



A Virtual Chat with Rachel M. Perash



BA Anthropology
MS Anthropology



Auburn University
University of Indianapolis



Specialty/Research Focus:
Archaeology and
Bioarchaeology

Rachel received her BA in Anthropology from Auburn University in 2012 and her MS in Anthropology from the University of Indianapolis in 2015. While in school she both attended and worked as a paid intern at James Madison's Montpelier field school. There she helped to expose the lives of the enslaved population of the plantation and taught field school students the basics of archaeological fieldwork.

Upon graduating she was employed as an Archaeologist I with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CCT) in north-central Washington. There she had the opportunity to lead crews through federal and county projects involving site condition monitoring and reporting which assessed the impacts and damages done to known archaeological sites by dams, ranching practices, erosion, and looting. Because the CCT's traditional lands expand throughout Canada, Washington, Idaho, and Oregon, she has also worked with federal environmental programs as a monitor during environmental clean-up projects. And assisted with the discovery of human remains and funerary objects on and off reservation as well as the repatriation process of the Ancient One, or Kennewick Man.

After leaving CCT, Rachel was employed with the Seminole Tribe of Florida in the Everglades as the Bioarchaeologist. Through the Seminole she expanded her ArcGIS knowledge, learned to identify native Floridian and introduced zooarchaeological remains, and performed Phase I projects. She had the privilege to protect Seminole graves, with both unknown and known locations, and to perform cemetery preservation with tribal members. She also assigned department-level projects, such as editing the 2016 Annual Report detailing the annual progress the Tribal Historic Preservation Office, which is disseminated to the council, other tribal departments, and tribal members.

Rachel was then hired as the NAGPRA Coordinator for the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma (UKB). In this position, she secured the tribe an NPS-NAGPRA Consultation Grant in the amount of \$84,000 and managed all grant activities and budget. Deliverables within the grant's scope included: 1) developing a NAGPRA strategic plan, 2) researching and documenting Keetoowah burials in Arkansas and Oklahoma, 3) contacting all known museums or universities that may contain UKB NAGPRA materials, and 4) conducting oral history interviews with tribal Elders. In addition, she received a \$740 scholarship from the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM) to attend their annual conference to present her experience developing a NAGPRA program.

For the past few years Rachel has transitioned to the cultural resource management (CRM) sector. She has worked for two CRM firms in the southeast serving as a Technical Editor and Project Manager/Archaeologist. She conducts archaeological survey, testing, and data recovery investigations; effectively discusses projects with clients and agencies; prepares budgets and proposals; and writes technical reports and publications. And provides her expertise in osteology, NAGPRA, and tribal consultation across our three offices.

In 2021 Rachel was elected Co-Chair of the Biological Anthropology Women's Mentoring Network (BA WMN).

Online
Office Hrs



See our list of
events to register
for Rachel's
upcoming office
hours.