

17th Annual Archaeology Discovery Weekend

Nov 15–16, 2025

Alexander the Great & How He Changed the World

In-person & Online
Find out more at:

lasierra.edu/archaeology

Image: Alexander Mosaic, Pompeii (Adobe Stock)

In Memoriam — Audrey Shaffer (1929-2025)

We proudly dedicate this Archaeology Discovery Weekend to Audrey Shaffer, whose years of archaeological service to and through CNEA in the lab and in the field shaped dozens of lives and has left a legacy of professionalism and collaboration emboldened by friendship and purpose that will forever be a part of all we do.



CENTER FOR
NEAR EASTERN
ARCHAEOLOGY
LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY

THE PROGRAM

2025 Archaeology Discovery Weekend

PRESENTERS (alphabetically listed)



Dr. Andrea M. Berlin, James R. Wiseman Chair at Boston University, is a renowned archaeologist and scholar of the ancient Near East. With 40+ years of fieldwork in the eastern Mediterranean, she most recently co-directed excavations at Tel Kedesh for over ten seasons. A former Fulbright Scholar, teacher, lecturer, and author, she has written extensively on life from the time of Alexander the Great to the Roman era.

Dr. Kent Bramlett is Professor of Archaeology and the History of Antiquity, Chair of the Department of Biblical Studies and Archaeology, and Director and Curator of CNEA at La Sierra University. He co-directs the Balu'a Regional Archaeological Project in Jordan, specializing in the Iron Age and especially the Late Bronze Age-Early Iron Age I transitional period.



Dr. Cynthia Finlayson is the only female Near Eastern archaeologist to direct major excavations at two UNESCO World Heritage sites—Palmyra (Syria) and Petra (Jordan). With 44+ years of experience, she now directs LAPIS: Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Foundation, including the Ad-Deir Plateau. Her expertise includes the Hellenistic, Roman, and Islamic eras in the Levant, especially Petra and Palmyra.

Dr. Rachel Kousser is Chair of the Classics Program at the Graduate Center, City University of New York and a professor of ancient art and archaeology at Brooklyn College. She writes and teaches about Alexander the Great, destruction of monuments in ancient Greece, and representation of gender and power in the Mediterranean world. She has received fellowships from NEH, the Getty Research Institute, and the Center for the Advanced study of the Visual Arts.



Dr. Jessica Nitschke is Editor of The Ancient Near East Today and a Research Fellow at Stellenbosch University (South Africa). She received her PhD in Ancient History and Mediterranean Archaeology from the University of California, Berkeley, and has excavated in Israel, Egypt, Greece, and Italy. She is currently working on a monograph on the Alexander Sarcophagus.

Theresa Shaw, JD, has volunteered with CNEA for more than 12 years researching and registering thousands of ancient artifacts. In 2019 she began working with the coins in CNEA's donated collections and became enamored with numismatic studies. She and her husband also enjoy traveling to archaeological sites and museums around the world.



2025 Archaeology Discovery Weekend PROGRAM

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15

3:00-6:00 PM (PST) — Illustrated Presentations w/ Q&A @ Zapara School of Business	
WELCOME to La Sierra University and Archaeology Discovery Weekend	3:00-3:05
La Sierra University President, Christon Arthur	
WELCOME to CNEA and the 17 th Annual Archaeology Discovery Weekend	3:05-3:10
Center for Near Eastern Archaeology Director, Kent Bramlett	
PRESENTATIONS	
Larry Geraty, Presiding	
<i>Alexander and the Great Cultural Exchange</i>	3:10-3:50
Kent Bramlett	
<i>The Alexander Effect: An Archaeology of Celebrity</i>	3:50-4:30
Andrea Berlin	
BREAK for refreshments	4:30-4:45
<i>Alexander's Legacy in Art: A Closer Look at the Alexander Sarcophagus of Sidon</i>	4:45-5:25
Jessica Nitschke	
PANEL DISCUSSION on Saturday Presentations	5:25-6:00
Presenters	
SPECIAL RECEPTION: <i>Alexander: Conqueror of Conquerors</i> — ZSB Atrium	6:00-7:30
(In collaboration with the Art Department - with special guests from Madaba)	

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16

1:00-4:00 PM (PST) — Illustrated Presentations w/ Q&A @ Zapara School of Business	
WELCOME	
La Sierra University Interim Provost, Leslie Martin	1:00-1:05
PRESENTATIONS	
Friedbert Ninow, Presiding	
<i>Living Like a Persian King: How Alexander Transformed Everyday Life</i>	1:05-1:50
Rachel Kousser	
<i>Alexander's Legacy and Cult: The Sibylline Oracle and the Quest for the Ideal Hellenistic Ruler</i>	1:50-2:30
Cynthia Finlayson	
BREAK for refreshments	2:30-2:45
<i>The Significance of Alexander's Coinage in His Quest for Hegemony</i>	2:45-3:25
Theresa Shaw	
PANEL DISCUSSION on Sunday Presentations	3:25-4:00
Presenters	

ALSO ON SUNDAY @ CNEA

Kids Dig @ CNEA	2:00-4:00 PM
Bedouin Tent with refreshments & Jordanian meet-and-greet	4:00-6:00 PM
Lab activities (including making mosaics) & exhibits @ CNEA	4:00-6:00 PM



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2025 Archaeology Discovery Weekend

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

- CNEA Founding Members and Supporters
- La Sierra University President and Interim Provost
- La Sierra University Director of Public Relations, Darla Martin Tucker
- All Presenters, Respondents, and Specialists contributing to Archaeology Discovery Weekend 2025
- Sponsor of the 2025 Archaeology Discovery Weekend — Versacare Foundation
- Co-sponsors of the 2025 Archaeology Discovery Weekend (see listing below)
- The CNEA Archaeology Planning Committee and Advisory Council
- Event Coordinators: Raúl Zanatta, Dawn Acevedo, Douglas Clark, Lovelyn Razzouk, Suha Huffaker, Carolyn Waldron
- Additional CNEA staff, students, and volunteers
- Kids Dig coordinators: Craig Lesh and Kaitlyn Satelmayer
- Event IT Providers and Support Team: Kevin Speyer and the campus IT Department
- La Sierra University Advancement and Marketing, Physical Plant, Custodial, and Security departments
- Special guest participants from Madaba, Jordan
- All attendees who joined us in-person or online to be part of this year's conference!

OTHER ACTIVITIES connected to the Center for Near Eastern Archaeology 2025-2026

[Visit the Center for Near Eastern Archaeology website — www.lasierra.edu/archaeology]

- Lectures (Winter Lecture in February and Homecoming Lecture in April)
- Archaeology Adventures for elementary and middle school students
- Archaeology undergraduate major and minor
- MA degree in Near Eastern Archaeology
- Volunteering in the Collections Lab
- Khirbat Ataruz, Jordan excavations
- Khirbat al-Balu'a, Jordan excavations
- Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum Project
- Archaeology Discovery Weekend: 14-15 Nov 2026

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- *Join us on Giving Day* – Wed. 10 December 2025 at www.lasierra.edu/givingday
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Background image: *Alexander Sarcophagus* (Adobe Stock)



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