

University of New Mexico

MAXWELL MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Annual Report 2025-2026





Mission of the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology at UNM

Working toward greater understandings of the fullness of human experiences in the Southwest and the world.

Vision

The Maxwell Museum of Anthropology at UNM contributes to

Reconciling injustices

Restoring voices

Realizing community

Values

The staff at the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology at UNM embrace these values in all they do

Uphold **integrity** through honesty and transparency

Act with **courage** and take informed risks

Lead with **humility** and own our mistakes

Embrace **inclusivity** with openness and sincerity

Embody **dynamism** and manifest meaningful change

Excite **curiosity** and a passion for learning

Land Acknowledgment

The University of New Mexico and the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology sit on and among the traditional homelands of multiple sovereign nations. We acknowledge the deep connections of the Pueblo, Diné, and Apache peoples to the land and the significant contributions of past, present, and future Indigenous peoples and communities to life and culture in the greater Southwest, the United States, and the world at large. In acknowledging these connections, we express our gratitude for the opportunity to live, work, and learn on this land. We honor our relationships with Indigenous peoples and commit to working towards reconciling injustices, restoring voices, and realizing community going forward.



2025-2026 in Brief

August 7, 2026

On behalf of the University of New Mexico Maxwell Museum of Anthropology I am pleased to share this report of our work from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. Over this year, we welcomed more than 35,000 visitors into our spaces. More than 850 UNM students from 21 separate courses visited the Museum's exhibitions and collection spaces and gained hands-on experience working with museum materials in their classes (pp. 3-6). An additional 64 UNM students worked, volunteered, and conducted research in the Museum. We also hosted classes from New Mexico State University, CNM, UNM-Valencia, and the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI).

As a major site for UNM community engagement, we welcomed visitors from Albuquerque and around the world (including this year, a State Department delegation from 20 African countries!). Under the leadership of Curator of Education Erica Davis, our education team served a record 4300+ K-12 students through our Adopt-A-Bus program, checkout trunks, and offsite presentations (pp.7-8). Curator of Public Programs Dr. Julián Carrillo and a dedicated team of student assistants and volunteers served more than 2,400 visitors in 24 public programs and 18 behind-the-scenes tours, open-houses, and workshops (pp. 14-15).

After four years of planning by Museum staff and a team of 25 Pueblo co-curators from 14 Pueblos, our newest temporary exhibition *Coiling Kin: The Life of Pueblo Pottery* opened in June (pp. 10-12). This exhibit is a fitting final project for Curator of Ethnology Dr. Lea McChesney, who fully retired from UNM at the end of June, and was exquisitely developed and designed by Curator of Exhibits Toni Gentilli. Gentilli and Museum preparator Chris Albert have continued to make the Maxwell spaces more welcoming and attractive, including creating a new gathering space for visitors and small groups and working with the Edaakie family of Isleta Pueblo to bring the courtyard horno back to life (pp. 13).

Research, care, and improved documentation of the collections and archives continues (pp. 17-22), supported by a great team of staff, student workers, and volunteers. We worked in the field, lab, and with community collaborators, producing publications and delivering presentations at national and international workshops and conferences (p. 25). A lot of our time this year was devoted to the important work of repatriation (p. 22). We are grateful to the many Tribal representatives who joined us in this important work.

As we look ahead to the coming year, we are excited to welcome our new Curator of Historic and Contemporary Indigenous Collections (aka Ethnology), Dr. Kendall Lovely (Diné), this fall. Kendall is a public historian whose research explores the history of anthropology museums and collecting of Native American belongings. She will hold a joint faculty appointment with the Department of Native American Studies, and in addition to welcoming her, we look forward to beginning a new relationship with the Department.

In all we do at the Maxwell, we are profoundly grateful to the communities we serve, here at UNM and across our region. These are challenging times for our nation's museums, and I thank our members, donors, and visitors for joining us on this journey of "working towards greater understandings of the fullness of human experiences in the Southwest and the world."

Carla M. Sinopoli, Director



UNM Students at the Maxwell

The Maxwell Museum provides unique educational opportunities to UNM students and to students and researchers from around the state, country, and world. Students engage with the Museum in a variety of ways: through class visits to exhibitions and collections, by gaining archaeological field experience and training through the Office of Contract Archeology, as independent researchers, and as employees and interns—welcoming visitors, leading tours, and working in the collections. While some collections remain off limits as the Museum undertakes NAGPRA consultations, the Maxwell nonetheless hosted more than 850 students in collections and exhibits, and through guest lectures in their classes. Visits to exhibits were supported by specially designed Education Guides for UNM Faculty and Staff. Students came from 21 separate courses in a variety of disciplines, including Anthropology, American Studies, Studio Art, Art History, Biology, Museum Studies, and Spanish. Students in several classes had multiple engagements with the Maxwell, participating in semester-long research and collection projects. All gained educational experiences that enriched their learning and understanding of anthropology and of the remarkable educational resources of the Maxwell Museum and UNM. The Maxwell also welcomed students from CNM, NMSU, and UNM-Valencia.

The Maxwell provides numerous opportunities for UNM students to interact one-on-one with museum staff as they seek to shape their own futures in anthropology, museum work, and related careers. New this year, the Maxwell's Laboratory of Osteology organized a program called "Maxwell Pathways," where students were invited to attend informal office hours with a museum professional to discuss topics including job and career opportunities, beneficial classes, resume help, graduate school programs, and other concerns.



Students in Anthropology 330 (Principles of Cultural Anthropology) learning about the repatriation of the Smith Family Totem Pole from Professor Les Field, Fall 2025

UNM Classes in the Maxwell Museum

- American Studies 1150, Introduction to Southwest Studies (Joshua Heckman), Spring 2026
- Anthropology 1211, Archaeology in Practice (Hannah Mattson), Fall 2025
- Anthropology 1211, Archaeology in Practice (Jacque Kocer), Spring 2026
- Anthropology 1211L Archaeology in Practice Lab (Madison Drew), Fall 2025, Spring 2026
- Anthropology 2175 World Archaeology (N. Marengo Comacho), Fall 2025, Spring 2026
- Anthropology 2190C Forensic Anthropology (A. Medendorp), Fall 2025, Spring 2026



UNM Students in the Maxwell

UNM Classes in the Maxwell Museum (continued)

Anthropology 330 Principles of Cultural Anthropology (L. Field), Fall 2025
 Anthropology 351 Anthropology of the Skeleton (O. Pearson), Fall 2025
 Anthropology 375 Archaeological Field Session (H. Mattson), Summer 2026
 Anthropology 420, Ritual Violence in the Ancient Maya World (N. Marengo Comacho), Spring 2026
 Anthropology 459 Advanced Osteology (O. Pearson), Spring 2026
 Anthropology 473/573 Analyzing Archaeological Collections (K. Schleher), Spring 2026
 Arts 1143 Art and Ecology 101 (Szu-Han Ho), Fall 2025
 Arts 1143 Art and Ecology 101 (Daniela del Mar), Fall 2025
 Arts 1143, Art and Ecology 101 (Subhankar Banerjee), Spring 2026
 Art History 120 Introduction to Art (D. Fry), Fall 2025, Spring 2026
 Biology 444/544 Interdisciplinary Museum Studies (T. Turner), Fall 2025
 Fine Arts 187, Introduction to Interdisciplinary Arts (Nicole Kesel), Spring 2026
 FYEX 1010 Foundational Mathematics (J. Fontenoy), Fall 2025
 Museum Studies 576 Collections Management (L. Traxler), Fall 2025
 Spanish 1210 Spanish for Heritage Learners (Dominique Rodriguez), Spring 2026

Other UNM Groups

Anthropology and Museum Studies first year graduate student cohorts, Fall 2025
 UNM Valencia, Spring 2026 (Prof. Jan Pacifico; led by Kari Schleher)
 Office of the Medical Investigator, Pathology Fellows (led by Ashley Burch)
 Mellon Summer Academy, Testimonies of Social Justice (Gaby Hernandez, led by Julián Carrillo)
 UNM Arts Career Fair, College of Fine Arts (Julián Carrillo, Carla Sinopoli)

Classes from other Institutions

CNM, Introduction to Latin American Studies (Sue Taylor, led by Kari Schleher)
 NMSU, Master Food Preservation Course (Amber Benson, led by Toni Gentilli)
 Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (Jilli Oyenque)



Anthropology doctoral student Olivera Masters and Latin American archaeology collections



UNM Students at the Maxwell

UNM Student employees, interns, volunteers, and research

64 UNM students (35 undergraduates and 29 graduate students) plus 15 students from other universities worked, volunteered, or conducted research in the Maxwell Museum and Office of Contract Archeology.

UNM Undergraduates

Genesis Abeyta, Records Room
Safa Bamatraf, Archaeology collections
Nicholas Brennan, Public Programs
Ben Bustamente, Archaeology collections
Patricia Carillo, Visitor Services
Kenneth Carver, Archaeology collections
Sierra Chapa, Visitor Services
Olivia Cole, Osteology collections
Cali Deprest, Archaeology collections
Loralei Chiccarello, Records Room
Jo Lynne Fenger, Archaeology collections
Mariatzin Flores, Visitor Services
Jacob Franco, Visitor Services
Kenly Frey, Archaeology collections
Ellen Franke, Osteology, Volunteer
Megan Geller, Archaeology collections
Dominik Gutierrez, Public Programs
Lalani Gonzales, Public Programs
Hadley Heng, Ethnology collections

Dylan Hill, Osteology/ Visitor Services
Riley Jones, Records Room
Brooke Laskowski, Visitor Services
Cory Lueninghoener, Archaeology collections
Rebecca Looney, Archaeology collections
Vanessa Lucero, Archaeology collections
Renee Maderazo, Visitor Services
Eva Marquez, Archaeology collections
Robert Martinez, Visitor Services
Prescott Moore, Records Room
Ericka Roman, Ethnology collections
Vanessa Salazar, Records Room
Alejandro Tarango, Public Programs
Glenda Urquidi, Osteology
Eligio Velasquez, Visitor Services,
Jacob Westenberger, Archaeology
collections
Robert Wick, Archaeology collections



Ericka Roman and future Lobo, Indigo Dyeing Family Day



UNM Students in the Maxwell

UNM Graduate Students

Mason Bright, Ethnology collections/Archives
 Hope Casareno, Ethnology collections, Exhibits
 Larkin Chapman, Archaeology collections
 James Chaves,* Archaeology collections
 Christopher Chaves,* Ethnology collections
 Leigh Cominiello, Archaeology collections
 John Conley,* Archaeology collections
 Brisa Del Bosque, Public Programs
 Madison Drew, Archaeology collections
 Julia Dubois,* Education
 Adesbah Foguth,* Archaeology collections
 Jasmine Hernandez, Osteology collections
 Michael Hopper,* Archaeology collections
 Jessie Johnson, Archaeology collections, Public Programs
 Rachel Johnston, Records Room
 Andrew Kennedy, Osteology collections
 Elena Kervitsky, Archaeology collections, Public Programs
 Cheyenne Laux,* Archaeology collections
 Olivera Masters,* Archaeology collections
 Nabil Mejia,* Archaeology collections,
 Kris Nitsche, Archaeology collections
 Donna Padilla, Ethnology collections, Exhibits
 Charlotte Robinson, Archaeology collections
 Evan Sachse, Archaeology collections
 Todd Scissons,* Archaeology collections
 Cassie Velarde Neher,* Education
 Moby Woods, Archaeology collections, Education
 Edber Dzidz Yam,* Exhibits
 (*Hibben Fellow)



*James Chaves MA student,
Public Archaeology*

Graduate Students researchers from other institutions

David Anderson, New Mexico State University, Archaeology collections
 Baron Atlantis, University of Montana, Osteology collections
 Gabe Bowen, University of Utah, Osteology collections
 Cassandra Boyer, University of Nevada Osteology
 Ellie Canning, Ethnology, University of Florida Archives
 Andrea Carvey, University College Dublin, Archaeology
 Tuesday Critz, New Mexico State University, Archaeology
 Kelsey Fox, Texas State University, Osteology collections
 Jacqueline Galimany, University of Nevada, Reno, Osteology collections
 Marisol Lomeli, University of Nevada, Reno, Osteology collections
 Anna Meier, Texas State University Osteology collections
 Teddy O'Hea, Northern Arizona University, Archaeology collections
 Summer A Peltzer, Washington State University, Archaeology collections
 Sierra Miya, New Mexico State University, Archaeology collections
 Corynna Stookey, Northern Arizona University, Archaeology collections



K-12 Programs

In the 2025-2026 school year, the education division served over 4350 K-12 students through gallery tours, classroom and public presentations, checkout materials, and educational events. This is over twice the number of K-12 students served in the previous year. The education team also facilitated visits and tours for UNM classes and groups. These programs were overseen by Curator of Education Erica Davis, assisted by Hibben Fellows Cassie Velarde Neher and Julia Dubois, volunteers Cathy Lydon, Diana Shea, Heather Caparoso, Ericka Roman, and Otilia Engle, and intern Moby Woods.

The Maxwell-in-Motion Adopt-A-Bus program provides free buses to classes from Title I Albuquerque Public Schools (schools where a majority of the student body are economically disadvantaged) for docent-led visits to the Museum. The program is funded by a generous award from the Frank C. Hibben Trust and by gifts from individual donors. In previous years, the program was offered to 3rd–5th graders. This year, the program was able to expand to 1st through 8th grade thanks to increased funding from the Hibben Foundation. In the 2025-2026 school year, the program brought a total of 2490 students from 106 classes to the Museum.



Learning about traditional technologies during a class visit to Peoples of the Southwest

This year, in addition to providing traveling trunks as check-out materials to classrooms around the Albuquerque metropolitan area, the traveling trunk program has expanded to provide checkout materials to children staying in or visiting the UNM Children's hospital. Traveling trunks served 1364 K-12 students in 75 groups/classes. In partnership with the Maxwell's Laboratory of Human Osteology. Trunks were also presented to more than 100 students at the Valencia High School career fair. Thanks to funding from the Frank C. Hibben Trust, the education team has been able to create duplicates of our most popular trunks, allowing for increased checkout options and greater public access. The creation of duplicate checkout materials will continue, as will the creation of new trunks with new materials and curriculum.

Maxwell Museum Family Days are free open-house events held once a semester with themes usually based on current exhibitions. Family Days are supported by donations from Garth Bawden and the late Elaine Bawden to the Passport to People Family Day Fund. The theme for the Fall Family Day was "Indigo Dyeing", highlighting elements from the exhibit "Entangled Cultures." Visitors learned about fermentation and the history of chemistry of indigo dyeing and created their own indigo dyed pieces. Spring Family Day celebrated human expression. Visitors learned about how we as humans have been expressing ourselves throughout our history and participated in activities including cave painting, print making, and writing using hieroglyphics.



K-12 Programs

The education team would like to offer a special thanks to Phyllis Herbertson, who retired from the docent program after volunteering for more than 10 years. Phyllis led tours and activities and presented traveling trunks to dozens of schools every year, in addition to participating in the development of educational resources and programs. The Maxwell Museum and the education team are incredibly grateful for all of Phyllis' work, kindness, and expertise.



Phyllis Herbertson presenting to students in the Peoples of the Southwest exhibition



Indigo Dyeing Family Day

The Maxwell Museum's educational programs rely on our wonderful volunteer docents. We are grateful to them for sharing their time, knowledge, and interest in anthropology with our youngest visitors. If you are interested in learning more about becoming a docent, email us at maxeducation@unm.edu or call 505-277-2924.



Exhibitions

The exhibitions that visitors see at the Maxwell Museum are the result of months or years of dedicated planning, collaboration, and work that stretches across and beyond the Museum's walls. Under the leadership of Curator of Exhibits Toni Gentilli and Museum Preparator Chris Albert, in 2025-2026, the north gallery and former Ortiz Center spaces were redesigned; the horno in the Maxwell courtyard was repaired and brought back to life; the Coiling Kin exhibition—the result of four years of planning and design—was brought to fruition; and a new exhibition on the history and collections of the Maxwell Museum was installed. In addition, **Entangled Cultures: How Humans and Microbes Co-Crete through Fermentation**, which opened in Spring 2025 remained on display throughout the year.

Redesigning Maxwell Museum Exhibit Spaces

In preparation for *Coiling Kin: The Life of Pueblo Pottery*, and ultimately, a more flexible and contemporary floorplan, Ms. Gentilli reconfigured the North Gallery for the first time in approximately 20 years. The physical work was expertly executed by Chris Albert with occasional assistance from a contract preparator. They removed several freestanding walls and all existing built-in wall cases, and closed off two sets of double doors located along the west wall of the gallery. In addition, they reconfigured the corners of the gallery and built five new built-in cases. The result is a more flexible and elegant space for major temporary exhibitions.

In addition, Gentilli redesigned the former Ortiz Center Gathering Space to create a comfortable space for visitors and UNM students to relax and gather and for community conversations. Old signage and infrastructure was removed and the exhibit cases formerly in the area are now in the interdisciplinary Natural History Science Center. This space was organized into four distinct zones: a lounge area with a couch, 2 armchairs, and side tables; a large meeting table with 10 cushioned chairs; a desk/shelf area and 4 stools perfect for younger Museum visitors, a comment board, and bookshelf with supplemental exhibition materials; and a changeable display wall with four large poster frames.



Renovated gathering space (Photo by Toni Gentilli)



Exhibitions

New Exhibit: Coiling Kin: The Life of Pueblo Pottery

On June 6, 2026, the Museum opened [Coiling Kin: The Life of Pueblo Pottery](#), the result of four years of work by Museum staff and 25 Pueblo co-curators. Originally inspired as an acknowledgment of the 50th anniversary of an earlier Maxwell benchmark exhibition (*Seven Families in Pueblo Pottery*), this exhibit marks a new benchmark for the Maxwell: in its scale and complexity and as a model of collaborative curation. Twenty-five artists from 14 Pueblos worked with Curator of Ethnology Lea McChesney, Collection Manager Lauren Fuka, and graduate assistants Hope Casareno (Esselen/Rumsen Ohlone) and Alexis Lucero (Isleta Pueblo) to select pots from the Maxwell's permanent collection for the exhibition. Videographers Charles "Bazz" McClain and Richard Estrada filmed the artists discussing their selections and in their workplaces. The team, with Curator of Exhibits Toni Gentilli and Director Carla Sinopoli, held five group meetings and many formal and informal conversations to generate ideas and themes for the exhibition.

The exhibit's title *Coiling Kin* emerged from these conversations and speaks to relationships among potters, with the earth, pigments and other materials of pottery making, and with the pots themselves. The exhibition design, developed by Toni Gentilli and created by Chris Albert assisted by Chandler Wigton and Patrick Collins, employs a rich color scheme reflecting New Mexico's landscape, and places the materials of pottery at the center: clays, tempers and pigments provided by the co-curators from their homelands. The exhibition radiates from this center, to explore the centrality of clay, potters' kin connections across generations, pottery making knowledge and processes, and contemporary and future of Pueblo pottery making. Eighteen videos edited by Gentilli (also available online) and ambient sound further enhance the exhibition, which will be on view until May 27, 2028.



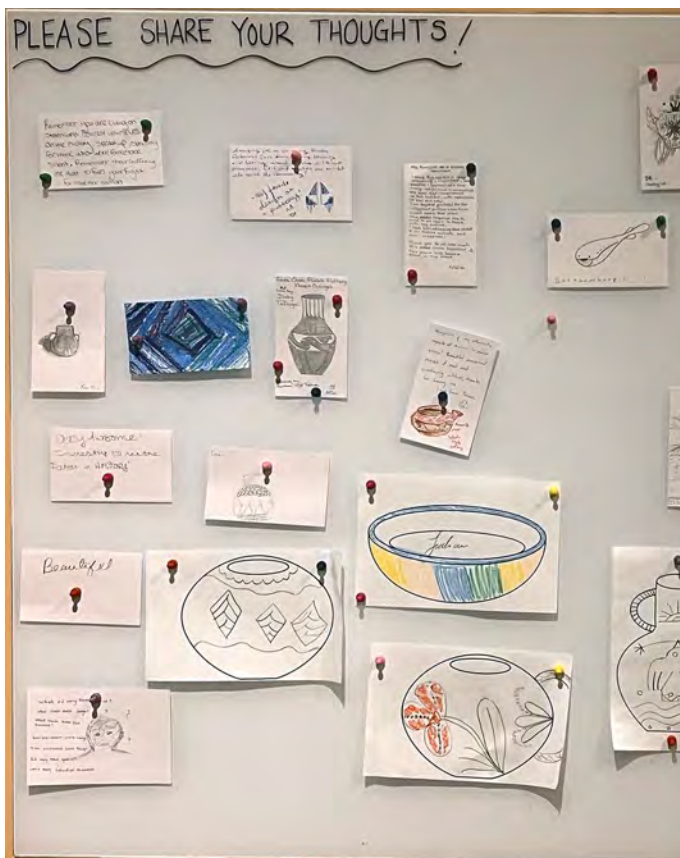
Coiling Kin overview (photo by Carla Sinopoli)



Exhibitions



Portrait wall of co-curators and relatives in Coiling Kin (photo by Carla Sinopoli)



Coiling Kin comment board (photo by Carla Sinopoli)

Visitor Responses to Coiling Kin

"When I first walked into the exhibit, I have never set foot in an exhibit where I held my breath ... it's breathtaking."
(Cassandra Tsalate, A:shiwi (Zuni Pueblo), potter and Coiling Kin curator)

"I think this exhibit is very welcoming, important, and beautiful. I appreciate how many indigenous communities are seen and remembered in this exhibition, with explanations on how and why. I am beyond grateful for the Indigenous potters who have helped make this place. This exhibit inspires me to want to be more in touch with my culture. I love how educating this exhibit is on Native Culture and our creations. Thank you to all who made this place come together. This place will have a place in my heart." (unsigned note, labeled "My thoughts as a Native American," June 6, 2026)

"The exhibit is welcoming as it is beautiful. It's a dynamic presentation at the Maxwell Museum. Congratulations to you [Toni Gentili] for designing the space and displays."
(Beverly Singer (Santa Clara Pueblo), Professor emerita, Dept of Anthropology, UNM)

[I write]"to say how AMAZING the new exhibit is! The color, the design, the flow-WONDERFUL! I think it's the best exhibit I've ever seen in that space, and I've been around since 2005! Excellent work!" (Jennifer George, Anthropology Department Administrator; Director, Clark Field Archive and Library; and Chair, Provost Committee for Staff)



Exhibitions

Lea McChesney and Museum staff gratefully acknowledge two grants from the Luce Foundation and support from the UNM Center for Regional Studies, as well as the support of the UNM Museum Studies Program and College of Arts and Sciences. We also thank the Tribal Historic Preservation Officers of the 14 Pueblos who reviewed and approved potters' selections for NAGPRA compliance. And we are especially grateful to the exhibits co-curators: Albert Alvidrez, Tigua (Ysleta del Sur Pueblo); Hubert Candelario, Katishtya (San Felipe Pueblo); Karen Kahe Charley, Hopi'sinom (Hopi Tribe); Clarence Cruz, Ohkay Owingeh (San Juan Pueblo); Jerry Dunbar, Tigua (Ysleta del Sur Pueblo); Max Early, K'awaika (Laguna Pueblo); Erik "Than Tsideh" Fender, P'o:whoge Owingeh (San Ildefonso Pueblo); Mary Dolores Lewis Garcia, Haak'u (Acoma Pueblo); Marita Hinds, Tay tsu'geh Owingeh (Tesuque Pueblo); Darlene James, Hopi'sinom (Hopi-Tewa); Deborah Jojola, Shiwif' Tuei (Isleta Pueblo); Lorraine Gala Lewis, Hopi'sinom, Thaawi', K'awaika (Hopi, Taos, Laguna pueblos); Lea McChesney, Maxwell Museum of Anthropology; Elizabeth Medina, Ts'iya (Zia Pueblo); Marcellus Medina, Ts'iya (Zia Pueblo); Claudia Mitchell, Haak'u (Acoma Pueblo); Martina Montoya, Tamaya (Santa Ana Pueblo); Emmaline Naha, Hopi'sinom (Hopi Tribe); Melda Navasie, Hopi'sinom (Hopi-Tewa); Donna Pino, Tamaya (Santa Ana Pueblo); Ryan Roller, Kha'p'o Owingeh (Santa Clara Pueblo); Jeff Suina, Ko-tyit (Cochiti Pueblo); Judy Tafoya, Kha'p'o Owingeh (Santa Clara Pueblo); Dominique Toya, Walatowa (Jemez Pueblo); Maxine Toya, Walatowa (Jemez Pueblo); and Cassandra Tsalate, A:shiwi (Zuni Pueblo).

The Maxwell's Inner Workings

Currently on display in the poster frames in the renovated Museum gathering space are four panels designed by Toni Gentilli and detailing the often-unseen inner workings of the Museum, including photographs, text, and statistics provided by Museum staff working in the Laboratory for Osteology, the Archaeology and Ethnology Collections, the Archives, and NAGPRA/community relations, together with a brief Museum history authored by Director Carla Sinopoli.



Maxwell Museum of Anthropology

A Brief History

In 1932, the University of New Mexico opened the doors of Albuquerque's first public museum: the Museum of Anthropology (now the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology). Since then, the Museum has been a center for public engagement, research, and teaching on archaeology and the contemporary cultural diversity of the U.S. Southwest and on the global human story from our species' earliest origins through today.

The development of Anthropology in the 19th century was intimately tied to Euro-American imperial expansion. Colonial collections and looted indigenous belongings and bodies came to form the holdings of large public museums. By the early 20th century, Anthropology's center of gravity—and its ethical shortcomings—had shifted to universities. UNM was no exception. The Museum of Anthropology was founded by Professor Edgar Lee Hewett, chair of UNM's young Anthropology Department. It had a threefold mission: to care for collections from the Department's archaeological field schools, to teach UNM students, and to exhibit to the public.

Despite this ambitious mission, for its first 30 years the Museum had a staff of one part-time employee: the controversial and charismatic Frank C. Hibben, who was also a professor in the Anthropology Department. It was not until 1962 that the Museum hired its first full-time staff member: art historian and Curator Dr. Jerry J. Brody. Today, the Maxwell has a professional staff of 19, who are supported by more than 80 student employees, interns, and volunteers each year.



Today, the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology is the first full-time museum of the University of New Mexico. It is the only museum of its kind in the Southwest. The Museum is the only museum of its kind in the Southwest. The Museum is the only museum of its kind in the Southwest.



Anthropology Building shows the entrance to the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology. The building is the only museum of its kind in the Southwest. The Museum is the only museum of its kind in the Southwest.

Over nearly a century and four homes, the Maxwell's collections have grown to more than two million archaeological and ethnographic items from around the world, as well as osteological collections and extensive paper, digital, and photographic archives. As the collections have grown, so too has our footprint. Currently, we occupy five buildings around the UNM Campus: the Maxwell Museum (named after donors Dorothy and Gilbert Maxwell), the Hibben Center for Archaeology Research (current home to the Smith Family Totem Pole), the Office of Contract Archaeology, and two offsite storage facilities.

Over time, we have added additional goals to Hewett's original vision. These are articulated in the Museum's mission to work "towards greater understandings of the fullness of human experiences in the Southwest and the world" and our 3R vision to "reconcile injustices, restore voices, and realize community." While these statements are new, the Maxwell's commitments to acknowledging and addressing anthropology's—and our—troubled past are not. Museum staff have worked collaboratively with New Mexico's indigenous nations and other communities of origin represented in our collections since at least the 1970's. These efforts intensified with the 1990 passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

Today, community consultation and collaboration are built into all of our work across the Maxwell Museum—in exhibition development, research and teaching, educational programming, collection care, and repatriation. We work in partnership with diverse communities toward an expansive anthropology that celebrates, respects, and explores what it means to be human in all our diversity and complexity.



— Carla M. Sinopoli
(Director 2016–Ongoing)

1932–1936

Established as the Museum of Anthropology Located in Rodey Hall

Frank C. Hibben (Director 1932–1959)

1936–1961

Located in the Administration/Laboratory Building (now Scholes Hall)

John Martin Gault Campbell (Director 1959–1972)

1961–1972

Located in the Anthropology Building (former Student Union)

Jerry J. Brody (Director 1972–1984)

1972

Museum addition added to the Anthropology Building and name changed to the Maxwell Museum

Carla Baecher (Director 1984–2001)

1998

Office of Contract Archaeology managed by the Museum

Bruce Hurst (Interim Director 2001–2007)

2002

Hibben Center for Archaeology Research opened

Carla Sinopoli (Interim Director 2016–2018)



Exhibitions

Horno and Courtyard

On August 9, 2025, Ms. Gentilli invited the Edaakie family of Isleta Pueblo back to the Maxwell Museum for an informal meeting and lunch with current Museum staff. As fondly recalled by many UNM faculty, staff and students, the Edaakies built and operated the horno in the Maxwell's courtyard for nearly 20 years. Unfortunately, around 2018 this longstanding relationship was interrupted by a family illness followed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Noting the deterioration of the horno and the Museum's longheld goal to enhance the untapped potential of the courtyard as an extended exhibition and community engagement space, Toni was eager to reconnect with the Edaakies. With the help of Chris Albert, she recorded an oral history about the Maxwell's horno and Isleta-style horno construction and use, with three generations of the Edaakie family including, Mary Jane and her husband Robert, their son Warren, and his daughter Jordan. Toni and the Edaakies continued their conversation in the courtyard around the horno as Robert and Warren inspected its condition and determined it was possible to repair it. Robert and Warren worked together through the hot and humid monsoon season to clean, stabilize, replaster, and cure the horno. They graciously allowed Museum staff to film and photograph the process.

In celebration of the renewal of both the horno and the Museum's relationship with the Edaakie family, Mary Jane and Robert came back to the Maxwell on October 2, 2025 to bake delicious Pueblo bread for Dean Jennifer Malat's A&S Monthly Mingle. The Edaakies returned to fire up the horno for the 2025 Hanging of the Greens and again for the Society of Applied Anthropology's conference attendees in March 2026. We acknowledge the Alfonso Ortiz Center for Intercultural Studies for support of the horno restoration project.

Currently, Toni is creating an online exhibit with the oral history recordings, photos, and video of the horno repair and combining them with archival photos and other documentation of the many years of teaching, cooking, and community-building between the Edaakies, the Maxwell Museum, and UNM. The exhibit will be accessible by QR code on signage to be installed in the courtyard, as well as signage in the Museum's Peoples of the Southwest exhibit, and on the Maxwell's website. Four photographs by Ms. Gentilli of the Edaakie's horno restoration are currently on view in the Coiling Kin exhibition.



Warren and Robert Edaakie working together to repair the Maxwell horno (photograph by Toni Gentilli)



Public Programs

The Maxwell Museum serves multiple publics. These include our core community of UNM students, faculty, and staff. They also include the many Indigenous communities whose heritage we steward and that we partner with in exhibitions, curation, and repatriation efforts. K-12 students comprise another key community that we serve through our bus program, check-out kits, virtual presence, and on- and off-site programs. The Museum also welcome members of the public from around New Mexico as well as out-of-state and international tourists. For the latter groups especially, the *Peoples of the Southwest* exhibition provides an invaluable introduction to the deep archaeological history of our region.

The Maxwell serves these many audiences through a wide-ranging schedule of public programs coordinated by Curator of Public Programs Dr. Julián Carrillo. In 2025-26, the Maxwell served more than 2400 visitors in 24 public programs and 18 behind the scenes tours and workshops for community groups and professional organizations. We thank the many co-sponsors and supporters of our events, including the UNM Department of Anthropology, Alfonso Ortiz Center for Intercultural Studies, American Studies Department, Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies, and the Latin American and Iberian Institute. Below are some highlights.



In honor of Native American Heritage Month, in November 2025 we were honored to host a showing of the film *Honor Song*, which shares the stories and perspectives of Native American veterans. The showing was followed a panel discussion with award-winning Director Ryan Begay (Diné), and veterans featured in the film, including Senior Master Sergeant Jamie Yazzie, Master Sergeant Darrell Charlee, and UNM anthropology doctoral student Cassie Velarde Neher (Jicarilla Apache).

Honor Song panelists (l to r): Senior Master Sergeant Jamie Yazzie, Master Sergeant Darrell Charlee, Ryan Begay, Cassie Velarde Neher

UNM archaeologists explored relations between past and present in South America in two public lectures. In an event in honor of International Archaeology Day, Dr. Frances Hayashida (Prof. of Anthropology/LAI) discussed indigenous brewing in Peru. Dr. Russell Greaves (OCA) presented the annual Ancestors lecture on his ethnoarchaeological research among Indigenous foraging communities in Venezuela.

On May 5, Ashley Burch (Osteology Collection Manager) and Ash Boydston-Schmidt (NAGPRA Coordinator) hosted a gathering in the Maxwell Courtyard to bring our community together on the MMIW National Day of Awareness to honor and acknowledge the crisis of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2-Spirit Individuals. This year, the event provided crisis and resource information by providing on-site DNA sampling supported by Michelle Graham of New Mexico DNA Identification System; two detectives (Ida Lopez and Gerry Roach) from the Albuquerque Police Department Cold Case Unit; and a resource table sponsored by the Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women. An information table on the Laboratory's collaborative relationship with the Office of the Medical Investigator, the Missing and Unidentified Human Remains Program. We are grateful to Marisa Page for sharing her personal experiences with the MMIW Crisis and John Swiftbird and his drum group for sharing songs of remembrance with visitors.



Public Programs

Maxwell staff had a fun time hosting a US State Department delegation of heritage and Museum professionals from 20 African nations in coordination with Global Ties ABQ. We toured the exhibits and collections, and discussed common challenges facing museums and heritage protection.



Public Programs

DATE	EVENT	Appx #
8/22/2025	Museum Members Meet & Greet: tour of Entangled Cultures exhibition with Toni Gentilli	22
8/29/2025	Student Pizza Party + Student Membership Drive	25
9/25/2025	Game Night @ the Maxwell	27
10/11/2025	Presentation + Discussion: "Fermentation Practices in New Mexico Today" with Amber Benson, Julian Scalon, Kyle Key, and Sarah Horowitz	65
10/16/2025	Archaeology Day Lecture: "The Making and Meaning of Maize Beer in the Andes," Dr. Frances Hayashida (UNM Anthropology and LALI)	44
10/18/2025	Family Day—Indigo Dyeing	95
10/22/2025	Tomás Lozano Concert: Romances Tradicionales	60
11/10/2025	Threads of Memory, Ties of Resilience; Online Conversation with Dr. Jennifer Denetdale, Dr. Christine Ami, and Independent Curator Lillia McEnaney	47
11/13/2025	"Honor Song," film screening and roundtable discussion with Director Ryan Begay	40
11/21/2025	Fall of Freedom workshop and Maxwell Museum's 3R conversation	12
11/21/2025	Navajo Rug Auction Appraisal Clinic	26
11/22/2025	Navajo Rug Auction, Prairie Star Restaurant, Santa Ana Pueblo	100
12/5/2025	Holiday reception/Hanging of the Greens	300
2/19/2026	Ancestors Lecture: "Ethnoarchaeology of Hunter-Gatherer Technology in Venezuela," Dr. Russell Greaves (UNM Office of Contract Archeology)	58
2/25/2026	Club 89: Global Music, Dance & Poetry Theme @ the UNM Maxwell Museum	35
3/5/2026	Book Signing: <i>Ancient Women Gardeners: Prelude to the Chacoan World</i> , Dr. David Stuart (Prof. emeritus)	60
3/9/2026	Lecture: Excavating the History of the UNM Maxwell Museum, Southwest Seminars, Santa Fe (Carla Sinopoli)	65
3/14/2026	Family Day—Express Yourself	75
3/17/2026	Society for Applied Anthropology: Open House and Bread Baking Demonstration	90
4/11/2026	Member Event: Snack + Learn at the Maxwell	14
4/18/2026	Cheese Guild fundraiser/Lecture by Paul Kindstedt, Exhibit tour, cheese tasting	30
5/5/2026	MMIWG2S Awareness Day Public Event	90
6/5/2026	Members-Only Exhibit Preview & Special Tour	24
6/6/2026	Coiling Kin: The Life of Pueblo Pottery. Exhibit Opening & Panel Discussion	300



In the Collections and Archives

The Maxwell Museum's collections are organized into four divisions: Archaeology, Archives, Ethnology, and Osteology. Together, these comprise some three million objects, human remains, images, and records. Many derive from a century of UNM anthropological research; others from donations. The Museum also holds collections for federal, state, municipal, and Tribal governments and organizations. Together, the collections constitute an extraordinary resource for teaching, research, and community engagement.

The collections are overseen by a dynamic team of museum professionals. For the archaeology collections (which constitute the vast majority of the Museum's collections), these include Curator of Archaeology Dr. Kari Schleher, Collection Manager Karen Price, and NAGPRA Collections Associates Caitlin Ainsworth, Nicholas Poister, and Todd Scissons. Registrar and Collection Manager Lauren Fuka and NAGPRA Collections Associate Emma Stewart care for the ethnology collections (Curator of Ethnology Lea McChesney has recently retired and we are excited to welcome Dr. Kendall Lovely (Diné) as our new curator of Historic and Contemporary Indigenous Collections this fall). Archivist Diane Tyink oversees the Museum's digital, film, and paper archives, and the Human Osteology collections are overseen by Collection Manager Ashley Burch. The Museum's repatriation efforts are coordinated by NAGPRA Coordinator Ash Boydston-Schmidt, with the participation of all collection staff.

Most of our collection work and current scholarship at the Maxwell focuses on existing collections. Guided by our 10-year collections plan, we are not looking to grow the collections significantly at this time, for both ethical and logistical reasons. However, after thorough review, the collections do grow a bit each year, both our own and those we hold on repository for other organizations. We acknowledge the many individuals who donated collection materials this year. The Maxwell accepted 42 new collections. Among these, the Laboratory of Human Osteology received the remains of nine body donors and of several unidentified individuals that we hold in trust for the Office of the Medical Investigator until they can be identified and returned to their loved ones. The Ethnology division accepted four accessions, including seven Pueblo pots and one Diné weaving; the Archaeology division accepted nine collections including collections from the Piedras Marcadas Open Space that we hold for the City of Albuquerque, and Archives accepted seven accessions, including researchers' papers and records associated with archaeological materials held by the museum.

Efforts continued across the Museum to improve the care and documentation of collections and archives.

Museum staff, UNM students, community members, and visiting scholars conducted new research on the collections. Staff hosted numerous collection visits for Tribal delegations, community and UNM organizations, and UNM classes. Collection staff responded to hundreds of queries from scholars, potential collection donors, and interested members of the public.



New Accession: Polychrome painted jar by Coiling Kin co-curators Marcellus and Elizabeth Medina (MMA 2026.12.1)



In the Collections and Archives

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

A museum registrar is responsible for the documentation and legal care of museum collections. At the Maxwell Museum, as in most museums worldwide, the Registrar's work is never done—managing the collections database and paper records, reviewing the backlog of old museum records, scanning and filing—the work keeps Registrar Lauren Fuka busy. She divides her time between work in the Museum's records room and her role as Collection Manager of the Museum's ethnology collections. This past year, Lauren's registrar work focused mainly on reviewing old loan documentation and adding information to the museum's CollectiveAccess database. In addition, there are always new loans to process and deed of gift forms for new donations to get signed.

In the Museum's records room, a dedicated crew of volunteers continued to digitize 35 mm slides of collection objects. Contributing over 500 hours of work this year, they have scanned thousands of slides that have been added to the museum's database.



Nick Poister and Karen Price installing exhibit at Singing Arrow (photograph by Kari Schleher)

ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeological materials comprise the majority of the Museum's collections. They are cared for by Curator Dr. Kari Schleher, Collections Manager Karen Price, Collections Associates Nicholas Poister, and BIA Collection Associate Caitlin Ainsworth, who were joined in January by NAGPRA Collections Associate Todd Scissons. In addition, 16 student employees and fellows (~4,250 hours) and 31 volunteers (~1,200 hours) assisted with the care and documentation of the archaeology collections. They worked on projects including collections inventory, cataloguing, photography, box-making, and rehousing legacy collections. Archaeology staff fielded 35 research requests, processed five loans, and welcomed researchers, UNM classes, and tribal community members to the collections. Staff also left the museum to work on the Tijeras Cultural Corridor exhibition at the Singing Arrow Community Center and to retrieve a large collection from Ghost Ranch.



Newly organized archaeology collection in new compact shelving (photograph by Karen Price)

Work on multi-year projects continued. These included grant work and object-level inventories and collection reorganization. With construction completed for the National Endowment for the Humanities Sustaining Cultural Heritage grant (awarded in FY23), this year focused on reorganizing the collections on the new shelving. Staff and students relocated over 2,250 objects to the new compact shelving. This project is in progress and will continue into the fall of 2026. Led by Nicholas Poister, staff and students also started a new project to completely reorganize the collections drawers that hold individually catalogued small objects (as opposed to bulk archaeological collections). The drawers were previously organized by acquisition year, resulting in a random order of items from all



In the Collections and Archives

over the world. Now the drawers are organized by region and archaeological site, with updated locations added to the CollectiveAccess database, making it easier to locate and view related items and conduct tours of collections.

In addition to collections owned by UNM, the Museum cares for archaeological collections owned by federal and state entities, including the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Kirtland Air Force Base (KAFB), City of Albuquerque Open Space, the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE), the New Mexico State Land Office, as well as several Tribal communities. With agency and Tribal approval, these collections are available for research and teaching. Financial support from the BIA, BLM, KAFB, and the City of Albuquerque allowed us to continue to improve the documentation and care of these repository collections.

ARCHIVES

During FY 2026, Archivist Diane Tyink and student workers once again worked on organizing several backlogged collections in the archives. The Albuquerque Archaeological Society's collection of administrative records and records from volunteer archaeological excavations were processed and arranged. The administrative records contain the Society's newsletters from 1969 to present. They are a rich source for local history, and present many local scholars' work.



Three men and a flat tire, Cornell University student changing the tire, Arizona. John Collier, photographer. (John and Mary ET Collier Collection 2006.117.594)



In the Collections and Archives

Archaeologist Karl Lambauch donated to the archives all papers, reports, maps, photographs and negatives associated with the lengthy Cañada de Alamosa project. Spanning approximately 1999 to 2011, the materials should be fully processed by the middle of next year. Dr. Lawrence Guy Straus' papers are currently being processed for researcher use. Spanning from the late 1960s to the present, the collection includes European prehistory archaeological projects and sites in Spain (La Riera, El Mirón), France (Abri Dufaure), Portugal, and South Belgium (Trou Magrite, Huccorgne, Grotte du Boise Laiterie, and Abri du Pape). When fully processed, Straus' collection will be approximately 21 linear feet and will include excavation documentation, publications (monographs, articles, etc.), photographs, drawings, and approximately 17,000 slides.

The collections most used by researchers in FY26 were John and Mary ET Collier Photographic Collection and Frank C. Hibben's papers. Additionally, archives personnel are helping locate excavation documentation and provenience information to facilitate the Museum's compliance with NAGPRA. All in all, work continues in the Maxwell Archives to inventory, rehouse, catalogue, and make archival materials available to researchers.

ETHNOLOGY

The Ethnology division was busy this past year with a basket rehousing project funded by a (recently restored) grant from National Endowment for the Humanities and the Museum's Robert Holzapfel Endowment. Staff, student interns, and volunteers worked to rehouse more than 1,000 Native American baskets, creating new archival trays and supportive mounts to improve long term preservation and make them more accessible to visitors, researchers, and descendant communities. This project is a critical step in our goal to renovate the ethnology collection spaces. The rehoused baskets are moving to compact shelving in the Hibben basement and we have begun work to upgrade the room where they were stored. We will be replacing old non-archival wooden shelves with archival cabinets and metal shelving to hold our jewelry, beadwork and other fragile collections.



Basket Relocation Project: before (Madisyn Rostro), the room emptied (Lauren Fuka, Emma Stewart), in their new home (l to r)



In the Collections and Archives

The *Coiling Kin* exhibition provided an opportunity to share with visitors a small portion of the Pueblo ceramics in the Maxwell's collections. As the exhibit was being developed, the 25 co-curators spent many hours in the collections selecting the 70 rarely-seen vessels now on display from among the thousands of ancestral and contemporary pueblo pots in the Museum's collections. Museum Studies masters student Donna Padilla and Anthropology doctoral student Hope Casareno gained experience in collection care and documentation and collaborative curation as they provided critical assistance to this museum-wide project.

The Museum loaned Ethnology objects for exhibitions in Albuquerque and Santa Fe. Clubs and a spear collected in Vanuatu were loaned to the Museum of International Folk Art (MOIFA) for their exhibit *Sandroing: Tracing Kaston in Vanuatu*, curated by UNM PhD candidate and MOIFA Director of Cultural Affairs Felicia Katz-Harris. And a windowpane made of the mineral selenite from Acoma Pueblo was loaned to the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center (IPCC) for their exhibit *Restorying Our Heart Places: Contemporary Pueblo Architecture*, curated by the Indigenous Design + Planning Institute at UNM.

The division added four new accessions. They included two purchases—ceramic pieces made by artists who contributed to the Coiling Kin exhibition—and two donations—a Navajo rug attributed to Daisy Taugelchee and five pieces of Acoma and Hopi pottery. Our work in the collections this year benefited from more than 300 hours of volunteer support in object photography, rehousing, and database work. The basket rehousing project would not have been possible without their contributions.

OSTEOLOGY

The Osteological Collections and Laboratory of Human Osteology efforts have continued to grow this year under the direction of Collections Manager Ashley Burch, with the assistance of her dedicated and very much appreciated lab assistants, graduate student Jasmine Hernandez and undergraduate Dylan Hill, as well as student and community volunteers.

The Laboratory's Documented Skeletal Collection (those individuals who donated their skeletal remains to the Museum for education and research) and Teaching Collection (comprised primarily of casts of human remains) were used in classroom settings in five UNM courses. UNM students, faculty, and researchers spent over 1350 hours in the Lab working on class assignments, gathering data from the Documented Skeletal Collection and Economides Dental Collection, and on skeletal material held in trust for Department of Anthropology research projects. Non-UNM researchers spent 386 hours in the Laboratory gathering data from the Documented Skeletal Collection. This is nearly a 70% increase from last year. Some project topics from this year include: improving age estimation methods using dental morphology, pelvic enthesal scoring, and Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy, respectively; comparability and accuracy tests of bone and CT metric and non-metric observations; and development of biological profile algorithms and associated software. The Laboratory also hosted several families of skeletal donors and community visitors interested in learning about the Museum, Laboratory, and Collections.

Work began to complete physical inventories of all the collections in the Lab and correlate them with digital and paper records. The collections include archaeological accessions, the Documented Skeletal Collection, the Economides Collection, and Office of the Medical Investigator materials. This is a huge undertaking for lab as, to our knowledge, a full physical inventory has never been completed in the Laboratory's nearly 60-year history. During the inventory process, staff has also worked to rehouse the Documented Skeletal Collection (and other remains, as needed) in new archival boxes and to



In the Collections and Archives

begin reorganization of archaeological remains to facilitate association with related materials in the archaeology collections. Following NAGPRA regulations, staff are not opening boxes holding Native American ancestors without approval from Tribal representatives.

The Documented Skeletal Collection added nine donors this year. After a year of research and experimenting, the Laboratory established an effective protocol for degreasing our skeletal donors, which can serve as a model for other body donor programs. Collection Manager Burch has also continued her efforts to develop standard operating procedure manuals for laboratory activities and organize laboratory space for more efficient use, as storage and research space are a valued commodity as the collections continue to grow.

The Laboratory has been working to engage UNM and K-12 students and to share the work it does on repatriation and identification of forensic cases with community members. In addition to the May 5 MMIW event, the Lab sponsored an information table at the UNM Kiva Club's Nizhoni Days Powwow. Also new this year, the Laboratory organized a program called "Maxwell Pathways," where students were able to attend informal office hours with a museum professional to discuss topics of interest, such as job opportunities, beneficial classes, resume help, graduate school programs, or just about anything else. The program received good reviews from participants.

In the coming year, the Laboratory will work to complete several ongoing inventory projects, including a photographic inventory of all skeletons in the Documented Collection; continue to expand educational and community outreach activities; and looks forward to further collaboration with Native communities through NAGPRA reviews, consultations, and repatriations.

The Museum continues its moratorium on teaching and research using the Museum's archaeological human remains, as we pursue NAGPRA consultations and repatriations. The Museum and the Laboratory are, as always, extremely grateful to the individuals who have donated their remains to the Documented Skeletal Collection this year. We hope their loved ones find comfort in knowing that their selfless gift will directly support anthropological research and education for many years to come.



Red dresses in honor of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2-Spirit Individuals in the Maxwell Courtyard, 2025 (photo by Carla Sinopoli)



Repatriation

The vision of the Maxwell Museum to contribute to “reconciling injustices, restoring voices, and realizing community” (our 3-Rs) is an explicit acknowledgement of the troubled history of anthropology museums and of our commitment to acknowledge and address past wrongs. A core part of this acknowledgment is our commitment to the repatriation of Native American ancestors and cultural belongings. Much, but not all, of this work is governed by federal law: the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). NAGPRA requires institutions to document all Native American and Native Hawai’ian ancestral remains, funerary belongings, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony in their collections; report them to the Department of Interior; and initiate consultations with federally recognized Tribes, with the goal of returning them to communities from which they were removed.

With support from the UNM Provost, the College of Arts and Sciences, and Office of the Vice President for Research, the Museum has significantly grown its NAGPRA staff over the last three years. Today, five staff are fully dedicated to repatriation work and five additional staff and the Director devote a significant portion of their time to this effort, all overseen by NAGPRA Coordinator Ash Boydston-Schmidt.

After several years of consultations, in FY26 the Museum published a Notice of Inventory Completion in the Federal Register for the ancestors and funerary belongings from the archaeological site of Pottery Mound (now owned by Isleta Pueblo). We hosted consultations with representatives from seven tribes (thus far) as we work toward the repatriation of ancestors and belongings from Chaco Canyon. Archaeology collection staff conducted archival research on collection history, worked to improve and update inventories, identified and sequestered potential sacred objects with Tribal guidance, and worked with state and federal agencies to resolve questions of collection ownership and NAGPRA responsibilities. Ethnology collection staff made substantial progress reviewing collections from Pueblo communities and providing documentation to Tribes in preparation for consultations. With Tribal approval, Osteology staff conducted inventories, supported repatriations by the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, and conducted reviews of records and box inventories. At the request of several Tribes, staff worked with the UNM Human Ecology & Radiocarbon Lab to conduct non-destructive testing of 24 objects to determine if they had been treated with pesticides like arsenic (they hadn’t) or contained toxic heavy metals such as lead (two did). Portable X-ray fluorescence testing (pXRF) helps identify hazardous materials on objects to ensure that they do not cause harm to museum staff or Tribes that wish to use the objects after they are returned.

The Maxwell is committed to repatriation beyond NAGPRA. In consultation with University Counsel, the Museum has developed a set of guidelines for the ethical return of collections to non-Native American and international Indigenous communities. The Museum is currently working with a Canadian First Nation toward an ethical return, and continues to partner with the Smith Family of the Tlowitsis First Nation, the owners of the totem pole on view in the Hibben Center. In many cases, even after a repatriation is completed, Tribes are unable to immediately take physical possession of ancestors and cultural belongings. This year, Maxwell NAGPRA staff developed a “Care and Trust” template for repatriated collections that remain at the museum until Tribes are able to bring them home. Through this agreement, Tribes determine care and access of their repatriated relatives. The Maxwell is honored to be entrusted with repatriated and other collections belonging to several New Mexico Tribes.



Office of Contract Archeology

The Office of Contract Archeology (OCA) serves UNM and the state of New Mexico by documenting and protecting archaeological heritage that is threatened by new construction, erosion, or looting. With five permanent staff assisted by on-call crew members and student employees, in 2025-2026, OCA conducted research and analysis throughout New Mexico, working on more than 11 ongoing and new archaeological projects totaling nearly \$3 million in funding.

OCA staff completed a large excavation project for the New Mexico Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Dept (NM EMNRD) in Madrid, NM. This project focused on documenting late 19th-mid-20th century mining activities. Improvements to the arroyo drainage by EMNRD required extensive documentation of architecture and other features. This project continues to generate laboratory work on the many historic materials recovered and has additional phases of ongoing mitigation as arroyo improvements occur. To support the interpretation of recovered materials, OCA staff undertook extensive archival research on Madrid's late 19th-early 20th century history and residents, identifying economic activities at some of the structures, information about mine workers and their families, and other complementary information.

Staff completed a multi-year chronometric (dating) study of perishable items from early 20th century excavations for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Also for the BLM, staff conducted an instrumental neutron activation (INAA) study of ceramics from the Jornada Mogollon culture region of southern New Mexico and west Texas to reconstruct prehistoric ceramic exchange networks.

Another BLM-funded project this year was a large survey of archaeological sites in the Cornudas Mountains of southern New Mexico. Our fieldwork and ongoing analysis have especially contributed to improved documentation of many Apachean wickiup structures in the area. This will significantly augment the inventory and understandings of Apachean use of this region.



Apachean wickiup recorded on the Cornudas Mountain Survey



OCA archaeologist Alex Kurota discussing rock imagery in the Cornudas Mountains



Office of Contract Archeology

A little further afield, OCA conducted two projects in Utah. The first was a survey focused on petroglyph recording for the National Park Service (NPS). Work took place along a roadway near Glen Canyon, one of the most scenic areas of the American Southwest, at the base of Cedar Mesa overlooking the goosenecks of the San Juan River and Monument Valley.

Our second Utah project documented looting activity that occurred over much of the 20th century at the Hedley Village Complex in southeastern Utah. The site is a large ancestral pueblo with more than 400 rooms and 87 kivas. Our work for the Archaeological Conservancy provides baseline data for their stewardship of this large and important site that is part of the Chacoan system of complex habitations.



Rusty Greaves recording a site, Gallup NM



Tim Wester recording a Diné hunting blind, Gallup NM

OCA completed other archaeological work from multi-year projects at White Sands Missile Range, and several smaller projects for the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, and northwest New Mexico Council of Governors near Gallup. We obtained several new contracts from the National Park Service for continued work in the Valles Caldera for the National Preserve, and successfully competed for and were awarded a preservation grant from the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division to document the archaeological record of the Marquez L Bar Ranch area in north-central New Mexico in collaboration with the New Mexico Department of Game & Fish and the Trust for Public Land. This research- and management-focused project will record an important Diné defensive site and obtain tree ring dates. It is being conducted in collaboration with Diné scholar Dr. Wade Campbell, from Boston University.

This year we augmented our mapping and documentation capabilities with significant purchases of new state-of-the-art equipment. OCA now has new hand-held GPS units with sub-centimeter precision for field mapping, new high-resolution field cameras, a hand-held LiDAR device, a new drone, complete field recharging capabilities for the equipment using solar panels, new total stations, and improved GIS capabilities. This equipment not only is more sophisticated than previous gear, but also streamlines field mapping efforts with superior quality data resolution.

Finally, after nearly 30 years at OCA's North Campus location, OCA will relocate to a new facility near the Albuquerque Sunport in the fall of 2026.

By Russell Greaves, OCA Director



Publications and Presentations

Publications and Reports

Samantha Fladd, **Kari L. Schleher**, Katelyn J. Bishop, and Sarah E. Oas, 2026, Who Writes about Southwest Archaeology? Gendered Authorship and Publication Trends, KIVA, DOI 10.1080/00231940.2026.2658968.

Toni Gentilli, 2026, ALL REZ: Community-Based Museology through Creative Placemaking, by Lillia McEnaney, Rapheal Begay (Diné), Matthew Chase-Daniel, and Toni Gentilli, of VoCA Journal, Voices of Contemporary Art Issue 15.

Kari L. Schleher and Michelle I. Turner, 2025 Local or Distant?: Items of Personal Adornment and Great House Identity in the Central Mesa Verde Region, KIVA, 91:3, 263-291, DOI: 10.1080/00231940.2025.2514950.

Corynna Stookey, 2026, Lithics in the Chacoan World: A Case Study of Color and Social Implications, MA Thesis, Department of Anthropology, Northern Arizona University.

Nckayla Duran and **Mary Ownby** (compilers), 2026, Petroglyph National Monument Archaeological Management Plan. OCA/UNM Report No. 185-1349 and 185-1307, Office of Contract Archeology, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

Russell D. Greaves, **Garrett Lloyd**, **Timothy Wester**, and **Lake Johnson**, 2026, Archaeological Survey and Condition Assessment of the Main Ruins Areas of the Hedley Pueblo Complex (42 SA 22760), San Juan County, Utah. OCA/UNM Report No. 185-1385, Office of Contract Archeology, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

Lake S. Johnson, **Garrett Lloyd**, and **Russell D. Greaves**, 2026, Archaeological Survey of Four Sites for Geophysical Seismic Station Installation OCA/UNM Report No. 185-1394, Office of Contract Archeology, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

Alexander Kurota and **Garrett Lloyd** (compilers), 2026, Permian Basin Programmatic Agreement Research: Reconstructing Ceramic Exchange Networks within the Jornada Mogollon Region, AD 1200-1450. OCA/UNM Report No. 185-1349 and 185-1344 Office of Contract Archeology, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

Conference sessions organized

Lea McChesney, SFAA Roundtable: Collaborative Curation in Museums, conversation with Coiling Kin Co-Curators: Society for Applied Anthropology, March 17, 2026.

Ash Boydston-Schmidt, Katie Brewer, Rachel Johnson, Rachel Watkins, Sarah Alluan, Joseph Jones, To Gatekeep or not to Gatekeep: Where to Draw the Line between Public Archaeology, Protection of Sites, and Descendant Community Concerns. Conference on Public Archaeology, Washington DC, August 8, 2025.

Presentations

Ash Boydston-Schmidt, Fostering a culture of accountability in a university museum: NAGPRA and Beyond. Presented in NAGPRA At 35: Culture Shifts and Changing Landscapes, Part I, Society for Applied Anthropology Annual Meeting. March 18, 2026

Toni Gentilli, ALL REZ: Land, Kinship, and Museum Transformation. Presented at Association of Tribal Archives Libraries and Museums Conference, Cherokee, NC, October 9, 2025.

Russell D. Greaves, Combining international and Egyptian symbolism: Ethnoarchaeology of mixed court regalia, presented at the Max Planck Institute for Legal History and Legal Theory, Frankfurt, Germany, April 13, 2026.

Russell D. Greaves, Challenges in understanding past ceremony, religion, and art: Ethnoarchaeological perspectives on demystifying the ambiguities of interpreting “ritual” behaviors, Albuquerque Archeology Society, Albuquerque, April 21, 2026.

(continued p. 27)



Budget and finances

The Maxwell Museum's budget derives from multiple sources, most importantly the UNM College of Arts and Sciences. Additional support for various aspects of our operations comes from the UNM Provost's office, other UNM departments and programs, external grants, gifts, and endowments. In 2025-2026, College support funded Maxwell Museum staff salaries (excluding OCA) and provided \$15,000 for operating expenses, \$10,000 for exhibitions, and \$12,000 to support the hiring of work-study student employees. The Museum also receives support from the Alfonso Ortiz Center for Intercultural Studies and from the UNM Museum Studies Program.

Grants, earnings from endowments, donations, and memberships play a critical role in supporting essential museum operations, including care of the collections and archives, K-12 educational programs, exhibitions and public programs, museum security, professional opportunities for our staff, and other essential operational costs. The Office of Contract Archeology is a self-supporting unit of the Maxwell Museum. Through grants and contracts OCA provides archaeological research and training opportunities to numerous UNM students. OCA and the Maxwell together generated \$3,631,284 in external grants and contracts.

2025-2026 Grants and contracts*

Office of Contract Archeology (\$2,934,895)

- U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management, Proposal to Conduct Instrumental Neutron Activation Analysis to Reconstruct Prehistoric Ceramic Exchange Networks within the Jornada Mogollon Culture Region. U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management, Rusty Greaves, 9/1/2022-5/30/2026, \$99,643.00
- The Archaeological Conservancy, Montezuma Village Eroding Kivas (42SA836) and Hedley Pueblo Complex Survey (42SA22760)_185-1385. The Archaeological Conservancy, Rusty Greaves, 6/1/2025, 6/1/2026, \$38,000.00
- US Army Garrison White Sands, Phase 3 of Archaeological Identification, Damage Assessment and Protection of Cultural Resources at LA 104864, White Sands Missile Range, US Army Garrison White Sands. Rusty Greaves, 9/6/2022-9/25/2026, \$644,000.00
- New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, Archeological Survey of Four Sites for a Geophysical Seismic Station Installation_185-1394. New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, Rusty Greaves, 6/15/2026-9/30/2026, \$10,433.00
- Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments, NWNMCOG McKinley County 50 Acre Survey_185-1395. Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments, Rusty Greaves, 6/1/2026-12/1/2026, \$23,981.00
- U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management, Sample Survey of Cornudas Mountains, Otero County, New Mexico and Refinement of Chronometric Study of Perishable Artifacts_185-1362. U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management, Rusty Greaves, 9/30/202-2/30/2026, \$398,703.41
- National Park Service, Archaeological Survey of Cultural Resources on Johns Canyon Road at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area_185-1364. National Park Service, Rusty Greaves, 8/9/2024-12/31/2026, \$130,000.00
- National Park Service, CP-CESU Class III Cultural Resources Survey. Virtual Fence. Valle Toledo Trail. Jemez Springs Parcels 1 and 2_185-1389. National Park Service, Rusty Greaves, 9/10/2024-5/31/2027, \$39,558.00
- New Mexico Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Dept, SHARE No 23-521-0600-0034 Task Order 7 Historic Properties Treatment Plan to Mitigate Potential Adverse Effects to Historic Properties from the Madrid Stormwater Erosion Control Project_185-1358. New Mexico Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Dept, Alexander Kurota, 12/16/2024-9/19/2027, \$1,550,577.00



Budget and finances

Maxwell Museum (\$696,389)

Kirtland Air Force Base, Memorandum of Agreement, Carla Sinopoli, 11/24/2021-1/31/2025, \$15,345.00

National Park Service, Documentation and Consultation of Chaco Canyon collections from the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, Kari Schleher, 10/1/2022-9/30/2026, \$ 99,346.00.

National Endowment for the Humanities, Rehousing Ethnographic Baskets at the Maxwell Museum, Lauren Fuka, 6/1/2025-5/31/2025 (terminated April 2025; reinstated June 2026). \$9,999.

Henry Luce Foundation, Maxwell Museum Co-curated Pueblo Pottery Exhibit, Lea McChesney, 7/1/2024-6/30/2027, \$149,999.

City of Albuquerque, Singing Arrow Archaeological Collections and Exhibition, Carla Sinopoli, 3/2/2022-3/1/2027, \$100,000.

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Affairs Repository Collections Curated at the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology: NAGPRA Compliance, 7/15/2024-7/31/2027, Kari Schleher, \$321,700.

* includes continuing and new awards

Endowment earnings

In 2025-2026 the Museum received earnings of \$45,407 from the following endowments:

Maxwell Museum Association Endowment, for public programs at the Maxwell Museum

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Frank C. Hibben Quasi Endowment, for research on archaeology collections, educational and public programs, and repairs to the Hibben Center.

Catherine Buchanan Endowment, for K-12 outreach and programs

Holzapfel Endowment, for curation and research on ethnographic collections

Presentations (continued)

Russell D. Greaves and Joseph Hackman, Ethnoarchaeology of horticulture and foraging economies among different subpopulations in the savannas of the Orinoco Plains, Venezuela, Presented at the 91st Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology Meetings, San Francisco, April 30, 2026.

Karen L. Kramer and **Russell D. Greaves**, Are mixed economies a long-term strategy and not a transition? evidence that farmers and hunter-gatherers diversify economic portfolios to retain their subsistence base. Presented at the 91st Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology Meetings, San Francisco, April 30, 2026.

Tuesday Critz, **Alexander Kurota**, and **Jeffrey Fergusson**, The final frontier: Using neutron activation analysis (naa) to understand frontier processes in Southern New Mexico. Presented at the 91st Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology Meetings, San Francisco, May 1, 2026.

Nicholas Poister, The Bighorn and the Winter Lake: Artiodactyl assemblages in the caves of the El Malpais Lava Beds. Presented at Snack and Learn at the Maxwell, Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, April 11, 2026.

Kari L. Schleher and Christopher Chavez, Identity in Ancestral Pueblo Jewelry from the Present to the Past, Taos Archaeological Society, January 20, 2026.

Carla M. Sinopoli, 2025, Rock Art Traditions of South Asia, Presented to the Albuquerque Archaeological Society, September 20, 2025.

Carla M. Sinopoli, Invited lectures: Crafting Empire and Challenges in the Archaeology of Empire, Dept of Anthropology, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, October 7-8, 2025.



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Members reception and tour of "Entangled Cultures" with Curator Toni Gentili



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Maxwell Museum of Anthropology and Hibben Center

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