

Samantha Ellens¹

Michigan State University Museum | 409 West Circle Drive | East Lansing, MI 48824
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Education

PhD, Anthropology (Archaeology) 2025

Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

Dissertation: “Uncovering Landscapes of Labor: Contributions of the Citrus Lime Industry to Socioeconomic Transformations in the Post-Emancipation Lesser Antilles”

Advisor: Dr. Krysta Ryzewski

Master of Arts, Anthropology 2015

Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

Masters Essay: “At the Nexus of Help and Harm: Identifying Consumption Patterns in Corktown Through a 19th to 20th-Century Household Medicine Bottle Assemblage”

Advisor: Dr. Krysta Ryzewski

Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Arts and Science, 2013

University of Windsor, Windsor, ON, Canada

Anthropology and Biology, Honours

Outstanding Scholars Faculty Mentor: Dr. Lynne Phillips

Employment History

Archaeology Collections Manager January 2024 - present

Michigan State University Museum and Department of Anthropology

Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

- Responsible for archaeological collections stewardship, including preservation, conservation, storage, inventory control, physical security, disaster preparedness, documentation, and loan administration.
- Maintain and update archaeological collections records in the Museum’s collection management system and online collections portal. Work with senior museum staff and campus stakeholders to develop and implement a plan to digitize, preserve, and provide access to archaeological collections.
- Promote, encourage, and facilitate the use of the archaeology collections by scholarly, university, descent, and Indigenous communities.
- Supervise students and volunteers working on collections-related projects.
- Assist in forming collections proposals and priorities that align with the Museum’s strategic plan.

Preservation Associate, November 2018-Present

Preservation Detroit, Detroit, MI (Current Board President: Devan Anderson)

- Primary support staff for Detroit’s oldest and largest historic preservation organization
- Reports to the Board of Directors
- Performs daily administrative tasks, maintains membership database, and website
- Plan and implement special events, fundraising, and public outreach opportunities
- Serves as liaison between organization and community partners
- Coordinates historic walking tour program

¹ Last named changed from Malette to Ellens in 2015

Scholarships, Awards, and Honours

Pam and Terry O'Connor Endowment Fund Scholarship 2021 (MHPN Annual Preservation Conference)
\$5,000 Graduate School Summer 2020 Dissertation Award
\$20,000/year SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship 2016-2020 (\$80,000 CAD total value)
\$1,500 Michael Marie Dion Scholarship in Anthropology 2019 (fieldwork travel award)
\$1,500 Barbara Aswad Award 2016-2017 (fieldwork travel award)
Wayne State Graduate Professional Scholarship 2014-2015 (tuition scholarship)
\$450 Coleman "Steve" Demeter Memorial Graduate Scholarship 2014
\$10,000 University of Windsor Renewable Entrance Scholarship 2009-2013
\$8,000 University of Windsor Outstanding Scholars Award 2009-2013
\$6,000 University of Windsor Outstanding Scholars Academic Appointment and Honorarium 2010-2013

Interests

Historical archaeology, collections-based research, educational outreach, cultural resource preservation, labor Caribbean, colonial North America, Great Lakes Region

Publications

Ellens, Samantha (2021) Landscapes of Lime: Boom-and-Bust Cycles of Botanical Commodities in the Eastern Caribbean. In *The SAA Archaeological Record*. 21(5):30-33.

Ellens, Samantha, Susan Villerot, and Don Adzigian (2021) Interpreting the Sherds: Ceramic Consumption Practices in a Nineteenth Century Detroit Riverfront Neighborhood. *Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology*. 46(1):83-106.

Ellens, Samantha (2020) Tracing the Post-Emancipation Landscape of Dominica's Lime Industry. In *Slavery on the Edge of Empire: The Political Ecology of a Caribbean Plantation*, edited by Mark W. Hauser and Diane Wallman. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Professional Presentations and Posters

Paper: "The Golden Splendor of Montserrat Limes?: A Multi-Scalar Archaeology of Caribbean Citrus Industry (ca. 1852-1928)." Society for Historical Archaeology. New Orleans, Louisiana. January 8-11, 2025.

Elizabeth C. Clay and **Samantha M. Ellens**

Symposium: "Co-Producing Space: Relational Approaches to Agrarian Landscapes, Labor, Commodities, and Communities." Society for Historical Archaeology. Oakland, California. January 3-6, 2024.

Paper: "Landscapes of Labor: Uncovering Montserrat's Post-Emancipation Lime Industry, 1852-1928." Society for Historical Archaeology. Oakland, California. January 3-6, 2024.

Paper: "Dynamics of a Post-Sugar Montserrat in the Era of Lime." Society for Historical Archaeology. Lisbon, Portugal. January 4-7, 2023

Paper: "A Post-Sugar Emerald Isle: Lifeways in Lime-Era Montserrat." International Association for Caribbean Archaeology. Matanzas, Cuba. June 26-July 3, 2022.

Paper: "In the Shadow of Sugar: Dwelling in the Post-Emancipation Era, Montserrat." Society for Historical Archaeology. Boston, MA. January 8-11, 2020.

Paper: “No Lovlier Sight’: Uncovering Montserrat’s Post-Emancipation Lime Landscape.” International Congress of Caribbean Archaeology. Barbados, WI. July 21-27, 2019.

Paper: “Time Jumpers: Community-Based Approaches to Archaeology in the Classroom” Society for American Archaeology. Albuquerque, NM. April 10-14, 2019.

Paper: “A Life of Limes and Leisure: A Post-Emancipation Quaker Elite Site in Montserrat, West Indies” Society for Historical Archaeology. Saint Charles, MO. January 9-12, 2019.

Paper: “Fostering Archaeological Stewardship and Community Engagement in Metro-Detroit.” Midwest Historical Archaeology Conference. Chicago, IL. October 19-20, 2018.

Samantha Ellens and Athena Zissis

Paper: “Time Jumpers: Inspiring Archaeological Stewardship Through Classroom Programming.” Society for Historical Archaeology. New Orleans, LA. January 3-6 2018.

Paper: “Mapping Montserrat’s Transition from Sugar to Limes: A Geosocial Landscape Approach.” International Congress of Caribbean Archaeology. St. Croix. July 24-28, 2017.

Paper: “Tracing the Post-Emancipation Landscape of Dominica’s Lime Industry.” Society for American Archaeology. Vancouver, B.C. March 29-April 2, 2017.

Paper: “Industrializing Detroit: Exploring a 19th-Century Waterfront Neighborhood.” Transformations Graduate Student Conference. Wayne State University, Detroit, MI. March 4, 2017.

Paper: ““No lovlier sight’”: Tracing the Post-Emancipation Lime Industry on Montserrat and Dominica.” Society for Historical Archaeology. Fort Worth, TX. January 4-8, 2017.

Paper: “Building the Paris of the West: Perspectives on Detroit’s 19th-Century Riverfront.” Midwest Historical Archaeology Conference. Detroit, MI. September 24, 2016.

Paper: “Uncovering the Past Below the Surface: Archaeology in Detroit Today.” Neighborhoods in America’s Legacy Cities: A Dialogue in Detroit Conference. Detroit, MI. September 15, 2016.

Paper: “Exploring Early Urban Detroit Through A Riverfront Assemblage.” Michigan Historic Preservation Network Conference. Detroit, MI. May 14, 2016.

Paper: “Industrializing Detroit: Exploring a 19th-Century Waterfront Neighborhood.” Transformations Graduate Student Conference. Wayne State University, Detroit, MI. March 5, 2016.

Paper: “Remedy and Poison: Examining a Detroit Household’s Consumption of Proprietary Medicine at the Turn of the 20th Century.” Society for Historical Archaeology. Washington, D.C. January 5-10, 2016.

Susan Villerot, **Samantha Ellens**, Don Adzigian

Poster: “Interpreting the Sherds: Ceramic Consumption Practices in a Nineteenth Century Detroit Riverfront Neighborhood.” Society for Historical Archaeology. Washington, D.C. January 5-10, 2016.

Paper: “Contextualizing Quackery and Medicine in 19th-Century Detroit.” Transformations Graduate Student Conference. Wayne State University, Detroit, MI. March 7, 2015.

Kate E. Korth, C. Lorin Brace VI, Mark Jazayeri, **Samantha Malette**, Kaitlin Scharra, Krysta Ryzewski
Poster: “Shaping the City from Detroit’s Rediscovered Archaeological Collections.” Society for Historical

Archaeology. Seattle, WA. January 6-11, 2015.

Kaitlin Scharra, C. Lorin Brace VI, Mark Jazayeri Kate E. Korth, **Samantha Malette**, Krysta Ryzewski
Poster: "Exploring Old Avenues in New Ways: Urban Archaeology and Public Outreach in Detroit." Society
for Historical Archaeology. Seattle, WA. January 6-11, 2015.

Research Experience

Student Research Assistant, 2013-Present

Unearthing Detroit Project (PI: Dr. Krysta Ryzewski), Anthropology Department, Wayne State

- Lead artifact analysis and archival research of 17th-19th c. Renaissance Center collection
- Assist with community outreach, dissemination, educational efforts, events, and exhibits

Artifact Model Technician and Writer, 2016-2017

Anthropology Virtual Exhibit Organization, Anthropology Department, Wayne State

- Create photogrammetric models and design information outputs for artifacts in Sketchfab for the virtual museum

Outstanding Scholars Academic Appointment, 2012-2013

Dr. Glynis George, Anthropology Department, University of Windsor

- Acquisition of statistical information and newspaper documentation relating to immigrant populations in Windsor-Essex County and their reception by various community programs

Undergraduate Research Assistant, 2011-2012

Dr. Lynne Phillips, Anthropology Department, University of Windsor

- L. Phillips. Paper presentation for the panel "Seeding the City", CASCA, Fredericton, NB, May 12, 2011. Contributor.
- L. Phillips (2012). *Eating Cars: Food, Politics and Pedagogy in a "Community in Crisis."* Urban/Urban Environment (6) 2012. p.a64 - a73. Contributor.

Outstanding Scholars Academic Appointment, 2010-2012

Dr. Lynne Phillips, Anthropology Department, University of Windsor

- Analysis of archival newspaper documents relating to the evolution of the automotive industry in Windsor, ON, and its relation to the formation of food deserts within the city center

Field Experience

Field Archaeologist, July 2022

Malcolm X House, Inkster, MI (PI: Dr. Tareq Ramadan and Dr. Krysta Ryzewski)

- Archaeological survey related to an NPS-funded restoration project in collaboration with the We Hope, Dream, & Believe non-profit organization.

Field Archaeologist, March 2019

2038 Halleck, Detroit, MI (PI: Dr. Krysta Ryzewski)

- Archaeological excavation related to a recently demolished Civil War-era log cabin

Field Archaeologist, September-Nov 2018

ANT 5280 Archaeological Field Methods Course (Instructor and PI: Dr. Krysta Ryzewski); Old Hamtramck Center, Hamtramck, MI

- Archaeological excavation and documentation of an outbuilding related to a 19th and early 20th-century Tin Shop
- Crew leader in charge of individual lot excavation and final site report contribution

Artifact Illustrator/Field Archaeologist, May-June 2014-2017

Survey and Landscape Archaeology on Montserrat (SLAM) Project (Co-PIs: Drs. John F. Cherry and Krysta Ryzewski) Montserrat, WI

- Illustrate scale drawings and reconstructions of prehistoric pottery
- Assist in surface survey, site excavation, and artifact processing
- Contribute to final report submitted to the Montserrat National Trust (unpublished)

Survey Crew, October 2016

Grande Ballroom, 8952 Grand River Ave, Detroit, MI 48204

- Archaeological survey and documentation of a historic live music venue designed in 1928
- Wayne State University in collaboration with Preservation Detroit, Detroit Sound Conservancy, and ECM Construction
- Contributing author of final report

Site Supervisor, May-June 2016

Survey and Landscape Archaeology on Montserrat (SLAM) Project (Co-PIs: Drs. John F. Cherry and Krysta Ryzewski), Montserrat, WI

- Led excavations on 18th- and 19th-century structures and co-authored final report

Survey Coordinator and Primary Investigator, January 2016

United Sound Systems Recording Studios, 5840 Second Ave, Detroit, MI

- Archaeological survey and mapping of a music recording studio established in early 20th century (Wayne State University in collaboration with the Detroit Sound Conservancy)
- Implemented archaeological survey and authored final report

Field Archaeologist, August 2015

Ransom Gillis House, Detroit, MI

- Wayne State University in collaboration with Preservation Detroit, HGTV, and the Brush Park Development Team
- Archaeological testing of late 19th to mid-20th-century property and historic pottery studio.

Project Co-Director and Co-Organizer, April 2015

Blue Bird Inn, 5021 Tireman Ave, Detroit, MI (Co-PI: C. Lorin Brace)

- Wayne State University in collaboration with the Detroit Sound Conservancy
- Implemented archaeological survey of mid-20th-century Detroit jazz club; co-authored final report

Field Archaeologist, Aug-Nov 2014

ANT 5280 Archaeological Field Methods Course

Wayne State University (Instructor and PI: Dr. Krysta Ryzewski); Roosevelt Park, Detroit, MI

- Archaeological testing of a 19th and early 20th-century neighborhood demolished in 1918
- Crew leader in charge of individual lot excavation and final site report contribution

Field Archaeologist, June-July 2014

Betty's Hope Archaeological Field School, Antigua, WI (PI: Dr. Georgia Fox)

- Identify artifacts, excavate carefully in stratigraphic lots, and screen material

Field Archaeologist, May-September 2013

Fisher Archaeological Consulting, Hamilton, ON

Stage 4: Mitigation of the Southwest bank of Puce River, Lakeshore, ON

- Identify artifacts, excavate carefully in stratigraphic lots and screen material
- Map features, take elevations, take soil samples, create plan and profile drawings

Professional Experience and Internships

Graduate Teaching Assistant (Grosscup Museum of Anthropology), 2021-2022

Wayne State University, Detroit, MI (Museum Director: Dr. Megan McCullen)

- Organize and supervise museum volunteer and work-study student activities
- Maintain accession and catalog records for museum collections
- Facilitate access to collections for teaching, research, and external organizations
- Daily administrative tasks, manage laboratory activities, and maintain the museum website
- Assist with grants proposals, annual reports, and conservation assessment of museum collections
- Exhibit design, planning, and installation
- Coordinate public outreach events, university-wide events, opening receptions, and special events

Primary Project Coordinator (Time Jumpers), Fall 2014-2019

Anthropology Department, Wayne State University

- Design and implement flexible learning program and activities for school and community outreach regarding archaeological practices, cultural heritage, and regional history
- Responsible for training/leading student volunteers
- Maintain relationships with educators throughout Metro Detroit
- Program featured locally on <http://www.modeldmedia.com/>

Next Generation PhD Humanities Clinic, Summer 2017

Wayne State University, Detroit, MI (Coordinator: Dr. Josiah Rector)

- Provide research assistance to the organizations outlined below:

InsideOut Literary Arts Program

5143 Cass Ave #225, Detroit, MI 48201

- Conduct qualitative analysis of video/audio recordings and transcribed interviews/focus groups

Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History

315 E Warren Ave, Detroit, MI 48201

- Acquisition of historical information and collections for new exhibition (installed late 2018)

Invited Lectures

Guest Lecturer, Spring 2021 (Cancelled due to Covid-19)

Brandeis University, Waltham, MA (Dr. Charlotte Goudge)

- Lecture Topic: "Techniques in Site and Artifact Illustration"

The Conference on Michigan Archaeology (COMA), March 24th, 2018

Michigan History Center, Lansing, MI

- "Time Jumpers: Inspiring Archaeological Stewardship Through Classroom Programming"

Societal Meeting Lecture, February 25th, 2015

Farmington Historical Society, Farmington, MI

- "Unearthing Detroit: Identifying Lost Communities through Archaeological Excavation and Collections-Based Research"

Societal Meeting Lecture, December 3rd, 2014

Windsor Chapter of Ontario Archaeological Society, Windsor, ON

- “Unearthing Detroit: Recovering the City’s Past Through Archaeological Excavation and Collections-Based Research”

Brown Bag Lecture Series, October 17th, 2013

Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

- “Cultural Resource Management and Archaeology, Recent Excavations at the Puce River Bridge, Lakeshore, ON”

Teaching Experience

Instructor, Fall 2023

Anthropology Department, Wayne State University

Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

- ANT 1100 Introduction to Anthropology; undergraduate

Guest Lecturer, Fall 2021

Anthropology Department, Wayne State University

Wayne State University, Detroit, MI (Instructor: Dr. Thomas Killion)

- ANT 6570 Archaeological Laboratory Methods; graduate
- Lecture Topic: "Archaeological Illustration" (9/27/2021)

Instructor, Winter 2016, 2020-2021

Anthropology Department, Wayne State University

Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

- ANT 2200 Lost Cities and Ancient Civilizations (Online); undergraduate
- ANT 3200 Lost Cities and Ancient Civilizations (Online); undergraduate

Guest Lecturer, Fall 2019

Anthropology Department, Wayne State University

Wayne State University, Detroit, MI (Instructor: Dr. Krysta Ryzewski)

- ANT 6570 Archaeological Laboratory Methods; graduate
- Lecture Topics: "Minimum Vessel Identification & Vessel Complexity" (10/7/2019) and "Archaeological Illustration" (10/14/2019)

Guest Lecturer, Fall 2018

Anthropology Department, Wayne State University

Wayne State University, Detroit, MI (Instructor: Katherine Slocum)

- ANT 3200 Lost Cities and Ancient Civilizations; undergraduate
- Lecture Topic: "Urban & Historical Archaeology" on 10/30/18

Graduate Teaching Assistant, 2015-2016

Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

- ANT 2110 Introduction to Physical Anthropology; undergraduate (Instructor: Dr. Julie Lesnik)
- ANT 3200 Lost Cities and Ancient Civilizations (Online); undergraduate (Instructor: Dr. Tamara Bray)

Teaching Assistant, 2012-2013

University of Windsor, Windsor, ON (Instructor: Dr. Maureen Muldoon)

- 01-01-204, Health-Care Ethics Through the Life Span; undergraduate

Digital Media

Unearthing Detroit Project, October 2013-2019
Maintains Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/UnearthDetroit

Roosevelt Park Excavations Blog, November 2014
Day #8 Contributor: <https://detroitarchaeology.wordpress.com/category/2014-roosevelt-park-excavations/>

Making Music in Detroit Project, April 2014
Blue Bird Inn: http://www.geostoryteller.org/mobile_view_site.php?id=383
Paradise Theater: http://www.geostoryteller.org/mobile_view_site.php?id=384

Select Service and Community Engagement

Noel Night, Open House and Public Outreach Night, December 2014 – 2019, 2023, 2024

Grosscup Museum of Anthropology, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

- Public open house and outreach event at museums and institutions across Midtown Detroit
- Preservation Detroit representative in collaboration with WSU Anthropology Museum and others

Junior Insiders: Bring Your Kid to Work Day, April 2022, 2023

Grosscup Museum of Anthropology, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

- Public outreach event with hands-on activities across campus for children (K-12)
- Wayne State University Anthropology student representative

Springfest, April 13, 2022

Grosscup Museum of Anthropology, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

- Public outreach event connecting student organizations, campus departments, and programs
- Wayne State University Anthropology student representative

Festifall, August 31, 2021

Grosscup Museum of Anthropology, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

- Recruitment event for incoming students to learn about student organizations, campus departments, and learning communities
- Wayne State University Anthropology student representative

Michigan Archaeology Day (Exhibitor), October 2018, 2019, 2024

Michigan History Center, Lansing, MI

- Coordinate archaeology-related public educational activities at annual outreach event
- Supervise student volunteers throughout the event
- Oversee soil stratigraphy and mock excavation units emphasizing appropriate archaeological methods and site interpretation

Michigan State University Science Festival Detroit Expo Day, April 2016, 2017

Several locations on Belle Isle Park, Detroit, MI

- Public educational activities located at the Dossin Great Lakes Museum (2016) and Belle Isle Nature Zoo (2017)
- Wayne State University Anthropology student representative

Wayne State Junior Insiders, April 28, 2016

Grosscup Museum of Anthropology, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

- Public outreach event with hands-on activities across campus for children (K-12)
- Wayne State University Anthropology student representative

International Day of Archaeology, Public Open Day, October 25, 2014

- Public open day at archaeological excavations conducted at Roosevelt Park, Detroit Demonstrated archaeological methods and techniques to members of the community
- Educate the public on the importance of archaeology to help understand our shared past and cultural resources

Technical Skills

Proficient: photograph editing, Argus, PastPerfect, artifact identification and cataloging, illustration, exhibit planning and installation, digital imaging (Photo Artifact TurnTable), archival digitization, total station, Garmin GPS, ArcGIS

Intermediate: 3D photography and modeling, database design

Basic and developing: ATLAS.ti, resistivity survey

Current Professional Memberships

Society for American Archaeology

Conference on Michigan Archaeology

Midwest Archaeological Conference

International Association of Caribbean Archaeology

Midwest Historical Archaeology Conference

Society for Historical Archaeology

Ontario Archaeological Society

References

Available Upon Request