Chapel Archaeology CIC

Presentation Summary

Forensic Anthropology Careers Event

For Community Interest

March, 2018

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Forensic Anthropology Careers Event

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Liverpool John Moores University, Forensic Anthropology Careers Event, March 2018

Presentation Summary

Earlier this month, Liverpool John Moores University hosted a Forensic Anthropology Careers Event in order to provide a summary of what is available for current undergraduate and postgraduate students. This evening hosted a number of speakers with various fields of expertise covering the Forensic services, Fingerprint consultants, Forensic pathologists and Crime Scene Investigators from the Merseyside area. Carla Burrell also gave a talk as an Osteologist and Postdoctoral researcher, providing further information for students considering a more academic career.

Carla talked through her volunteering experiences and work-placements she did whilst studying at LJMU and encouraged undergraduate students to do this to help them develop relevant skills and additional experiences to stand out from the crowd. Her experiences included a four week archaeological excavation in Bulgaria and a three week internship with St. Mary's University in Canada. During her time in Canada she had the opportunity to work alongside some of the world's leading experts and assisted with autopsies, forensic bone cases, forensic photography and forensic facial reconstruction. She also did a ten week work-based learning placement as part of her degree at Poulton Chapel. Carla then went on to share how she continued her study at LJMU applying for an MPhil with transfer to PhD and shared her research on the Poulton and Gloucester skeletal collections. She then explained how her research has been presented at events and conferences across the UK and internationally.

Carla really stressed the importance of volunteering and making connections. An important volunteering opportunity for Carla was with Norton Priory. Norton Priory is one of the most excavated monastic sites in Europe. The site includes the ruins of a 12th century Abbey, the standing remains of the 12th century undercroft as well as an 18th century Walled Garden just a stone throw away. The new museum displays thousands of artefacts from Norton's 900 year history. Carla signed up to volunteer on the collections and met with the Senior Keeper to discuss her skills/knowledge and background with human skeletal remains. This led to progression in her research interests where she has been involved in the preparation of osteological reports for Norton and exploring Paget's Disease of Bone in their human skeletal collection as part of her postdoctoral research.

Carla summed up the talk with some top tips including:

Don't be afraid to leave your comfort zone, try something new – you may like it! Carla had some fascinating experiences working on medieval pottery glaze at the University of Liverpool NiCAL laboratory and was trained to use their facilities. This became a useful network for later research.

Check out local museums and archaeological sites. They are often looking for volunteers even if they don't advertise it. Send a polite email and enquire about any volunteering opportunities – including public outreach and engagement!

Network. Attend local conferences and historic day events – often local sites will set up a stall there and it's a fabulous way to make new connections and discover new opportunities.

Enjoy what you do. It's not always a straight path, so stay open minded and positive and good things will come.