Work opportunities in Alaska

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Work Opportunities in Alaska

• Introduction to ourselves
• Work and Training Opportunities in the state
  • Work, Work, Work, Work, Work, Work
  • The Alaskan Hiring Cycle
  • What employers are looking for
  • Where to look
• Volunteer/Internship Opportunities
• Field Schools
• Learn from our mistakes (and occasional successes)
Introductions to ourselves

• I’m Joshua Lynch!

• I’ve worked in archaeology in Alaska for more than 10 years
  • As grad student working in academic archaeology and associated field schools
  • As a hybrid seasonal worker on research projects and in Cultural Resource Management in interior Alaska
  • As a full-time archaeologist with the Center for the Environmental Management of Military Lands, CSU
  • As Assistant professor at Arkansas Tech University
Introductions to ourselves cont.

- I’m Sam Coffman!
- I’ve been practicing archaeology in Alaska for more than 15 years
  - I have worked as an undergrad student working in academic archaeology and associated field schools
  - As a seasonal worker on research projects for Federal Agencies and local governments
  - Currently as a full-time researcher and archaeologist with the UA Museum of the North
Types of Anthropological Work in Alaska

Can lead to full-time work

Looking for volunteers or leading field schools

Leads to seasonal or full-time work

Volunteering/Interning Field Schools

Seasonal Work

Careers/Full-time Work

Can lead to full-time work
The Alaskan Hiring Cycle

• We reached out to several the largest employers in the state and one of the major points of agreement was that if you are looking for summer field work in May, you are probably already too late!

• Companies want to fill positions early with employees they can count on to commit!

• On-boarding and training often takes place before it even possible to jump into fieldwork, so be prepared!
Field Schools

- COVID-19 has changed things!
- UAF is offering a 2021 fieldschool
- Other universities that usually offer field schools include:
  - University of Alaska Anchorage
  - Adelphi University
  - Texas A&M University
  - Paris 1 University / Nanterre University
- Make sure credits TRANSFER to your home university!
- Look into Financial Aid/Grants to attend - help reduce costs
- Use Professional Organizations or people in your own Dept. to ask questions about field schools
- Ask Questions and be your own advocate!
Volunteer/Internship Opportunities

Alaska Office of History and Archaeology

Forest Service - Passport in Time

Bureau of Land Management (BLM): www.volunteer.gov OR contact local office

National Association for the Practice of Anthropology: https://www.practicinganthropology.org/discover/volunteer/

Museums Alaska

Voluntouring.org/tag/anthropology

National Park Service

Job Fair Tomorrow!!
Types of Work Available in Alaska – Seasonal Field Technicians

• The most hired positions across the spectrum are seasonal field technicians employed to conduct archaeological surveys, site evaluations, and excavations
  • Often filled by those with BA degrees and a field school or other field methods training
  • Technicians are generally hired for 3-4 months during the field season and are expected to work full time (and often more) schedules that can be highly irregular
    • Some seasonal technician positions are suitable for daily commuting, but many require extended periods of remote work
    • Employees are often expected to provide their own accommodations between projects which can present logistical challenges
Where to look for Seasonal or Full time work in Alaska?

• Cultural Resource Management and Government Agency employers advertise positions in many of the same places!
  • Keep your eye on employment websites in the early spring:
    • Usajobs.gov
    • Shovelbums.org
    • Indeed.com
    • Local CRM firms
    • Native Corporations

• Go to the sources! Seek out agencies and companies you would like to work with and make inquiries!
  • For example: Cemml.colostate.edu

• Watch for announcements disseminated through your department or posted online through REGIONAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATIONS (wink, wink)
  • Access to this information is a perk of membership – use it!
Lessons Learned

- Flexibility is key – getting your foot in the door is half the battle and sometimes those experiences take some work around

- Lean into Professionalism from Day 1

- In transitioning from seasonal to full time work – apply for everything
  - Put in dozens of applications in the year leading up gradation to only get two interviews
Lessons Learned Cont.

• Being flexible is key – there are so many “what if’s” and variables in Alaska
  • A matter of choice - if you can pick projects that feed you and/or are gone for long durations.

• Use your professional contacts and reach out to people.
  • Word of mouth goes a long way
  • Advocate for yourself

• The rewards are worth it!
Thank you!

Questions, Comments?