Lambda Alpha Anthropology Honors Society (LAB): Bridging The Gap Between Coursework And Career

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INTRODUCTION

Many anthropology majors gain an academic familiarity with the subject through coursework, but lack an understanding of how to utilize their anthropological skills outside of academia in future careers. To remedy this issue, the Lambda Alpha Beta Honor Society (LAB), a student-led anthropology organization at Portland State University, provides opportunities for participation in events that get students involved with our local community, such as non-profit organizations and local cultural institutions. Some of these organizations include the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI), Clark Public Utilities, Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge, Stream Team, and Habitat for Humanity. As an unfunded student group, LAB provides networking opportunities for our students and ensures our relationship with the applied anthropology subfield in general. Therefore, LAB provides an example of a student group that bridges the gap between studying anthropology in the classroom and practicing anthropology as a career.

LAMBDA ALPHA BETA 2014-2015 OFFICERS & FACULTY ADVISOR

ADRIANA STEIN
President

CASSIDY ABBOTT
Vice President

DESI BOLSTER
Secretary

STEVEN ANDREW Pritchard
Treasurer

DR. JEREMY SPOON
Advisor

HANDS ON PORTLAND

Potluck in the Park: Winter 2015

PURPOSE OF EVENT: To serve food to those in need in Portland, while getting a firsthand look at inequalities present in our community.

RIDGEFIELD WILDLIFE REFUGE

Habitat Restoration Day: Winter 2015

PURPOSE OF EVENT: To provide vegetation for a newly introduced species of deer in an effort to improve the environment of Ridgefield, Washington with their natural habitat.

OREGON MUSEUM OF SCIENCE & INDUSTRY

Science Activity Day: Fall 2014 & Winter 2015

PURPOSE OF EVENT: To promote childhood education and applied anthropology by manning demonstration booths with creative activities such as making a velociraptor claw, dye casting, finger printing, and fish printing.

CLARK PUBLIC UTILITIES

Stream Team: Fall 2014 & Winter 2015

PURPOSE OF EVENT: To restore the Salmon Creek watershed with 40 other volunteers. We worked to understand and improve the relationship between this local community and their environment within the context of applied anthropology.

ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT

Crowdfunding Campaign: Winter 2015

PURPOSE OF EVENT: To raise funds in order to showcase the Anthropology Department’s research, and the activities of faculty, alumni, and students.

Funding provides opportunities for faculty, alumni, and students to exhibit and share their photography. In order to explain our project, the LAB officers created an informational video and a crowdfunding website that was launched with the help of the PSU Foundation.

“This photo was taken in a Sri Lankan state museum during our travels while the lab was involved in a tree-breaking competition.” Photo by Dr. Michele Gamburd.

“Every fall, the people of Sri Lanka gather to decorate the decorated cycle of the tree by dressing up in white clothing and wood carved masks.” Photo by Sharja Samabinki.