Joe D. Seger Grants

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$17,500 Awarded in Archaeological Project Grants

7 grants awarded

Since 2018

2023 Grant Report

Dr. Mara T. Horowitz, Purchase College, SUNY

The Middle Cypriot Hilltop Site at Kalavasos-Laroumena, Cyprus

The Kalavasos area is famous for its rich archaeological record and history of excavation. The K-LAARP project targets the poorly known Middle Cypriot (MC, c.2000-1650BC) period in the valley. Our goal is to study the transition from simple to complex societies on Cyprus that may have originated with prestige competition and communal surplus storage among local families. Laroumena is a clifftop promontory adjacent to a 60-hectare terrace complex above the Vasilikos River with many MC surface finds indicating a large settlement.

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An exciting find is a small black stone ground into a trapezoid, possibly a balance pan weight. A single piece of bronze was also recovered. Ceramic finds date these deposits to the MC.
In future seasons we will work to determine the character and function of these features and how they may relate to the adjacent settlement's social organization and economic basis. We are particularly interested in the possibility of public architecture and boundary walls of the type that mark the late MC at other sites. The 2023 season's assistant director was Christine Johnston and the field director was Enrico de Benedictis.

Learn more at https://klaarpcyprus.wordpress.com

2022 Grant Report

Dr. Shawn Bubel, University of Lethbridge

Final Analysis of the Chipped Stone Tools Excavated from Tel Beth-Shemesh (2003-2019)

I was the recipient of an ASOR Joe D. Seger Project Grant in 2022, a funding opportunity designed to support the completion of components of ASOR-affiliated excavation projects. I used this funding and matching funds from the University of Lethbridge to complete my work on the chipped stone tools from Tel Beth-Shemesh, Israel.

Tel Beth Shemesh was occupied from the Middle Bronze II Period through to the Assyrian conquest of the region. Excavations directed by Shlomo Bunimovitz and Zvi Lederman (Tel Aviv University) since 1990 have focused on refining the occupation phases of the site and establishing its role as a border community in the Shephelah region during the Iron Age.

We have excavated more than 2700 diagnostic chipped stone artifacts at Tel Beth-Shemesh, making it one of the largest lithic assemblages amassed from a historic period site in the Levant. These specimens include cores and waste flakes (debitage) from tool production, tool blanks or preforms, and finished tools. Thousands more non-diagnostic chips and chunks of high-quality chert were also collected and examined.

It was quickly clear that at least some lithic tool production was taking place on site, but a detailed study of the artifacts was needed to understand the manufacturing process and determine if certain tools were locally manufactured and others acquired through trade. Moreover, the chipped stone artifacts came from Middle Bronze II to Iron II contexts, which allowed me to study diachronic change in the chipped stone industry. This was especially exciting because Tel Beth-Shemesh is one of only a handful of sites that was continually occupied through these periods.

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