A number of organizations exist around the world that assist students in preparing for careers in underwater and maritime archaeology, whether through training programs, internships, publication, or research assistance. The next few editions of *ACUA Student* will focus on some of these organizations and how they work with students. The first featured organization, the Nautical Archaeology Society (NAS), is a charity based in Portsmouth, UK. NAS employs three underwater archaeologists and is most well known for its peer reviewed journal, the *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology (IJNA)* published since 1972, and for its international training program taught since 1986.

As of 2010, NAS has offered students of archaeology free access to the complete collection of the *IJNA* online for a period of 12 months to assist them in their studies.

Additionally, the NAS training program is taught within several universities around the world, including the University of Southampton in the United Kingdom and East Carolina University, Texas State University, and Michigan University in the United States.

NAS courses around the world need to be taught by knowledgeable individuals who...
East Carolina University has long emphasized field training in its graduate Maritime Studies Program. Students quickly realize that archaeological fieldwork underwater requires a different skillset than what is practiced in the classroom, on land, or even in pool training. While many ECU graduates enter the profession certified as AAUS Scientific Divers with training in relatively shallow sites, this spring, five graduate students had the opportunity to develop skills in diving the deep, dark, and scary.

Led by ECU Dive Safety Officer Jason Nunn, underwater archaeology graduate students Ryan Bradley, Kara Fox, Greg Stratton, Jeneva Wright, and Caitlin Zant became technical divers after a semester of coursework. We gained certifications in advanced nitrox, decompression procedures, and trimix diving, allowing us to work on sites longer, and much deeper, than the average scientific diver. This training opened possibilities for deeper field projects, such as Kara Fox’s research mapping a World War II shipwreck at 90 feet, as well improved training in buoyancy, wreck penetration, and composure skills.

The first step was gaining familiarity with new equipment. We began working with double steel tanks, learning how to quickly identify issues and problem-solve. We discovered how to maneuver with a massive increase in weight and gear and, as soon as we became competent on land, began adjusting how we moved underwater. The principles of excellent buoyancy and motion control while diving, especially for archaeologists, are even more essential in technical diving. Once we stopped floundering, we began to task load, manipulating slates, lift bags, and stage bottles while maintaining perfect buoyancy. We also studied the physics and planning required by deep diving, which involves a significantly slimmer margin of error than your average open water dive. The result was a greater understanding of the science behind diving principles, and the ability to proficiently manage gas mixes, decompression schedules, and the development and execution of contingency plans.

Finally, we were ready for our checkout dives. Over seven days in Key Largo, Florida, we completed ten dives on four different shipwrecks, with depths ranging from 100-190 feet. The dives included challenges in correctly identifying and addressing issues or threats, maintaining composure with the loss of equipment or air, and beginning to learn wreck penetration. The ability to examine massive propellers, boilers still holding coal, and galleys with oven doors and countertops in place, at depths exceeding 130 feet, was an incredible thrill for budding underwater archaeologists.

—Submitted by Jeneva Wright

We gained certifications...allowing us to work on sites longer, and much deeper, than the average scientific diver.
I have numerous colleagues in academia who do an outstanding job producing quality students, but I believe that the old model of trying to make more academics is not realistic or sustainable for the field at large — particularly in light of where I see the jobs in the field right now. I don’t think that working for a company like Tesla Offshore or an organization like NOAA is, as some of my academic colleagues seem to feel, a second place consolation prize for those who couldn’t make it into academia.

I guess I would argue for a balance of both practical skills and theoretical background for the application of those skills. Also, I think it is important for people just entering the field to take a minute in whatever position they find themselves to try and see what is going on before speaking up about how “…we did this back in grad school.”

Most well run projects and organizations have a rationale for doing things the way they do them that comes out of experience and the particular circumstances in which they work. While new approaches and new ideas are always welcome, coming out of the chutes with a bunch of ideas that may or may not apply, particularly from an academic background in a non-academic setting, is a recipe for short-term employment.

How important is field experience (terrestrial or underwater) to finding employment in underwater archaeology?

If you are getting paid to do underwater archaeology, you need to have a skill that is worth something to the project or organization that is hiring you. So, field experience (for a field job) is absolutely vital. Certainly prospective employers don’t expect new graduates to be able to do everything well, but you should have some solid skills that you can bank on. In terms of terrestrial vs. underwater archaeology, I do believe that underwater experience is important for underwater jobs. As an employer, I strongly disagree with the old school notion that diving skills are not important for underwater archaeology — you can’t collect good data while you are busy trying not to drown and, as the field professionalizes, the consequences of accidents (fatal or otherwise) is becoming more and more serious for the institutions and organizations most of us work for. The notion that you can have an Open Water I dive certification with 25 years in the field needs to go away.

Since there are so few undergraduate and graduate programs dedicated specifically to underwater archaeology, do you have any advice for students interested in pursuing underwater archaeology from colleges or universities that do not offer full programs?

I came through a program, at Brown University, that didn’t have very deep roots in the larger field of maritime archaeology. I chose Brown because I wanted to work with a particular professor, Richard Gould, who was pursuing an anthropological approach to underwater archaeology that I found particularly stimulating. But, I hustled in the summer to find projects outside of Brown that gave me practical experiences that I could build on. If you are going to work outside of the mainstream of maritime archaeology, and this isn’t necessarily a bad idea, you will have to work harder to get into/onto fieldwork projects and into the networks that will help you later in your career.

Do you think job opportunities in underwater archaeology will increase or decrease in the future?

I believe that the field will grow in the future as it becomes more professional and as legislation and regulations establish parity between underwater archaeology and terrestrial archaeology. On the academic side, many intriguing questions and themes, such as the study of global slavery, or alternative communities aboard ships are emerging as deeply productive veins of scholarship and future research.

Dave Conlin is the Chief of the National Park Service’s Submerged Resources Center. The opinions presented above are his and his alone and do not represent any position, official or otherwise, of the National Park Service.
The 2014 SHA Annual Conference in Québec City saw the recognition of several student awardees in outstanding contributions to both paper and photo competitions. The ACUA George Fischer Student Travel Award was given to Amelia J. Astley (University of Southampton) for her jointly authored conference paper with Justin Dix, Fraser Stuart, and Charlotte Thompson: “The Taphonomy of Heritage Shipwreck Sites: Implications for Heritage Management.”

ACUA’s 15th Annual Photo Competition also awarded prizes in five categories. Awards went to both students and non-students:

**Color Archaeological Site**
- 1st Place: “Navagio” by Alexis Catsambis
- 2nd Place: “Emily Japanese Flying Propeller in 3D” by CNMI
- 3rd Place: “Untitled” by Pares Canada

**Color Archaeological Fieldwork**
- 1st Place: “Emily Japanese Flying Boat Turret” by CNMI
- 2nd Place: “Manselling Cores” by Katelyn Hillmeyer
- 3rd Place: “Deploying the Sonar” by Pares Canada

**Color Artifact**
- 1st Place: “Archifact or Archival Wreck” by Bernard Allaire

**Black and White Artifact**
- 1st Place: “Promontorium Sacrum” by Alexis Catsambis
- 2nd Place: “Seeds of the Past” by Katelyn Hillmeyer

**Color Portrait**
- 1st Place: “Alexis at the Waterscreens” by Katelyn Hillmeyer
- 2nd Place: “Learning the Ropes Underwater, Yatlit Ram, Isreal” by Jonathon Benjamin

Don’t forget that you can get your own copy of these photos each year in the ACUA Calendar!

### SHA AWARDS TO STUDENTS

The 13th Annual SHA Student Paper Prize, which goes to a student, or students whose written conference paper is judged superior in the areas of originality, research merit, clarity of presentation, and professionalism, and of potential relevance to a considerable segment of the archaeological community, went to Heather Walder, University of Wisconsin-Madison for “Small Beads, Big Picture: Patterns of Interaction Identified through Chemical Analysis of Blue Glass Artifacts from the Upper Great Lakes Region.”

The Ed and Judy Jelks Student Travel Awards were given to both David Markus (University of Florida) for “Swinging Fowl in the Name of the Lord: Jewish Ritual Sacrifice on the Arkansas Frontier” and Heather Walder (University of Wisconsin-Madison) for “Small Beads, Big Picture: Patterns of Interaction Identified through Chemical Analysis of Blue Glass Artifacts from the Upper Great Lakes Region.”

### GMAC AWARDS TO STUDENTS

An inaugural award in 2014, the Gender and Minority Affairs (GMAC) Diversity Field School Competition, which recognizes fields schools in historical archaeology that foster diversity in research objectives, perspectives, and participation, awarded 1st place to Annalise E. Morris (University of California, Berkeley) for “The Historical Archaeology of Lawrence County Project Field School Collaborative Public Archaeology In Lawrence County, Illinois” Second place was awarded to Jamie Arjona, Tatiana Niculescu, and Christopher Fennell (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for “Edgefield, South Carolina Pottery Communities Field School—The Pottersville Site, Edgefield County, South Carolina.

GMAC also held the inaugural Diversity Photo Competition, which recognizes photos that display how historical archaeology can embrace diversity and advances concepts of diversity within the profession, field, and society. First place was awarded to Katelyn Hillmeyer (Western Michigan University.

GMAC travel awards were also given to Justin Dunnavant, University of Florida and Russell Palmer, University of Ghent, Belgium.