

SOUTHEASTERN ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE BUSINESS MEETING 2020
AWARDS CITATIONS

Native American Speakers Fund

The Southeastern Archaeological Conference awarded a grant from the Native American Speakers Fund to Professor Jan Simek of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Stephen Alvarez of the Ancient Art Archive, and the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma to provide extensive reporting to the community about documentation in *Chola Aayokachi'* (Foxtrap Rockshelter). The supported visit took place December 4-7, 2019.

Chola Aayokachi' is an important cultural site in the Northwest Alabama Homeland of the Chickasaw People that was purchased by the Chickasaw Inkana Foundation in 2017 in order to protect it. The site is a rockshelter containing black, charcoal-based pictographs made by tribal ancestors in ancient times. The rock art depicts dozens of anthropomorphs, quadrupeds, birds and reptiles, as well as geometric and abstract symbols. The site is so unique in the treaty-territory homeland of the Chickasaw Nation that the tribe partnered with Dr. Simek, Alvarez, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and the Ancient Art Archive (<https://ancientartarchive.org/>), to carry out extensive documentation of the rock art at the site with funding support from the Nation. To this end, high resolution digital photography, digitally aided drawings, 3D photogrammetry, and non-invasive chemical analysis of the paint pigments were carried out at *Chola Aayokachi'*. Of particular import was a high-resolution 3D Digital Elevation Model (DEM) that was produced using photogrammetry. This DEM provides the basis for detailed mapping of the site and its rock art, and it provides replicable data for monitoring of site condition over time. The DEM also makes it possible, through animation and contextualization, for Chickasaw people from Elders to young people to experience this ancestral art, even if they are unable to make the trip to Alabama. The potential of the project results for education and site management is extraordinary.

Over the course of several days in Oklahoma, the researchers gave two well-attended public presentations. They were interviewed on KCNP Chickasaw Community Radio, owned and operated by the Nation, and they met with numerous Chickasaw Culture & Humanities officials, staff, artists, and video production specialists who will use the DEM to develop educational and cultural programming for the people of the Nation.

SEAC is pleased to be able to support public engagement in association with this important project.