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Simple things you can do to promote the public benefits of archeology

Archaeologists have a special responsibility to promote the public benefits that can be derived from the practice of archaeology and the appropriate investigation of archaeological resources.

A variety of other groups, some with very different and quite destructive perspectives on archeological resources, busily pursue different agendas for use of the archaeological record.

If archaeologists do not act to counter these, who will? This brochure provides a wealth of suggestions about what you can do to be and advocate for archaeology.

Spread the word enthusiastically

1 Include public outreach in all of your projects. Provide tours. **Develop** or **contribute** to an Internet page.

2 Hone your writing skills and use them. Write letters to the editors of your local newspaper. Learn to write for specific audiences. Above all, avoid jargon!

3 Talk about the values of archaeology, historic places and preservation and highlight local archaeological activities. Practice the effective “sound bite.”

- 4 Cooperate with the media and build contacts with history and science writers and broadcasters.

Get the most out of the National Register of Historic Places

- 5 Nominate sites and multiple properties to the **National Register of Historic Places**.

- 6 Use state and local registers as well to honor and document important sites.

- 7 **Request and Author's Packet** from the **National Register of Historic Places** and write a Teaching with Historic Places lesson plan.

Get on the tourism train

- 8 Contact state travel offices and local **convention and visitor bureaus** with accurate, interesting information on **archaeological travel destinations**.

Improve undergraduate and graduate education

9 PROFESSORS: Include discussion of public archaeology in all of your courses: business, legal and ethical issues, and the responsibility to communicate with the public about archaeology. Ensure that students learn that archaeological sites are found in the communities, not only in exotic locales.

10 Educate the administration of your school about the importance of public outreach.

11 STUDENTS: Request courses in public archaeology and methods of public education.

Join up: There is strength in numbers

12 Join the **professional council** and the **avocational society** in your **state**. Keep your dues current, attend meeting, and participate by giving papers or writing for journals.

Provide your insight as a professional, a citizen, and a constituent

13 Know you local, state, and federal legislators and let them know what you think. (The **League of Women Voters** is one source of information.)

14 Learn about issues that impact archaeology, such as **federal land management, resource protection, and historic preservation**. Check out the **Government Affairs** section of **SAA's Web page**.

15 Communicate the business and financial contributions of archaeology to the **Chamber of Commerce in your community**.

Get involved with local communities

16 Contact all local community interest groups about your work. Know local cultures, history and customs.

17 Be sensitive to the traditional knowledge and values of **Native Americans** and other ethnic and **racial minorities**.

18 Speak to local organizations, civic association, and clubs.

Build Bridges

19 Contact and cooperate with other professional to promote a multidisciplinary approach to **Cultural Resource Management**.

20 Talk to developers, civil engineers, and planners and write articles for their professional journals.

21 Initiate and maintain contact with historical societies and local historic preservation commissions.

22 Work with agricultural, environmental, and land trust organizations to promote consideration of cultural resources in open space, or protection through easements or other preservation strategies.

Build a constituency of teachers and students

23 Support and participate in the public education activities of your professional societies.

24 Volunteer to be a resource person for teachers to help get archaeology in the curriculum.

25 Encourage your school system (and particularly your own children's teachers) to subscribe to **SAA's *Archaeology and Public Education*** and to use the **National Park Services' Teaching with Historic Places** series of lesson plans.

For information on the Public Education and Information Committee contact the following address or click here:

Society for Historical Archaeology

PO Box 30446
Tucson, AZ 85751
phone: 520-886-8006
fax: 520-886-0182
email: sha@azstarnet.com

Some other useful Internet sites:

National Association of State Archaeologists

Archaeological Institute of America

Public Benefits of Archaeology

Teachers and students find that archaeology can help teach principles of math, science, geography, and logic as well as history and human diversity.

Community leaders find that archaeology can build community links in the present as well as the past.

Cultural groups find that archaeology can contribute to the preservation of their history and traditions.

Ecologists find that archaeology reveals information on environmental stability and change.

Historians find that archaeology provides both new information to complement the written record and important new questions about our past.

Avocational archaeologists find the opportunity to make a direct contribution to research about the past.

Senior citizens find that their broad range of skills and expertise contribute to archaeological research.

Writer, newspaper reporters, and television producers find that archaeology is educational entertainment that sells.

Tourism councils, museums and parks find that authentic archaeology brings people in and keeps them coming back.

Planners and citizens find that archaeology can contribute to a sustainable community where cultural heritage is valued and nurtured.