



Berkeley-Abiquiú Collaborative Archaeology (BACA) Partnership

The BACA partnership in rural Northern New Mexico is unique for its example of an archaeological praxis by which the descendant community is central to research inception, design, implementation, and application of archaeological work that serves the Pueblo de Abiquiú as well as the professionalization of students and research partners. The goal of this kind of work is to be meaningfully engaged with current struggles for self-determination, which include not only heritage revival and local school curriculum, but also federal recognition, land, and water rights cases. Community partners tie their current battles over access to sustainable livelihoods to not only the material practices of their Indo-Hispano heritages, but also their sense of corporate identity grounded in the heritage resources of their home places.

The BACA project challenges previous historical and legal notions too often found in both academic and CRM archaeologies. Diacritical labels, often indexing stereotyped indigeneity or Hispanophobia, have been linked (e.g. Lamadrid 1992) to dehistoricizing the Indo-Hispano political, social, and economic alliances which made America what it is today. The BACA project's ongoing, collaborative, and pluralistic archaeological foci incorporate multiple descendant perspectives on the value and direction of inquiry for research on and with Indo-Hispano communities to understand the myriad ways in which historical archaeology can combat these racist paradigms. Bringing that work back into local schools, training local youth, and working closely as a volunteer for descendant communities in their current preparations for the legal defense of their water and land base is central to the research program.

The BACA project's most recent field season took place this last summer, though multi-media products and presentations continue to become available as the project spools up for our next season. A diverse team of volunteer undergraduate and graduate students, community religious and secular leaders, community youth, as well as professional archaeologists from private and public sector agencies were housed by the Pueblo de Abiquiú community and had our excavations incorporated into the center of daily plaza life. Research agendas and modes of reporting have been closely articulated with the priorities of the community in which BACA project members have been invited to work. The partnered leadership of the project recruited and trained local youth from the Merced del Pueblo de Abiquiú, including at-risk youth from the Northern Youth Project who continue to be hard at work on interpretive video, drama, and written works related to their experiences for public outreach and records at the Pueblo de Abiquiú Library and Cultural Center.

Building upon these successes, a new partnership has been formed by the BACA leadership and nearby Ghost Ranch Museum. One important dimension of this museum partnership is for Ghost Ranch Museums personnel to spend time working with the Pueblo de Abiquiú Library and Cultural Center to develop exhibits, support curation and database building, and build interpretive programs together.

All of this work is part of an integrative framework that empowers leadership partners through direct management of project foci, funds, resources, and products as well as providing for engaged scholarship opportunities for non-local students and colleagues. Our most recent broadly-attended event was the summer 2016 community forum organized by BACA project partners in Abiquiú, New Mexico that featured community leaders, regional scholars, allied community speakers, and BACA project reports. Our accountability structures with our project partners includes regular reporting, artifact repatriation, skills transfers, project financial co-management, and support of youth and cultural programming missions.

Details

Restrictions: Minors need parental consent. All volunteer applicants must be approved by PALCC and Merced leadership

Services

Locations

Pueblo de Abiquiú, New Mexico

Abiquiú, CA 87510

Mailing:

PO Box 838

Abiquiú, CA 87510

Phone: 505-685-4884

Parent Organization

Berkeley-Abiquiú Collaborative Archaeology Project

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Abiquiú, CA 87510

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Type: Alliance, Association, or Coalition

<http://arf.berkeley.edu/projects/bearbones/research-projects/current-projects-2/baca-project-2/>