Dear Colleagues and Friends,

We have some important news to share about leadership at the museum. On Feb. 13, Janet Braun, Ph.D., was named director of the Sam Noble Museum. Dr. Braun had been serving as interim director since 2020 and actually began her career at the museum in 1984. We look forward to working with Dr. Braun, especially with our important Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act compliance work.

The Archaeology Department is also pleased to announce our participation in some exciting collaborative research in this issue. These collaborative investigations demonstrate the incredible research value of the collections at the Sam Noble Museum. Wishing you a happy and healthy summer!

Marc

Marc N. Levine,
Associate Curator of Archaeology - Sam Noble Museum

New Publication Highlights
Collaborative Research at OU

The Wichita Archaeology Metagenomics Project is a collaborative effort among researchers from the Sam Noble Museum, OU’s Laboratories of Molecular Anthropology and Microbiome Research, and the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes. This partnership recently led to the publication of an article in the American Journal of Biological Anthropology. The new article is titled “Oral metagenomes from Native American Ancestors reveal distinct microbial lineages in the pre-contact era.”

Sam Noble Museum Participates in Horse Research

Sarah Trabert, Ph.D. of the Department of Anthropology in the Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences and Brandi Bethke, Ph.D. of the Oklahoma Archeological Survey participated in a recent study focusing on the when, how and why domestic horses were reintroduced to North America during the Contact Era.

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Elisif Dorsey graduated this May with a bachelor’s degree in anthropology. Elisif is a former intern of both the Ethnology and Archaeology departments at the SNOMNH. They were hired as a undergraduate collections assistant in archaeology in the spring of 2023. They also serve as accessibility coordinators with the Oklahoma Public Archaeology Network, working to create their accessibility manual and design with accessibility in mind. This summer, they will continue working with the archaeology department and OKPAN.

Regan Crider, OU undergraduate and archaeology collections assistant, received a fellowship for an internship through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to work at the Red River Wildlife Refuge in Bossier City, Louisiana. She will be researching and assisting the production of a video for their website.

Emily Andrews (Dartmouth College), who completed a summer internship at the Sam Noble Museum, was recently credited with discovering the remains of Native American ancestors forgotten in the Department of Anthropology at Dartmouth College. Her discovery resulted in an external review and they are now working to re-inventory human skeletal remains in their possession.

Lauren Gastineau, OU undergraduate and archaeology collections assistant, published her honor’s research in The Honors Undergraduate Research Journal. Her article, titled “The Circle of Pomegranate: Finding Religious Syncretism Through Fruit,” examines Bronze Age trade routes through the lens of this fruit. By connecting the pomegranate to multiple spatial and symbolic categories, she shows how ancient civilizations display religious syncretism.

This study, recently published in *Science*, included collections from the Sam Noble Museum. To read more about how OU researchers are contributing to a better understanding of horses in the West, see “The Untold History of the Horse in the American Plains.”

New Oklahoma Archaeology Journal

The Oklahoma Professional Archeology Network recently launched a new online magazine: *The Community Archaeologist*. Check it out!