

**Yale**

**Center for International and Professional Experience**

**First Name Last Name**

**Trumbull College Class of 2022**

**ABC Scholars**

**Antiparos, Greece. Despotiko, Greece. Paros, Greece. Athens, Greece.**

**ARCX 221: Evacuating the Aegean: The Despokito Field School**

**Summer 2019**

Near the end of May, I found myself on the longest flight of my life, crossing the Atlantic for the first time. For the next three weeks, I stayed with my twelve other classmates at Zombos Taverna. For those three weeks, my day would look like the following. Waking up around six in the morning, I would go for a run on the dirt roads by the taverna, eat with my roommates, and walk with my class down to the dock carrying containers of water for washing pottery, sun protection, and journals. My class, along with a team of archeologists, grad students, and geologists, would take a small boat to the uninhabited island of Despotiko where we would work on the excavation site of a 7th century BC sanctuary to Apollo. Under the supervision of my professor, Alexandra Alexandridou, I would dig with two other students, working on a single layer at a time. After arriving back on Antiparos, we were given the afternoon to share lunch and wander to the beach, as long as everyone was back in time for class in the evening.

We learned how to keep a trench diary for each day, documenting every find, change in soil, and architectural feature that was uncovered. Over the course of three weeks, many pottery sherds, bones, loom weights, and roof tiles were recovered. After the pottery was given a preliminary washing at the site, it was transported to the archeological museum on the larger island of Paros. During the fourth week of the course, the class moved to Paros and continued in the museum, working with pottery sherds recovered from the excavation at Despotiko. That week was spent working hours in museum store rooms, rewashing pottery, sorting, photographing, drawing, and cataloguing.

My time working at Despotiko inspired me to pursue archeological studies back at Yale. I fell in love with the feel of ancient soil beneath my hands and the enormous amount of history in even the smallest of pottery sherds. It is still amazing to me that the Corinthian vase that I held in my hands after unburying it was held by other hands over two thousand years ago. On the weekends, it was possible to travel to other islands in the Cyclades in close proximity to Paros and Antiparos. One of my favorite experiences was when a portion of my class attempted to visit the temple to Demeter on Naxos. After following the instructions of a single sign and the woman working the ticket counter for the public bus, we found ourselves hiking for over an hour on a dirt road, going through pastures, completely lost. However, we were able to find a farmer who offered us a ride and allowed the nine of us to sit in the bed of his pickup truck. Soon, after completely retracing our steps, we were at the ancient temple which sits in the center of a farming valley.

Thanks to the generosity of the ISA, I was able to have an experience in a foreign country that changed the course of my life.

 