer help in the lab or on endangered sites. A CAP participant, who mentioned that he used to walk fields and dig on his own, was steered toward both a museum excavation (in which he has participated) and another college-sponsored excavation. Community programs such as CAP can create advocates for heritage preservation and reduce the potential for casual archaeology. Community programs also offer excellent opportunities to train the next generation of professional archaeologists in community and collaborative endeavors.

Currently, CAP offers three sessions depending on age groupings: Kids, Teens, and Adults. All three sessions are held for a period of five days with varying combinations of lecture, lab, and field time. Sustainable funding for community programs is always a challenge when there is no renewable institutional support. CAP is funded by participant fees and donations. Each year, we check other summer programs in the area and make our fees commensurate, building in a small increase biannually. Donations are used to provide up to five full and partial scholarships for those who cannot afford the program in order to be more inclusive and allow for greater participation (Neal 2015). Adults who successfully complete CAP are invited back in future years at a reduced fee. This keeps them engaged and continues to provide them with a supervised professional field research opportunity. Enrollments are capped to provide the professional supervision necessary and produce the best experience for our participants. We do not limit the number of new and returning adult participants, who average around 15 each year, balanced between new and returning members. Four to five professional archaeologists supervise the program. The number of participants in the Teens and Kids groups is limited. In Teens, the limit is 12, with two professionals; in Kids, the limit is 16, with three supervisors.

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FIGURE 1. Adults and teens programs at the Amos Patterson House historic site. Photograph by Jonathan Cohen, Binghamton University.

Over the years, the CAP curriculum has evolved as new directions or activities are proposed. CAP staff meet regularly throughout the year to plan the curriculum and initiate advertising for the program. Prior to the advent of social media, advertising was a challenge, and lower enrollments reflected the difficulty of getting the word out. We credit our website (https://www.binghamton.edu/programs/cap/ index.html) and Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/Community.Archaeology.Program/) as part of the reason enrollments have increased continually each year. Social media also gives potential participants an overview of each program and what to expect from the curriculum.

Our current curriculum begins in the classroom on the Binghamton University campus with an introduction to CAP and its goals: what is archaeology and what are the field and lab processes. This discussion stresses proper excavation techniques, context and association, and archaeological ethics. Presentations are also given on New York State archaeology and that particular year's field site. For some of these presentations, teens and adults are together, and it is fun to watch them interact and answer questions. To stress the full process involved in archaeological research, the groups tour PAF's lab facilities, where artifact processing, analysis, and curation are discussed. Here, participants experience the journey an artifact takes from the field to cataloging, analysis, and interpretation. To reinforce information covered during the program, a workbook is provided, which includes a summary of local prehistory and history, articles on archaeological methods, a reference bibliography, an illustrated glossary of archaeological terms, and examples of archaeological field forms. When possible, our participants visit other ongoing PAF excavations in the area to view how professionals operate within the cultural resource management (CRM) context of archaeology. We also make time to visit an exhibit on an urban site investigated by our facility that is permanently on display in a local downtown building.

For the remainder of the week, the adults are in the field excavating under the supervision of professional archaeologists (Figure 2). These professionals are often joined by experienced graduate and/or undergraduate students, who gain valuable experience working in community and collaborative endeavors. Field methods emphasize proper excavation and recording techniques, and participants are taught to shovel scrape, trowel, screen, take notes, and draw profiles. Typically, three adults or teens are assigned to a unit, and one professional archaeologist or advanced graduate student supervises two nearby 1 × 1 m units. Adults can take part in all aspects of excavation, unless they are not comfortable with—or are unable to perform—a task. Participants are encouraged to walk around the site to learn what is taking place in other units, and all interesting artifacts or features recovered are discussed with everyone on-site. Rain days are spent divided between lectures from staff about other research sites they are studying and the washing and sorting of artifacts. Occasionally, the adults will join in on a teen activity, such as atlatl throwing. Some local participants have volunteered in our labs after the CAP week ends. They experience the journey of artifacts from the field through processing to interpretation as they interact

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FIGURE 2. Two veterans of the Castle Gardens season screening. Photograph courtesy of Public Archaeology Facility.

with PAF archaeologists responsible for writing the results of the season's excavations or other CRM projects.

Teens spend the remainder of the week dividing their time between excavation and hands-on activities, such as typology, orienteering, stratigraphy, and zooarchaeology (Figure 3). They explore investigative questions such as

- What type is the tool?
- What was it used for?
- What kinds of resources were targeted for food, clothing, medicine, et cetera?
- What kinds of landscapes were targeted for use or habitation?
- How did people form sustainable communities?

Since many participants return each year, we are constantly developing new activities during the off season.

Whereas the teen session is run almost like a "mini" adult session, Archaeology for Kids is different. For most of the week, the children are on campus engaging in hands-on activities to convey the nature of some basic concepts in archaeology, such as stratigraphy, context and association, differential preservation, and use wear. During this time, they also take part in a mock excavation, in which they learn not only the basic principles of excavation and recording but also analysis and interpretation. One day a week is devoted to a visit to the site. The field trip gives students the opportunity to observe professionally trained archaeologists at work, ask questions of the adult and teen participants, and assist in the recovery of artifacts from the screens. According to parent comments and the reactions of children on-site, this is one of the most satisfying days of the program—participants in all three sessions are helping to recover artifacts and connecting them to the people who once lived on the site.

As CAP continues to evolve, we seek ways to expand to more audiences. Last year, we began a new initiative that involved local schools underserved by summer programs due to their rural locations and poorly funded school districts. We partnered with a rural middle school just north of Binghamton University. Adjacent to the school's playing field, archaeologists identified a site during a Department of Transportation bridge replacement project. This site became our 2019 CAP site. Given the site's location on school property, we had an ideal opportunity to work with the middle school students and faculty. We also attended the school's STEAMFest the previous winter, presented to the school board after our 2019 excavations, and went to the Fall Festival. To work more directly with the students, we devoted one week of our summer session to students from the middle school. This was the first time we had the ability to conduct classroom activities adjacent to a summer program site, thanks to the generous and enthusiastic school administration. This allowed the students to visit the site location repeatedly to understand the landscape, see new discoveries in real time, and incorporate them into their daily lessons. Our long-term goal is to extend these educational experiences into the school year, starting with artifacts and relating them to scientific concepts in classification, math, ecology, and biology, balanced with an Indigenous science perspective delivered by Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) representatives.

We have found that CAP works well within a university setting. For instance, universities usually have faculty and interested graduate students with experience working with aspects of the public. Many have given presentations to service groups, school career days, and scout groups. Universities also have safe facilities for hosting community programs. At Binghamton University, there is a compliance office that vets our instructors within federal and state child-abuse registries and that offers protocols for interaction with vulnerable populations. PAF has the equipment and vehicles

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FIGURE 3. Teens participating in lab activities. Photograph courtesy of Public Archaeology Facility.

available for use in CAP programs. With the right resources, however, a community program can be successful anywhere professional archaeologists are interested in working with non-archaeologists. One also needs access to a community that is interested in archaeology. An interested public can be found (or created) by giving talks on local/regional/national/international projects. If one gets good attendance and the audience is asking interesting questions, one has found people who may want more than an entertaining presentation. A community program does not need to be a field-based program, although such opportunities build a degree of sweat-equity in discovering the material links to the past, and they help develop empathy for preservation and respect for cultural landscapes.

If a field program is developed, selection of the research site is important. Because archaeology itself is a destructive process, we select our research sites carefully, with a focus on ongoing research and endangered properties at the fore. We often piggyback onto faculty and graduate research sites and use their formal research designs. Other projects are part of an ongoing CRM project with a state- or federally approved research design. Collaborative projects with descendant communities have less formal research designs guided by the questions our community partners wish us to address. Most research sites are on private or municipal land, and appropriate permissions are gained from landowners or municipal managers, sometimes as formal agreements but other times as less formal research work plans outlining questions and responsibilities of all parties. Excavations that will occur on New York state land require a 233 Permit from the New York State Education Department, administered by the New York State Museum. As stated in all formal or informal research proposals, all artifacts, notes, and other documentation, as well as all analytical databases produced by CAP excavations, are curated within the Department of Anthropology at Binghamton University in facilities that meet federal curation standards (36CFR79).

Because CAP investigations are part of research projects, the results are disseminated widely. CAP site data have been incorporated into master's theses and doctoral dissertations (e.g., Ferri 2011; Interligi 2012; Miroff 2002), CRM reports (e.g., Grills 2016; Knapp 1996a; Kudrle 2015), papers presented at professional meetings (e.g., Knapp 1996b; Kudrle 2014; Miroff 2008; Miroff and Knapp 2010; Price et al. 2000; Versaggi and Miroff 2005), and in peer-reviewed publications (e.g., Knapp 2009; Miroff 2009; Miroff et al. 2008). We have held CAP at almost a dozen sites in New York and Pennsylvania, both precontact and historic. Bringing our public programs into the world beyond Binghamton University's physical and imaginary walls expands the number of individuals we reach. We build a relationship with the community as a whole—people stop by to see what we are doing, and we follow up each season with a community presentation.

A recent expansion of CAP involves community-initiated and community-based research projects (Atalay 2012; Ellenberger 2018; Lyons 2013; Marshall 2002). The archaeological community recognizes that we are not the only people who have an interest in heritage. CAP attempts to incorporate research based on a community's (or individual's) interest, whose research questions become ours in a collaborative experience. Recent examples of this collaboration include the historic Amos Patterson House site, where the landowner requested help in answering questions about the people who once lived in her house, one of the oldest standing structures in the county. One year, we investigated a property within a Revolutionary War–era hamlet when a descendant of a soldier who had fought in that war had questions

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about how one parcel was used. Several years ago, we again responded to a landowner request for investigations at the historic Unitaria site, the former residence of a family associated with a national movement for reinless horse training.

One example of a CAP project that exemplifies the principles of our program is Castle Gardens. The Castle Gardens site showed the power of a local site, an artifact, and an engaged community to motivate people to become advocates for preservation.

THE CASTLE GARDENS SITE

From 2003 to 2005, Binghamton University's Department of Anthropology field school was held at the Castle Gardens site within the upper Susquehanna Valley (Miroff et al. 2008). Excavations produced over 150 projectile points, over 70 thermal and pit features, and almost 9,000 pieces of debitage, along with bannerstones, celts, net weights, and other rough and ground stone tools. AMS dating placed the site in the Late Archaic at approximately 2500 BC.

After completion of each of these three field schools, CAP participants expanded the field school investigations of this 5,000-year-old National Register–eligible site. In all, students and participants completed 135 shovel test pits and 60 units, each measuring 1 × 1 m. In New York's Susquehanna Valley, the Castle Gardens site is famous among archaeologists for the unique Vestal point, named for the town where it was first discovered (Figure 4). The point type was identified in 1966 by then state archaeologist Dr. Robert Funk, based on his findings at Castle Gardens. For archaeologists, this small notched projectile point is an important part of a diverse artifact assemblage. For the CAP participants and the local community, this point became much more, eliciting an overwhelming sense of pride for the residents of this community in Vestal, as well as for the surrounding region. The town has become dominated by strip malls and other developments in recent years, overpowering any places of historical note and making cultural resource preservation more important than ever. When *American Archaeology* magazine published an article on the site (Dickinson 2005:31–35), this enhanced the pride many residents harbored for their community and prompted discussions about the importance of preservation.

Following excavations at Castle Gardens, the Vestal Historical Society invited us to present our findings at a special program, which over 100 people attended—three times more than its usual audiences. They came not only to learn about the site and "their" Vestal point but to express pride in this nationally significant site in their own neighborhood. A good number of CAP participants whose first program experience was at Castle Gardens has returned each year since and, inevitably, someone brings up their summer—or summers—at Castle Gardens more than 15 years ago. That sense of community and community pride continues today. It was the experience at Castle Gardens that prompted one participant to become a strong advocate for preserving local heritage and form the Vestal Historic Preservation Commission.

For CAP, the Vestal point became a touchstone that we return to each year—an item from which to begin further discussions. We use the point to explain how a single artifact type can raise multiple questions about Indigenous peoples, their communities, and their descendants who live within the region today. Artifacts from Castle Gardens also allow for deeper questions about how people used certain artifacts and how people interacted with each other within larger regions. For example, the unique notched Vestal point is often found with the more ubiquitous stemmed Lamoka point. Sites with Lamoka points are found over a much broader geographic area than those with Vestal points, and we have been proposing various hypotheses for why the two point types are found together in the same horizon and even in the same features at Castle Gardens. Is there a functional difference, a gendered difference, or a cultural difference that would account for this unusual coexistence? Asking these questions prompts participants to think beyond the artifact to the people who made and used it. The fact that so many participants return each summer and continue to discuss these topics suggests that, for the most part, they understand this message. Although they still enjoy finding interesting and unique artifacts, they also ask questions about the people behind them, as well as the archaeological process of discovery, interpretation, and preservation. This is important because "if archaeological research does not continue to produce improved understandings of the human past, or if archaeological research loses its scientific and scholarly credibility, the public's attention to and interest in things archaeological will diminish" (Lipe 2002:20).

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

We were preparing for our twenty-fifth Community Archaeology Program in 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, which resulted in our canceling the summer program. This has given us time to reflect on past seasons and prepare for future directions.

Not being able to meet with our participants in person has spurred us to think about other ways to engage with the members of communities. We are currently exploring ways to reach out via online platforms such as webinars, online presentations, and PowerPoint modules for schools in order to provide additional opportunities to interact with the public throughout the year. For instance, we can offer online presentations that follow artifacts found during previous CAP seasons through the analytical process. Viewers will be able to see the results of specific analyses—measurements; classifications; and use-wear, faunal, and botanical analyses—to see how we develop interpretations of a site. Developing an interactive experience for some presentations would be ideal. Rather than waiting for next year's CAP, we can continue the experience of the discoveries made at the trowel's edge.

A recent research project has also encouraged us to think differently about how we engage the public in our research. In the next year, we plan to begin a citizen science project that will allow community members to participate in archaeology year-round. It is difficult to get adults and school-aged children to devote more than a week to archaeology. Citizen science fits well with a desire to include the public in research because "participants are informed about the scope, goals, and outcomes of the research and actively become partners in the scientific enterprise" (Smith 2014:750). We are proposing an online database of stone tools to which individuals can contribute (Smith 2014). This will not only

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FIGURE 4. Vestal point found at the trowel's edge. Photograph courtesy of Public Archaeology Facility.

allow for participation throughout the year but also involve people who may not be able to take CAP for various reasons. Participants will be contributing directly to new scientific research.

One future initiative involves a more formal approach to evaluation of the program. We have realized that although we casually survey participants at the end of the week about their experiences and the way the program met their expectations, we have not done a formal assessment recently. Up to this point, our informal evaluation process has asked each participant, on a voluntary basis, to answer open-ended questions about their experience anonymously. This feedback is then discussed by instructors at a post-program "debriefing" and used to make changes to the program. Although informal assessment is valuable, we need a more formal approach to evaluating our successes and any areas needing improvement to know if we are achieving our goals. We plan to implement an open-ended assessment survey to obtain feedback from those who have gone through each of the three age-based sessions. This will assess how the program can better serve the needs and wants of each age group and whether participants are receiving our preservation message (King 2016). In addition, staff will be asked to maintain a reflective journal throughout the program. Although we do a follow-up meeting with staff at the end of the summer session, staff will reflect *during* the program on what is working and where there are weaknesses in the course of their interaction with youth and adults.

Above, we mentioned that rain days are spent, in part, washing and sorting artifacts from our site excavations. We have been fortunate during the past few years, however, to have good weather. This has meant that artifact processing and analysis have not been part of our usual curriculum for the program. To address this, last summer we invited adult participants to wash artifacts after the program was over. Although this worked well for those who live locally and had the time, we have many participants who live out of town or who were not able to join us due to their jobs. Involving the community in the entire archaeological process is important to our educational mission, and it aids in our goal of demonstrating that archaeology is not simply about discovery in the field. As Thum and Troche (2016) point out, we have a responsibility as a university entity to highlight the research aspects of our discipline. In the future, we will build time into each session to wash, sort, and catalog site artifacts, coupling this with discussions about the artifacts and the way they will aid in site interpretations. Of course, this may lead to another challenge. Many of our participants are reluctant to miss an opportunity to dig. We are discussing the addition of a second session focused on laboratory processing to follow the artifacts from their discovery at the trowel's edge through classification, interpretation, publication, and curation. This initiative will enhance our goal of creating engaged preservation partners and promote our responsibility for the collective understanding of those who came before us. This requires that the public be engaged in the complete archaeological process—from setting the research questions to final site interpretations.

As part of a recently awarded National Science Foundation Advancing Informal STEM Learning (AISL) grant, we will include the voices of Indigenous people into each session to provide a non-Western perspective on the meaning and function of artifacts and to link the archaeological objects to the living landscape. Tribal leaders will work with us in the initial planning stages to develop the best ways to incorporate their teachings into the teaching modules we will use in CAP sessions. They will guide us on incorporating an Indigenous perspective into the program so as to build a respectful approach to teaching youth and adults

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about the sites and artifacts being studied and their linkage to Indigenous lifeways. We will invite them to take the lead on what they would like us to incorporate in CAP and how they would like those concepts to be presented. PAF has long-standing relationships with Indigenous leaders, and we will ask them to share their knowledge with our participants (Reetz and Quackenbush 2016). Indigenous people and their traditional knowledge play critical roles in the process of interpretation and education, contributing to an ongoing decolonizing of the field of archaeology (Atalay 2012; Kerber 2006; Popp 2018). These individuals will ground the program within an Indigenous perspective that highlights respect for the land we all live on today, the solemn role of artifacts as direct links to their ancestors, and the place of material culture in Indigenous lifeways, both then and now (Basso 1996). They have also agreed to share their technological and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) through oral tradition and storytelling (cf. Inglis 1993; Iseke 2013). Including an Indigenous perspective in CAP will ensure that the program is carried out in a manner respectful to the heritage of Indigenous people.

CONCLUSION

When CAP began 25 years ago, our motivation was simply to present our archaeological experiences to the communities in which we conducted research projects. This worked well, but over the years, we realized that this top-down approach was rewarding for archaeologists but less beneficial for community members. Involving non-archaeologists as more than passive participants is useful in that their knowledge and background aids in defining hypotheses and interpretations. The dialogue generated by this approach leads to a better all-around understanding of the past and increases the potential for heritage preservation. Participants become scholars in their own right instead of merely being excavators looking for artifacts (Barnes 2018:14). Recently, we have been moving toward what Grima calls "the 'multiple perspective model,' which recognizes the variety of perspectives, attitudes, and needs of different audiences, which will result in very different forms of engagement with the past" (2016:54). Consequently, the archaeologist is not the keeper and dispenser of knowledge. Rather, the archaeologist seeks to "improve research through an inclusive approach which sees, for example, communities as defining research agendas themselves rather than as a passive 'consent-based' process" (Neal 2015:353; see also Barnes 2018). Like others who have shifted to this approach, we have noted over the past few years that participants are eager to contribute to ongoing research (Copeland 2004; Kowalczyk 2016).

The ultimate goal of CAP is to involve individuals in archaeological research that goes beyond the artifact and to instill a sense of stewardship in, and advocacy for, local heritage. A public that is educated and engaged will more likely support preservation. Including the public in excavations, however, elicits the common concern that we are only teaching people how to dig and find artifacts. We have revised our program over the years to address this issue. We begin with the artifact—a projectile point or a potsherd—an object that is a known and has long drawn the attention of the public. From there, we move on to the questions that can be answered about the people who once used that object. This leads to more in-depth conversations about research design, excavation methods, and interpretation. We encourage dialogue among our participants and share views about the people behind the artifacts, their living descendants, and respect for the land that was once their homeland, which continues to be connected to their communities today.

CAP creates a sense of community among people of different backgrounds, builds local pride in heritage, educates the public about history, and creates new stakeholders in historic preservation. Active participation in supervised experiences builds an empathy for the past and respect for the heritage embedded in artifacts. As archaeologists, we

> must be able to explain why such tangible evidence is vital if [we] are to stop the theft of artifacts and the careless or intentional destruction of sites. If archaeologists do not explain why the physical heritage is important, they cannot blame those who, having no archaeological training or education, consciously or unconsciously destroy or sell parts of that heritage [Stone 1997:27].

Through local programs that allow people to touch pieces of the past and learn about the people who created and used them, we have found a way to make the past come alive and be more personal for people in the present. Nowhere was this more evident than our work at Castle Gardens (McManamon 2000:22).

As we look to the future, remembering these principles will keep our focus on the discovery, preservation, and sharing of the heritage unique to our interested publics. If our nation's heritage is important to people and if we involve them in what we do, we can spark a deep interest in citizens becoming stewards of the past and partners in local preservation efforts. We can also foster communities that are knowledgeable about why the past matters from the trowel's edge to policy.

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Data Availability Statement

There are no data for this article/project.

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AUTHOR INFORMATION

Laurie E. Miroff and **Nina M. Versaggi** ■ Public Archaeology Facility, Science 1, Room 146, Binghamton University, Binghamton, NY 13902-6000, USA (lmiroff@binghamton.edu, corresponding author; nversagg@binghamton.edu)

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