Presenting a paper or research project at a major, international conference can be a daunting task. Not only does a well-planned and articulate presentation help legitimize your research, it can also provide a good beginning for creating important connections that may one day lead to amazing opportunities. If you are planning on attending the 2014 (or 2015) Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, or any other large conference, it is never too soon to start preparing for your presentation! Take a few simple steps to reduce your presentation-related stress:

1) **Baby steps.** If public speaking makes you nervous, try presenting a poster on your research. Designing a poster can take a little time, but poster sessions are less formal and will allow you to talk to people as individuals or as small groups.

2) **Start local.** Looking to get some good feedback from professionals without introducing yourself to an international audience? Present your paper at smaller local or regional conferences. These conferences tend to be popular with other students, too, and can be more comfortable for first-time presenters!
STUDENT PROJECTS:

WHERE LAND AND RIVER MEET:
THE ARCHAELOGY OF A RECONSTRUCTION-ERA FLORIDA SAWMILL

Nestled on a bluff of the Escambia River in Molino, Florida, the remains of the once-thriving Molino Mills lie strewn over the landscape, on land and underwater. The uniqueness of the archaeological landscape required investigators to examine a cultural resource typically associated with the terrestrial landscape with an additional maritime lens. The result was a unique research project that crossed traditional boundaries between terrestrial and underwater archaeology.

When the University of West Florida began its investigation into Molino Mills in 2011, virtually nothing was known about the mill, including its name. Archival research revealed that Molino Mills was a Reconstruction-era, steam-powered sawmill constructed along the Escambia River in 1866 by a group of wealthy Northern entrepreneurs. The mill grew, eventually becoming one of the largest sawmills in the West Florida lumber industry, changed hands a number of times, and prospered for many years until it burned to the ground in 1885.

Territorial excavation at the mill site helped to pinpoint its exact location on the landscape; however, early on in UWF’s investigation, it became apparent that Molino Mills did not cease at the water’s edge. In order to locate any submerged remains, a marine remote sensing survey using a magnetometer was completed. Additionally, students from UWF’s Combined Terrestrial and Maritime Field School conducted a pedestrian survey of the shallow water surrounding the mill. These two surveys and subsequent diver investigations identified previously unknown submerged structures, including a trench/sluiceway, a dock, and a line of pilings that would have formed a mill pond in which to keep logs before they entered the trench/sluiceway.

One major goal for this project was to take a traditionally terrestrial archaeological site and integrate a more holistic investigation that also included submerged components. This kind of investigation into Molino Mills was extremely fruitful, revealing the full landscape of a site that was critical to the economic development of West Florida after the Civil War. If anything can be taken away from this project, it is that acquiring the best understanding of the past should not be limited by the boundaries of “land” and “water.”

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Prepared for the 2014 Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology

3) Make it a party. Get together with other students going to the conference (or even those who aren’t) to set up practice presentation sessions. This is a great way to get much-needed critical feedback from peers without cause for undue stress and to make sure your presentation doesn’t go over the time limit!

4) Know your material. While this seems obvious, knowing the material you are presenting will make you much more comfortable talking in front of an audience. By the time you have practiced your presentation fifty times, you will no longer need to rely solely on the text in your slides or notes!

For students of maritime history and archaeology, the ACUA has a great deal to offer to those attending the upcoming SHA conference. If you are looking for travel support and are presenting a paper at the SHA conference in 2014, the ACUA offers the George Fischer Travel Award to one international student to defray the costs of attending the conference (see page 4 for more information and how to apply). Also, be sure to sit in on the Student Subcommittee of the APTC and the ACUA Student Council panel entitled “Reaching Out: Public Archaeology for Students and New Graduates.”

If you have any questions regarding the upcoming conference, feel free to contact us at grad-rep@acuaonline.org!
While paper publications are perhaps still seen as the ideal medium in the "publish or perish" world, more and more alternative options are becoming available, not the least of which is digital publishing. In the field of maritime archaeology, one of the leading websites for presenting student research is the online Museum of Underwater Archaeology (MUA; www.themua.org). The MUA's mission is to assist and promote the use of the internet by ethical professional, student, and avocational underwater archaeologists.

The MUA has several different standard ways of presenting projects. The most complex of these are exhibits, similar to brick-and-mortar museums with several thematic galleries showcasing the artifacts and information relating to the project. There are also project journals, which are presented in real time and trace the development and progress of a particular project. The "In the Field" section of the website provides researchers an opportunity to post a brief introduction to their project and usually equates to one or two pages of text and several photographs. The MUA also has a posters section with zoom-able online poster presentations such as one might see at conferences. In general, the text of each of these pages is written by the researchers themselves, while the MUA assists in web design and promotion.

Though many individuals and organizations today create individual Facebook or blog pages to introduce a project, the MUA has the advantage of being a central location with an established and growing readership. Instead of beginning to promote a project from scratch, students can take advantage of the already-present MUA audience to showcase their work. Past projects continue to be highlighted through tools such as the MUA-created educational kits and learning paths, thematic series of questions to help educators introduce maritime archaeology to schoolchildren.

I have been volunteering as the Exhibits Editor for the MUA since 2004, but I am also a student who has taken advantage of the many different ways in which the MUA presents student research. Several universities, including my alma mater East Carolina University, have created student-written project journals during and after a field school. This allows the students to describe their projects to a wide audience, giving us valuable experience in writing for a public readership as well as for our colleagues and professors. I have also done an individual project journal that chronicled my Master’s thesis research. This, especially, was a fantastic way to highlight my personal research and to cast a wide net for answers to questions on obscure topics or get suggestions for additional research venues. The MUA project journal further opened doors for me in my Master’s research that later led to additional helpful connections during my doctoral research in Japan. At the time of this writing, over eight thousand people have viewed my project journal – a number that likely exceeds the readership of most specialized print journals. Years after finishing my thesis and graduating from ECU, I still have people approach me at conferences saying that they read my work on the MUA. I firmly believe that exposure through the MUA greatly facilitated my research process, as well as promoted my own research to a worldwide audience.

Particularly, as academia grows to accept non-traditional forms of publishing, such as online posts, as “real” publications, being able to promote our work through venues such as the MUA is a wonderful opportunity. The MUA welcomes student publications and encourages any student with an interest in promoting their work online to contact them for more information at: research@themua.org.

Submitted by Michelle Damian, Exhibits Editor, The MUA, and PhD Candidate, University of Southern California

NEW PERSPECTIVES:

Sample image from former Texas A&M student Ben Ford’s PhD research project journal entry.

WORLDWIDE CONNECTIONS via THE MUSEUM OF UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY

SOME STUDENT MUA PAGES

Exhibit:
East Carolina University’s Shipwrecks in Bermuda
http://www.themua.org/exhibit_ecu/

Project Journal:
University of West Florida Maritime Field School
http://www.uri.edu/artsci/his/mua/project_journals/wf/wf_intro.shtml

In The Field:
The Joy Parks
(Mark Opdyke, Flinders University)
http://www.uri.edu/artsci/his/mua/in_the_field/skipjack.html

Posters:
University of Rhode Island and St. Mary’s College of California, Bermuda Field School
http://www.uri.edu/artsci/his/mua/posters/URLSM/poster.html
2014 ACUA George Fischer Student Travel Award

The Advisory Council on Underwater Archaeology is pleased to announce the 2014 ACUA George Fischer Student Travel Award. This award of $1,000.00 (USD) will be offered to help fund travel costs for the upcoming 2014 SHA Conference in Québec City, Canada, and will be granted to an international student presenting a paper on an underwater or maritime archaeology topic. Submissions will be judged on academic merit and relevance to the field of underwater and maritime archaeology. All application materials must be sent to the ACUA at info@acuaonline.org by 10 September 2013. If you missed the deadline for the 2014 conference, don’t worry! The ACUA offers the George Fischer Student Travel Award each year.

To be eligible for consideration, students interested in applying for this award must currently be enrolled, and in good academic standing, in a graduate degree program (includes full-time, part-time, or thesis/dissertation hours only). Preference is given to international students. International students are considered to be those students residing or studying in a country other than the country where the conference is being held.

To apply for this award you must submit the following:

1. Curriculum vitae
2. Short covering letter
3. A short essay on the subject to be presented at SHA; 1,000 words maximum

INTERVIEW WITH AN ACUA BOARD MEMBER:
DAVE BALL, BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT (BOEM)

HOW DO YOU FEEL THE ACUA HELPS STUDENTS WITH THEIR CAREER GOALS?

The ACUA is always looking for opportunities to help students advance their career goals. The annual Conference Proceedings series is a good example. The Conference Proceedings series provides students with a great way to publish the research they present at the annual SHA conference. In many cases, this is where a student’s first professional publication often appears.

HOW CAN STUDENTS GET INVOLVED WITH THE ACUA AS WELL AS IN THEIR FIELD?

One way for students to get involved with ACUA, and SHA for that matter, is to attend the annual conference! This is really the best opportunity for students to network with professional archaeologists and other students from around the world, learn of fieldwork and job opportunities, and get their name out there! And don’t just show up at the conference, but make sure you attend a few of the receptions as well. The ACUA Board always makes a point of attending the Past Presidents’ Student Reception, which is a great opportunity for students to introduce themselves and ask questions.

ACUA STUDENT

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY
STUDENT NEWSLETTER

Compiled by ACUA Board Graduate Student Representatives
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For any comments, questions, or suggestions, please contact:
Jennifer Jones and Nicole Bucchino at grad-rep@acuaonline.org
Visit www.acuaonline.org for more news and information