

HAS Outreach

July 4, 2012

Girls Incorporated

In our efforts to create an atmosphere conducive to greater public understanding and appreciation of archeology and related fields of science, the HAS participates in programs that focus on enriching the minds of America's future scientists. This year, at the request of Girls Inc. of Greater Houston, the Houston Archeological Society participated in a summer program that was made possible by the National Endowment For The Humanities known as ***Girls Dig It: An Archaeology Program For Girls Ages 12 to 14.***

Girls Dig It introduces young teens between the ages of 12 and 14 to the interdisciplinary field of archeology. Unlike other "soft" science disciplines, archeology incorporates both science and the humanities, utilizing the "tools" of science and the "interpretive" practices of the humanities. This collective approach introduces the girls to disciplines such as "history, art history, anthropology, linguistics, philosophy, folklore and folklife". In addition, the program provides an awareness of the practicum of academic coursework, which is the basic foundation for all fields of science.

The program goals strive to help the girls explore:

- What archeologists do, as well as what areas of study are important and why.
- What kinds of skills, personal characteristics and interests are useful to an archaeologist?
- What, if any, stereotypes exist about archaeologists?
- What are the fundamentals and the vocabulary of archaeology that can be generalized to other sciences (hypothesis, verification, classification, analysis and interpretation)?
- What are the fundamentals and the vocabulary specific to archaeology (stratigraphy, artifact, feature, survey, testing, excavation, mapping, cataloging, lithics, ceramics, etc.)?
- What research ethics means and the vital role it plays in archeology.
- What techniques of historical research are used by archaeologist and what venues of data are available today.
- What it means to be "me", meaning how their own culturally constructed ideas of self and of the environment in which they live in, are shaped by our nonrenewable cultural heritage.



Figure 1: Classroom discussion of archeology and associated sciences with hands on artifact and soil analyses.

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Figure 2: Preparing for field survey.



Figure 3: Girls participating in shovel testing and screening on the grounds of Chinquapin Preparatory School.

"Girls Dig It builds on a solid foundation of Girls Incorporated programming in science and technology education (Operation SMART) as well as on more recently implemented media-based programs, Girls Re-Cast TV, a media literacy program for girls, and GirlsLink, a technology access and Internet outreach program for girls" (Girls Incorporated, 2001).

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For more information on Girls Incorporated please contact the National Headquarters for information on the various programs they offer and regional assistance.

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