October is archaeology month! Come out and celebrate International Archaeology Day with the Legacy Program on October 18th at Mission San Jose. Legacy will have multiple booths and activities at the event. Stop by and practice your excavation skills in our mock dig or learn how to use ancient technology like the bow and arrow. CAR archaeologists will be out to answer all of your questions at our “Ask an Archaeologist” booth. On October 25th the Legacy Program will also be at the Alamo for San Antonio Founder’s Day. The day is dedicated to celebrating San Antonio’s diverse cultural past. Re-enactments, dancing, music, and more make this event sure to be a great time for the whole family. Archaeology Day and San Antonio Founder’s day are both free and fun ways to celebrate archaeology month in San Antonio!
Meet the Legacy Staff!!

Whitney Lytle is the Legacy Program Coordinator and a Ph.D. student at UTSA. She brings to the Legacy program extensive experience in archaeological research, as well as designing and promoting public outreach programs. For more information about opportunities offered by Legacy, email her at Whitney.Lytle@utsa.edu or contact her by phone at 458-4462.

Rachel Vara is Legacy’s new Assistant Coordinator. In addition to spending over 100 hours as a volunteer at Legacy, she has experienced archaeology in both the field and the lab as a UTSA field school student in Belize. Rachel graduated with her B.A. in Anthropology from UTSA in 2013. Contact her via email at Rachel.Vara@utsa.edu.

Spotlight on Ancient Technology: Atlatl Science

The book series and movie “The Hunger Games” has popularized the bow and arrow with today’s students, but before the bow and arrow a much older technology existed. The atlatl (at-latl) was a tool used for throwing darts or spears over 30,000 years ago. The term “atlatl” comes from the Aztec, but the tool was used all over the world. Spear throwing devices have been found in Australia, Russia, Europe, and the Americas! The atlatl is typically made from wood, but versions made of antler have also been found. The length varies, however, most atlatls are no longer than two feet. One end is shaped into a grip occasionally including finger loops. On the other end is a carved piece of antler, bone, stone, or wooden tip to keep the dart in place. The dart can be up to seven and a half feet long with a stone point tied at the end. The atlatl is a simple machine, allowing the user to throw a dart much farther and with more accuracy. This technology allowed darts to reach 80-90 feet per second, making it possible to hunt from long distances. Today, the longest recorded throw in competition was 252 yards! Sometime between 5,000 and 3,000 years ago the bow and arrow first appears in North America and the atlatl is slowly replaced. Even after the tool was no longer in use, its symbolic meaning was not forgotten. For example, the Mixtec of Mesoamerica used the atlatl as a symbol for warfare and power and can be seen in many of their codices (books).

Learning how to use this ancient technology is just one of the exciting activities offered to students on the Center for Archaeological Research tour! Students will also get to see our working archaeology lab, handle artifacts in the education room, and participate in a mock dig. Legacy offers in-school presentations that teaches students what archaeology is, how archaeologists work, and career opportunities in archaeology. Tours and presentations are ideal for grades 3rd-12th. Additionally, this year Legacy is offering a new in-school program for high school classes called “Atlatl Science”. This new program includes a brief presentation on archaeology and the atlatl. Then students head outside for an interactive activity on the physics behind the technology. To schedule a tour or in-school presentation email Legacy staff at CARLegacy@utsa.edu or call 210-458-4462.

Legacy Fees:

Lab Tours:
$8 per student

In-School Presentations:
(classroom, auditorium, career day, atlatl science)
$75 for 4 hours or less
$125 for more than 4 hours

Clubs:
$200 for club sponsorship

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