

**By Beth Lefebvre**

## **THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY SELECTS FIVE STUDENTS FOR FELLOWSHIP TO DIG AT MEGIDDO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE**

Five George Washington University students will receive a fellowship to study past civilizations this summer at the Megiddo archaeological excavation site near Haifa, Israel. GW's Columbian College of Arts and Sciences announced the 2008 fellowships of \$1,000 each, from The William Warren Endowment Fund for Fellowships in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, which can be used to cover airfare, room and board, and/or tuition expenses during the Megiddo excavation.

Megiddo is one of the world's richest archaeological sites: It appears in the Bible as Armageddon, with remains of 30 cities layered one on top of the other, and was the scene of many battles that decided the fate of nations and empires for more than 6,000 years. For students, it offers a chance to dig in the trenches at a site that has been excavated for more than 100 years, unraveling mysteries of the Bronze and Iron ages in Israel.

GW joined the excavation project in 2000, and the university first brought students to work at the 20-acre site in 2004. This summer's dig will extend from June 15-July 31, and will include 37 GW students and alumni, out of a total of approximately 100 volunteers from around the world who will be working at the site.



Monumental temple at Megiddo.

### **2008 FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS:**

**Kristine Merriman**, Senior, Archaeology, Chemistry and Classical Humanities, Augusta, Ga.

**Kelly Overvold**, Sophomore, Archaeology, Savannah, Ga.

**Zach Dunseth**, Junior, Archaeology and Classical Humanities, Bangkok, Thailand

**Natalie Mueller**, Junior, Archaeology and International Affairs, Rochester, N.Y.

**Rachel Navarro**, Junior, Archaeology, Lee's Summit, Mo.

"It's encouraging that we had such a talented pool of students to choose from, and such a difficult decision to make," said Bill Warren. "I wish we had the resources to benefit all of the students through this hands-on experience."

The students will be led by Professor Eric Cline, the chair of the Department of Classical & Semitic Languages & Literature at GW and associate director (USA) of The Megiddo Expedition, based at Tel Aviv University.



Cline

“There’s the classroom, and then there’s Megiddo, where you literally encounter the archaeological experience of mystery, history and getting your hands dirty in the discipline. You cannot replicate that brush with ancient history,” Cline said. “I keep coming back, year after year, because there’s nothing else like it in the world.”

The fellowship recipients have their own unique reasons for wanting to excavate at Megiddo, but for each student, the trip fulfills an academic and career goal.

“I’m hoping not only to get great experience in field techniques, but also to gain insights into the cultural and political situation in the Israeli and Palestinian area,” said Natalie Mueller. “This trip is really a dream come true for me.”

“Megiddo is an extraordinarily fascinating site. I couldn’t ask for a better opportunity,” said Kelly Overvold.

For many students, this is their first chance to take part in an excavation, and while their passions for archaeology already run high, digging in Megiddo’s significant, ancient remains will help cultivate life-long research and scholarship.

“Fieldwork is the highlight of an archaeologist’s life, and it’s something I haven’t experienced,” said Rachel Navarro. “Megiddo is one of the most famous sites in the world. To be part of that – meeting other archaeologists from all over the world and learning about different viewpoints on the major issues in archaeology – is something I will never forget.”

“Megiddo will be my first solid taste of physical archaeology,” said Zach Dunseth. “Enough of the theory; I’m ready to dig.”

**For more information about the Columbian College, visit [www.gwu.edu/~ccas](http://www.gwu.edu/~ccas).**

**For more information about the Department of Classical and Semitic Languages and Literatures, visit [www.gwu.edu/~cssl/](http://www.gwu.edu/~cssl/).**

**For more information about the Anthropology Department, visit [www.gwu.edu/~anth/](http://www.gwu.edu/~anth/).**

**For more information about The Megiddo Expedition, visit <http://megiddo.tau.ac.il/>.**

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