



CAMPUS NEWS

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A Mycenaean Master

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When Christofilis Maggidis, assistant professor of classics, joined Dickinson this year, the college took a giant leap toward leading the world in the field of Mycenaean study.

A graduate of the University of Athens in Greece and the University of Pennsylvania, Maggidis brings to Dickinson a knowledge of Mycenaean culture unprecedented in someone his age.

At the tender age of 17, Maggidis was the youngest archaeologist invited on a major Bronze Age dig at Archanes and Crete. Since then, he's had 16 years of field experience in various prehistoric sites.

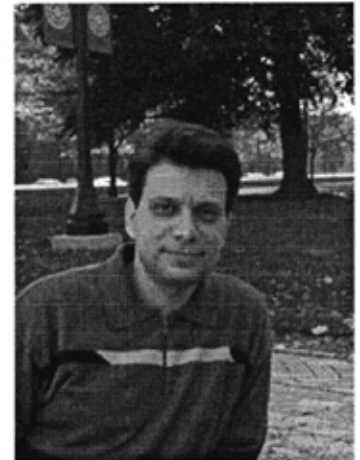
At 30, Maggidis became the youngest member of the Greek Archaeology Society, an organization that counts only 430 professionals among its membership.

Mycenaea, the prehistoric site found near Argos in Greece, became world famous in the late 1800s when Heinrich Schliemann, the father of archaeology, found pure gold treasure at the site's excavation. It is believed that Mycenaea is the leading palace of the Mycenaean world and the home of the Trojan war hero Agamemnon and other Greek figures including Electra, Clytaemnestra and Orestis. An Aegean Bronze Age expert, Maggidis serves as the assistant to the director at Mycenaea. With the notable archaeologist on staff, Maggidis will open up the world of archaeology to students in a new and exciting way. Starting this summer, Maggidis will take Dickinson students to Greece for a dig, museum research and archaeological survey at the famous site. Dickinson already has named the project D.E.P.A.S, or Dickinson's Excavation Project and Archaeological Survey. Depas is the ancient Greek word for the two-handed drinking vessel discovered by Schliemann in the 1800s.

"The students, having been thoroughly prepared at Dickinson both on a theoretical level and practiced field archaeology in the recently established full-sized Simulated Excavation Trench (SEF). They will be called to apply their knowledge in research, survey and excavation — a rare opportunity for any undergraduate— thus contributing to the study of this monumental site, gaining valuable experience and deepening their understanding of the prehistoric Aegean civilization," Maggidis explains. "Living and traveling in Greece, they will expand their knowledge and familiarize themselves with modern Greek culture."

With Maggidis on staff, the Classics Department is looking at expanding the interdisciplinary minor in archaeology into a major field of study. The college is also developing an archaeology lab and Web site devoted to Mycenaean exploration.

"We want to make Dickinson the international center for Mycenaean studies," Leon Fitts, professor and Asbury J. Clarke Chair of classical studies, says. "With Christofilis on board, I think we can do it."


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