CEMETERY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES + DISCOVERING GREENLAWN CEMETERY THROUGH HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

INDIANAPOLIS CITY-COUNTY ARCHIVES

PRESERVING HISTORIC PLACES CONFERENCE

9/30/26

OUTLINE

- Intro
- Internship
- Mock Conference
- Outcomes
- Lessons Learned
- Documentary
- Wrap



INTRO

CEMETERY DUTIES FOR THE ARCHIVES

- Cemetery compliance with city-county enterprise agencies
  - Any project on or within 100 feet
  - Any accidental discovery
- Research for agencies & the public
- SOPs for cemetery compliance and NAGPRA compliance
- Township trustee cemetery records stewardship
- County cemetery commission/task force visioning
- Community Advisory Group for Greenlawn Cemetery
- Research support for Greenlawn Excavation Documentary
- Summer high school internship, Indy-ology

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Indy-ology is a hands-on youth archaeology learning experience centered on the excavation of Greenlawn Cemetery, as part of the Henry Street Bridge project

Supported by the Mayor's Office, Department of Public Works, and Office of Finance & Management – Archives Division



HANDS-ON LEARNING

- Bioarchaeology
- Forensic anthropology
- Osteology
- Material culture / artifacts
- Excavation processes
- Genealogy
- Archival research
- Historic preservation
- Cultural resource management
- State laws & reporting
- Photos & glass plate negatives
- Landscape architecture & monuments
- GIS, photogrammetry, & VR
- Geophysical techniques
- Headstone symbolism
- Survey & curation techniques

EXPERIENCES





EXPERIENCES





FUNDING



citizens energy group™

INTERNSHIP

BUILDING PROGRAM FROM SCRATCH

- Budgeting
  - Project Manager
  - Instructors
  - Supplies
  - Interns
- Secure funding
- Reimbursement Process
- Fiscal Agent Process
- Coordinating with purchasing
- Job posting / HR
- Recruitment
- Press release/media coverage
- Job application evaluation
- Syllabus/schedule development
- Onboarding process

DEVELOP LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand basic archaeological research strategies and methods
- Learn how to identify bones in the human skeleton
- Understand how to clean and rearticulate the human skeleton
- Learn how to clean, catalog, and identify artifacts
- Familiarity with local archival and genealogical collections

2025 SCHEDULE

Tuesdays

- Artifact Day
- Typically in the artifact lab
- Occasional field trips and out to the excavation



Wednesdays

- Archives Day
- Typically in the City-County Archives
- Occasional field trips to Crown Hill and State Museum



Thursdays

- Osteology Day
- In the osteology lab on the IU-Indianapolis campus



*Condensed schedule for 2026 – full weeks, full days
*Went from 120 teaching hours in 2025 down to 70 teaching hours in 2026 = “Greatest Hits”

SCAFFOLDING KNOWLEDGE: OSTEO

- Anatomical Terminology
- Cleaning Remains
- Articulating Remains
- Sex Estimation
- Osteoware
- Craniometrics
- Post-Cranial Metrics
- Dental Morphology
- Taphonomy
- Pathology



SCAFFOLDING KNOWLEDGE: ARCHIVES

- History of the Site
- Research Methods
- Genealogy
- Stone Symbolism
- Laws
- Reporting Processes
- Photo Research
- Cultural Resource Management
- Memorialization

SCAFFOLDING KNOWLEDGE: ARTIFACTS

Digital Methods

Excavation

Inventorying

Collaboration

Public Archaeology

Research

INSTRUCTORS & GUEST SPEAKERS

- Dr. Brooke Drew, Co Principal Investigator, Artifacts & Indy-ology Co-Instructor
- Dr. Jeremy Wilson, Co Principal Investigator, Human Remains & Indy-ology Co-Instructor
- Ryan Peterson, Co Principal Investigator, Stantec
- Samantha Catchpole, Project Manager
- Leon Bates, Historian, Pan Africanist PhD student
- Duane Perry, Genealogist, Indiana African American Genealogy Group
- Tracy Jones, Indiana Landmarks Black Heritage Preservation Program
- Former Deputy Mayor Judith Thomas
- Dr. Alex Badillo, Digital Archaeologist, Stantec

GUEST SPEAKERS CONT'D

- Jeannie Regan-Dinius, Director of Preservation, Crown Hill Cemetery
- John Flood, Field Director, Stantec
- Alyssa Henss, Field Archaeologist, Stantec
- Izzy Ortt, Field Supervisor, Stantec
- Clara Peters, Field Archaeologist, Stantec
- Jamie Reeder, Preservation Specialist, State Historic Preservation Office
- Joan Hostetler, Indiana Album Director
- Deedee Davis, Historian & Reference archivist
- Michele Greenan & Gail Brown, Indiana State Museum, Cultural Resource Management Division
- Ahmaud Carroll Tubbs, Ball State landscape architecture grad student
- Kortnee Bell and Ian Roa, Artifact Lab Techs, Stantec

EXPERIENCES














Stantec

MOCK CONFERENCE

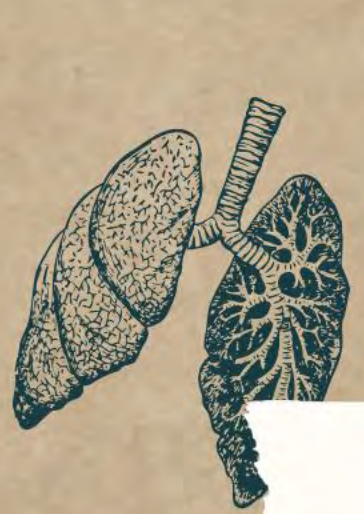
Greenlawn and the White River

What existed at Greenlawn before it was a cemetery?

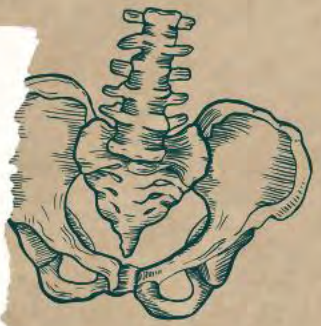
Body Snatching

CULTURAL BURIAL PRACTICES IN GREENLAWN CEMETARY












DISEASE AFTER DEATH

How Common 19th Century Diseases Affect the Human Skeleton

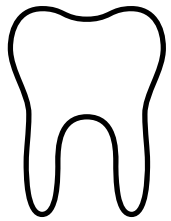
From Bones to Data

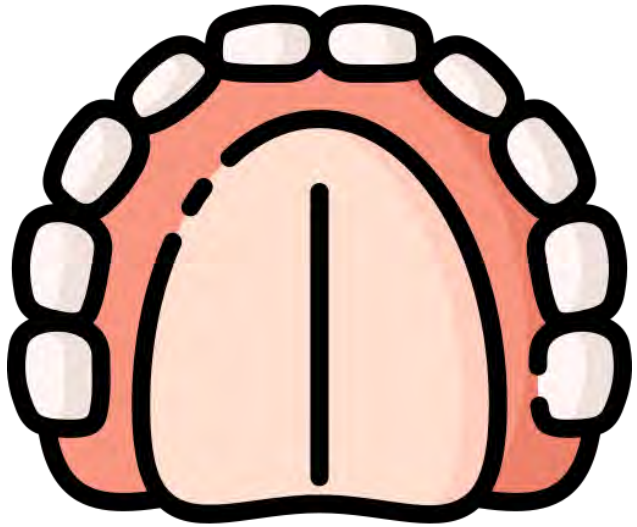


How Craniometrics can Determine Ancestry

Indyology

TOOTH MORPHOLOGY AND ITS USES IN ESTIMATING ANCESTRY





LOWER CUSP NUMBER



Right Mandibular (Lower) 1st and 2nd Molar



Left Mandibular (Lower) 1st and 2nd Molar

Constructing Biological Profiles in Indianapolis' Greenlawn Cemetery

OUTCOMES

OUTCOMES - REPRESENTATION

- Diversity in students' race, age, and residence
- Asian, Black, Central/South American, Hispanic, and White backgrounds
- Incoming 10th, 11th, 12th grades in high school and incoming college freshman
- Center, Lawrence, Pike, Warren, Washington, Wayne township representation
- City-County Council Districts 1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 13, and 14 representation



PRE-EVALUATION OUTCOMES

#	Question: Ranking your confidence of explaining the following topics on a scale of 1 (least) to 5 (most)	Ave. Rank 2025	Ave. Rank 2026
1	What archaeology is?	3.250	3.285
2	What osteology is?	2.250	2.429
3	What genealogy is?	2.750	2.857
4	How to research artifacts?	1.750	2.000
5	How to articulate a skeleton?	1.500	1.143
6	How to do genealogy?	1.875	1.714

POST-EVALUATION OUTCOMES

#	Question: Ranking your confidence of explaining the following topics on a scale of 1 (least) to 5 (most)	Ave. Rank 2025	Ave. Rank 2026
1	What archaeology is?	4.250	4.666
2	What osteology is?	4.375	4.666
3	What genealogy is?	3.625	4.666
4	How to research artifacts?	3.625	4.000
5	How to articulate a skeleton?	4.625	4.000
6	How to do genealogy?	3.750	4.000

MEASURED CHANGE 2025 & 2026

#	Question	Pre-Eval	Post-Eval	Change
1	What archaeology is?	3.250	4.250	Increase
2	What osteology is?	2.250	4.375	Almost doubled
3	What genealogy is?	2.750	3.625	Increase
4	How to research artifacts?	1.750	3.625	More than doubled
5	How to articulate a skeleton?	1.500	4.625	More than tripled!
6	How to do genealogy?	1.875	3.750	Almost doubled

#	Question	Pre-Eval	Post-Eval	Change
1	What archaeology is?	3.285	4.666	Increase
2	What osteology is?	2.429	4.666	Almost doubled
3	What genealogy is?	2.857	4.666	Increase
4	How to research artifacts?	2.000	4.000	Doubled
5	How to articulate a skeleton?	1.143	4.000	More than tripled!
6	How to do genealogy?	1.714	4.000	More than doubled

EVALUATION OUTCOMES 2025 + 2026

Did the Indy-ology summer program meet your expectations? Why or why not?
"Yes, it did. I'd even say it exceeded it! I got to explore a lot of different fields in history and anthropology, and it was so **much more hands on that I expected** which was really good."
"The Indy-ology summer program did meet my expectations. I learned a lot about archaeology and anthropology from experts, along with **gaining hands on experience**."
"I would say so. I came in expecting to familiarize myself with death in the context of history, and **I got what I expected plus more**."
"Yes! I had lots of fun and **learned a lot**!"
"It exceeded it! I expected to mostly be an observer, but **we were participants in all stages**. Infinitely cooler than what I expected."
"Yes, I got to have a **hands-on, up close experience** with the basics of archaeology and anthropology, and I was very satisfied with all the things I got to learn about in such a short time."

EVALUATION OUTCOMES 2025 + 2026

Are you more or less likely to pursue a related field (archaeology, anthropology, forensics, osteology) since attending Indy-ology?
"I think it showed me anthropology and archaeology might not be my thing but **affirmed my interests in human anatomy and medicine**."
"I am more likely for sure. I actually **decided to major in anthropology thanks to this program**. I also want to look into osteology and archaeology."
"Yes! I have more interest in the **biological / stem side of anthropology** that I didn't know about before."
"I am very likely; this program helped me to **commit to anthropology** studies."
"I am more likely to pursue a related field: I would like to **learn more about anthropology (particularly cultural)** and I am so happy I have experience in osteology, lab work, and archaeology."
"Way more likely, considering I actually was able to see what it's like first hand, and getting to talk to **people who are in the field**. "

EVALUATION OUTCOMES 2025 + 2026

Did anything in the Indy-ology program encourage you to try something new? If so, what?
"Yes, I had never really done genealogical research and while tedious I found it **very interesting and rewarding**."
"I used to be **adamantly against biology** because I didn't consider myself a "science person" but doing osteology in the lab **changed my mind**."
"Yes, I was firm that I **wasn't at all interested in stem until the program**. I also got to try out genealogical research."
"I am now **very interested in the osteology aspects** of anthropology."
"The Indy-ology program encouraged me to **pay more attention to Indianapolis' history** such as Greenlawn Cemetery and other details around how the city has developed."
"Yes, before the program, I **didn't want to work with the bones but I ended up really enjoying it** and I may try to pursue that more in the future."

EVALUATION OUTCOMES 2025 + 2026

What was your favorite lesson or activity in the program?
"**Pathology and articulating skeleton** – thanks Dr. Wilson."
"My favorite activity was probably working on **cleaning and articulating** the burials. My favorite lesson was probably either **cemetery laws** one or the one by Alyssa."
"Most certainly the discussions about archaeology pertaining to **black American history**."
"My favorite was probably **visiting the site and also talking to all the people** about their professions and their jobs so that I could get a better idea of what I want to do."
"My favorite activity was everything in the **osteology lab**. Everything in the lab fascinated me. I think I want to get into archaeology/osteology!"
"My favorite activity was **articulating** the remains, but a close second was **cleaning off the artifacts** and seeing all the very beautiful and ornate handles and parts of the casket."

LESSONS LEARNED

LESSONS LEARNED

- Program created **unique opportunity** for students to engage hands-on with archaeological subfields, experts, all facets of the Greenlawn Cemetery excavation
- Students gained pivotal skills in research, communication, and collaboration which hopefully will assist them in their **future academic and professional endeavors**
- Blueprint for what works; **could repeat** every summer or with an altered schedule
- Both quantitative and qualitative data from evaluations **exceeded our expectations**
- Some high school students have never had a **paying job** before
- Plan for in-person **interviews**
- Add multiple emails and phone numbers to application – we had **AWOL students**

LESSONS LEARNED

- Some minor behavioral issues with our youngest students – perhaps 10th graders were too young and applications should be limited to **juniors and seniors**
- Provide food and snacks for students with **food insecurity** issues
- **Make days/times explicit** in recruitment materials and strongly encourage students to be available during those times – we ended up with many make-up hours, which increased the project coordinator's wages, increasing the overall budget
- More details in **messaging on what to expect** – local media grabbed the internship posting and advertised it as a strictly fieldwork internship, ignoring our language and creating initial confusion

NEXT STEPS

- **Indy-ology Curriculum** launch late 2026 – brief teaching videos accompanied by lesson plans and activities to get Indy-ology into the classroom
- **2027 internship** without remains & artifacts? Research & Interpretation, GIS training, StoryMaps as deliverables?
- **Documentary Film** by Jerald Harkness/Studio Auteur

Watch the documentary trailer

CONTACT

Project website:
https://wridinfrastructure.com/

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QUESTIONS?

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PUBLIC [ARCHAEOLOGY]

AS A TOOL FOR CULTURAL RESOURCE PRESERVATION

explorearI.org

› Rachel Sharkey
Vice President of Archaeology, Research, and Preservation

Who does the Past belong to?

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Historically, the public has not felt welcome to be involved in preservation

- WE are the ones that tell the stories
- WE decide which stories to tell
- WE control access to the site
- Ivory-tower mindset

This removes the control of the narrative from the community in which our historic sites sit

- They become outsiders
- They feel like they have no say, or their opinions don't matter
- They become disconnected to their histories



Archaeologist-First Archaeology

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Findings sit on shelves with guarded access

Findings are presented to a select group

Research questions are not developed *with* the local community

Archaeology is not a necessity to nonarchaeologists



"We suspect that unless archaeologists find ways to make their research increasingly relevant to the modern world, ***the modern world will find itself increasingly capable of getting along without archaeologists"***
(Fritz and Plog 1970: 412).

Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)

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Research designed around a **reciprocal** relationship between archaeologists and local and descendant communities.

Involving the community in the research process gives power back to them.

- They care because it is **relevant** and **relatable**
- Results and process are **tangible**

Atalay 2012

Sense of shared participation leads to an investment in heritage resources



What's Next?

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Archaeologists are great at **sharing knowledge**

Archaeologists can do better at **fostering stewardship attitudes** and **inspiring action**

Heritage preservation professionals lack a body of research that examines variables that inspire pro-stewardship behavior among both adults and children.

Reetz et al. 2022:97



If we want people in the communities in which we do our work to **help** us protect cultural resources, then we have to make them
feel like they are making a difference.

The Collectives

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Collective effervescence

- First described by French sociologist Emile Durkheim in 1912
- The shared emotional energy people feel when a group ritual or ceremony brings everyone into the same moment
- Social cohesion enhances sense of belonging

Collective efficacy

- The feeling that together, we can get more done



Amplify (2025), by Adam Met

Themes to Engagement:

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Education

Experiences

Community

Storytelling

Action

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EDUCATE → CONNECT → EXPERIENCE → ACT

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Educate

Education is the foundation for meaningful participation

- Archaeological and preservation concepts must be explained in accessible ways
- Translate complex processes into language that communities can understand
- Teach not only what we know, but how we know it
- Use stories, artifacts, fieldwork, exhibits, and hands-on experiences to make learning memorable
- Provide the context people need to understand why a place or resource matters

EDUCATE → CONNECT → EXPERIENCE → ACT

Connect

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People protect what they feel connected to

- Find common ground with people who have different perspectives
- Build relationships before conflict arises
- Listen to what matters to a community
- Reach beyond usual audiences and partnerships
- Build a community of people who see themselves as active participants in preservation

EDUCATE → CONNECT → EXPERIENCE → ACT

Experience

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Connection grows when people experience archaeology rather than hear about it

- Create opportunities for people to participate
- Give participants agency and let their choices matter
- Create shared experiences that foster collective efficacy
- Give people something they can take with them
- Through experiences, the importance (and protection) of heritage resources becomes less abstract

EDUCATE → CONNECT → EXPERIENCE → ACT

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Act

The ultimate goal is not simply an informed public - it is an engaged public.

- Give people clear, specific ways to get involved
- Give people talking points
- Show people that their actions make a difference
- Publicly celebrate progress so people can see that collective action is possible
- Keep engagment going
- Provide concrete calls to action at programs and events

EDUCATE → CONNECT → EXPERIENCE → ACT



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We want people to leave ARI feeling that the past belongs to them, preservation matters, and that they have a role in protecting it.

The strength of the public's understanding, relationships, and willingness to participate is the key to preservation at the community level.

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THANK YOU

exploreari.org

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ENGAGING COMMUNITIES IN ARCHAEOLOGY

Innovative Paths to Participation

What ARI has learned from building ways for people to participate in archaeology

LOUIS HERZNER
Archaeology Coordinator / Director of VALOR

Preserving Historic Places 2026 • Franklin, Indiana



Public participation is not one thing

People enter archaeology at different depths.

1
SEE
watch / encounter

2
TRY
touch / test

3
MAKE
build / create

4
ASK
question / interpret

5
CONTRIBUTE
share / document

6
CARE
steward / return

ARI's job is not to force everyone to the deepest level. It is to create credible next steps for the people who want them.

That is the difference between programs people attend and the relationship we can build.

Build for the community—not the program

Start with what makes participation feel possible.

FAMILIES

Give us a reason to explore together.

Adventure Trek / Pumpkin STEM

STUDENTS

Give us a role and a question to answer.

Field trips / hands-on learning / field schools

ADULTS

Give us a skill, story, or conversation worth showing up for.

Workshops / speaker series

COMMUNITY

Give us a place to bring our own knowledge.

Rock, Fossil, and Artifact Identification sessions / tours

VETERANS

Give us a pathway where existing skills have value.

VALOR / field / lab / outreach

Same mission. Different doorway.

Lower the threshold before you raise the stakes

A first experience should answer: “Can I do this?”



ADVENTURE TREK

Explore first. Learn almost accidentally.



PUMPKIN STEM

Experiment and understand the capabilities of ancient technologies.



ATLATL RANGE

Try an unfamiliar tools with guidance.

Don't just demonstrate it. Let people do it.

Hands-on History workshops turn archaeological technology into a shared investigation.



2026

Hands-on experimental archaeology workshops can move from material → process → experiment → interpretation.

- Pitch making & hafting
- Atlatls, darts & fletching
- Natural dyes and resource harvesting
- Flintknapping
- Blacksmithing Introduction
- Cordage and fiber work
- Ceramics and firing
- Trebuchet engineering and tuning

The participant is not just watching. The participant is experiencing and discovering how people have solved problems and manipulated materials through time.

The community already has questions

ARI can be the place where those questions become conversations.





IDENTIFICATION DAYS

Artifact
Rock
Fossil
Memory
Question

People don't need to arrive knowing the right question.

- Rock, Fossil, and Artifact Identification Days: The second Saturday of each month
- Land Stewardship at the Farmer's Market
- Land Stewardship providing classes at the Community Gardens

The benefit is reciprocal: ARI provides context; the community provides observations, stories and new questions.

A recurring social format lowers the pressure around expertise and creates room for conversation.

We deliberately stepped away from Guard

The Guard site was what helped to spawn ARI. Then we tested whether ARI could build meaningful public archaeology beyond one location.



THE BOARDING HOUSE

In 2024, ARI used historic archaeology to investigate a suspected 19th-century boarding house along the Ohio River.



WHY IT MATTERED

A different period, a different site, different questions—and proof that public archaeology could connect people to more than one cultural resource.

DIVERSIFICATION

New sites and histories expanded ARI's research, partnerships and public offerings without abandoning the importance of place.

THE LESSON

Diversification was valuable. It gave us more tools, more stories and more ways to engage different audiences.

We did not leave Guard because it was less important. We left so ARI could learn how to do more.

Return to a place we steward

The Guard Archaeological Preserve gives ARI a unifying resource—not a single program.







GUARD SITE / GAP

A real archaeological landscape that ARI stewards, studies, interprets and can invite the public into.

INTERPRET

Tours, REXplore/AR, field experiences and public programming make the site understandable from multiple perspectives.

PARTICIPATE + CARE

Gardens, stewardship, research, and hands-on experiences create opportunities for ongoing relationships with our participants.

The question changes from “What program should we offer?” to “How can we use the places we steward to engage and inform the community?”

Now we can come back to Guard differently

This has allowed us to refocus on a broader archaeological landscape surrounding the Guard site and provide opportunity to bring everything ARI has learned back to a place we steward.

RESEARCH

Fieldwork, chronology, environmental archaeology, invasive and native plant species, and ongoing questions keep the site active as a research landscape.

EXPERIENCE

Adventure Trek, field experiences, experimental archaeology and technology create multiple entry points.

INTERPRETATION

AR/REXplore, tours, gardens and signage help people understand the landscape and its stories.

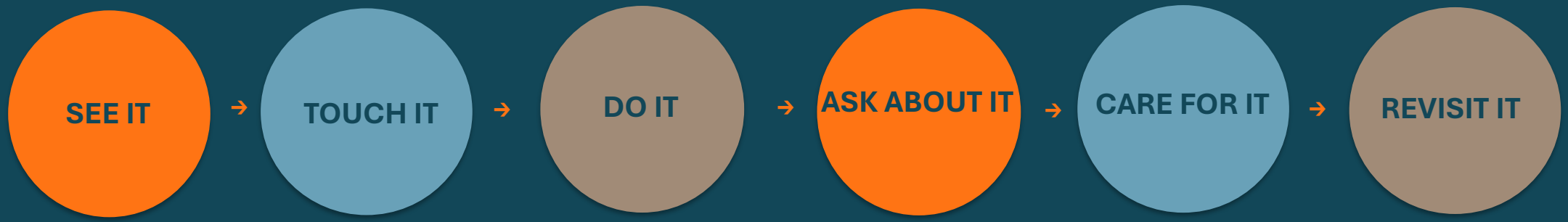
STEWARDSHIP

Bioblitz, invasive and native species management, gardens, trails and community involvement connect archaeological preservation to the living landscape.

Cultural Resources becomes the common thread; the programs become the entry point.

Use a unifying resource to organize participation

A site can give otherwise separate programs a shared purpose.



Tours / AR / trails

Gardens / artifacts / materials

Excavate / experiment / build

ID day / speakers / research

Stewardship / volunteer / advocacy

Take what we learned and make it better

This is the opportunity in returning to GAP: not another "ARI program," but a connected public archaeology ecosystem.

The same approach can be adapted to a historic site, a cemetery, a landscape, a collection—or a community question.

The site changes. The architecture of participation does not

ARI can use the same design logic whether the focus is Guard, the Boarding House, another historic property, or a community-led project.

1. FIND THE RESOURCE

What place, collection, story or research question can anchor the experience?

2. BUILD ENTRY POINTS

Give people more than one way to encounter it: see, make, ask, explore, contribute.

3. CREATE A NEXT STEP

Make it easy to return at a deeper level—another program, volunteer role, field experience or stewardship opportunity.

Guard taught us the value of place. Diversification taught us the value of having more than one place.

Now ARI can combine both lessons: anchor public archaeology in meaningful resources while giving people many different ways to participate.

That is the model we want to carry forward—not a single site, but an archaeological landscape with repeatable ways of opening doors.

The goal is not to keep people at the door

The goal is to help people find a meaningful role once they walk through it.



VISITOR	I can experience this place.
PARTICIPANT	I can do something here.
CONTRIBUTOR	I can add knowledge, questions, or skills.
STEWARD	I have a reason to help care for it.

Guard gives ARI the place. Our programs give people the roles. Stewardship gives the relationship a purpose. ARI helps pave the way to the future.

That is what meaningful public participation can look like in practice.

A place can be more than a site.

At ARI, we are learning to use the places we steward as platforms for research, learning, participation and care.

Louis Herzner • Archaeological Research Institute • Franklin, Indiana • 2026