



CROW CANYON
ARCHAEOLOGICAL CENTER

REU Site: Northern Chaco Villages Project in Archaeology

The *Northern Chaco Villages Project in Archaeology* actively engages undergraduate students from underrepresented communities across the nation in authentic archaeological research alongside professional mentors within the framework of a long-term research project, the Northern Chaco Outliers Project. Students receive extensive preparation in STEM-based learning objectives necessary for future success within the scientific disciplines. Students gain necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to secure future employment within the sciences and to pursue advanced degrees, emerging as the next generations of professionals, tribal historic preservation officers, educators, and leaders. Students will: 1) Design and conduct empirically derived research; 2) Develop critical thinking skills; 3) Gain skills in excavation and survey methods and laboratory analyses; and 4) Learn and adhere to U.S. archaeological laws and ethics. Inferences generated about past human behaviors are generated to create a more robust understanding of the principles that govern culture change worldwide, address issues relevant to today's societies, and provide critical information to guide future policy making.

The Crow Canyon Archaeological Center initiated the Northern Chaco Outliers Project in 2017 with the goal of addressing important questions surrounding the expansion of Chaco-style communities in the Mesa Verde region, as well as broader anthropological research questions concerning human-environment interactions, the development of inequality/equality, the political role of community centers, and identity formation/dissolution. Its results have national and global impacts. Archaeology, more than any other scientific discipline, is best suited to study how humans engage with environmental and societal change, lending insights to modern-day issues that continue to resonate with populations across the world. By engaging in scientific research focused on broader anthropological questions, REU students advance and share knowledge of the human past and contribute to cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary research surrounding human actions in the past, present, and future.