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The advertisement features a dark background with several car brand logos. On the left, the Lincoln logo is at the top, followed by the Ford logo and the text "Pre-Owned". In the center, the "Gillie Hyde" logo is written in a stylized, cursive font, with "AUTO GROUP" in bold, block letters below it. On the right, the Dodge logo is at the top, followed by the Chrysler logo and the Jeep logo. At the bottom, a red banner contains the text "Click here to visit and shop GillieHyde.com from the comfort of your home!"

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After finding home at WKU, Kentucky Archaeological Society to bring educational opportunities

AARON MUDD amudd@bgdailynews.com 26 min ago

When Eric Schlarb looks back on his career as an archaeologist with the Kentucky Archaeological Survey, working with students stands out as one of his proudest accomplishments.

He's worked with elementary school students who've then come to him as college students and said "Hey, I had that experience out in Ashland, at the Henry Clay estate, and that's one of the reasons I want to become an archaeologist."

By doing that work, Schlarb said, "you're actually working with and attracting that next generation of archaeologists."

Now, thanks to a new partnership with Western Kentucky University's Department of Folk Studies and Anthropology, that work has an opportunity to continue.

The partnership with WKU became official earlier this month. It follows an earlier decision by the University of Kentucky to eliminate both the Kentucky Archaeological Survey and the Program for Archaeological Research, which the Lexington Herald-Leader reported in March.

At the time, UK spokesman Jay Blanton told the newspaper that an external review of the university's anthropology department recommended that UK discontinue contract archaeological work, in favor of letting private firms fill the void.

Additionally, the review recommended UK focus more attention on maintaining its archaeological collection, the Lexington Herald-Leader reported. UK hired new faculty to achieve those goals, using resources previously set aside for the programs.

Now, however, the Kentucky Archaeological Survey is settling into its new home at WKU.

“It’s a fresh start, but it’s also a chance to build on programs that we have and hopefully develop new and innovative things,” said David Pollack, director of the survey.

Since 1995, more than 150,000 school students have participated in KAS archaeological research at sites such as Riverside: the Farnsley-Moremeyn Landing in Louisville and Fort Smith in Livingston County, according to a news release. Survey staff conduct workshops and develop curricula for teachers, provide field and laboratory experiences for students and publish booklets and online content about various aspects of Kentucky’s history.

Pollack described the survey’s mission as three-pronged: to educate the public about Kentucky’s rich archaeological heritage, provide experiences for students they can’t get in a typical classroom and provide a service to state and federal agencies and nonprofits through archaeological surveys.

WKU students also stand to benefit from the partnership, said Jay Stottman, the survey’s assistant director. Students will get the chance to do field work and experience other things archaeologists do on the job, he said.



“It provides a hands-on opportunity for students to actually get a taste of what it’s like to be an archaeologist,” Stottman said. “They’ll actually get to work on projects (and) do all the things that they would do when they graduate and get a job.”

The Kentucky Archaeological Survey has attained national recognition for its efforts, including an award from the Society for American Archaeology it won last year for public education outreach, Pollack said.

Darlene Applegate, an archaeologist and head of WKU's Department of Folk Studies and Anthropology, also added that KAS is known nationally for how to interpret archaeology for the broader public.

“A number of the staff members are published and have presented widely, even internationally, about how best to engage with the public,” she said.

According to WKU, the Kentucky Archaeological Survey has been and will continue as a self-funding unit. Staff salaries, student assistants and projects are supported by contracts with state and federal agencies, agreements with nonprofit organizations, service fees and private contributions, a news release said.

Justin Carlson, also with KAS, said he's most looking forward to working with WKU's students.

“I'm excited for the opportunity to work at WKU and to work with the students because I think they're going to get excellent hands-on opportunities,” he said. “It's just such a great way to learn, to actually do it.”

– Follow education reporter Aaron Mudd on Twitter @BGDN_edbeat or visit bgdailynews.com.

Aaron Mudd

Education reporter. Covers education and related issues, focusing primarily on the Bowling Green and Warren County public school districts and Western Kentucky University.

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