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College students uncovering 1,000-year-old artifacts in Mesa

Max Gorden. Posted Nov 13, 2020



A group of students are unearthing artifacts here in the Valley that date back over 1,000 years!

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MESA, AZ (3TV/CBS 5) - An archeology class at Mesa Community College is giving students the experience of working on a real dig.

"We're just giving the students that kind of first-hand experience in the field, which is the only way to learn how to do this," said Dr. Kirk Costion, a professor at Mesa Community College.

The archeologists uncovering the roughly 1,000-year-old Hohokam trash pile are concerned people might come and take the artifacts, so they asked the location only to be identified as "in Mesa."

The site was first discovered in 2010 ahead of potential development.

Students and archeologists are finding shards of pottery, stone tools, a few shells, and animal bones at the old garbage pile.

It's shedding more light on who the Valley's first residents might have been trading with between 1,000 and 1,200 A.D.

The archeology fieldwork at Mesa Community College is the only class of its type in the Valley.

Twelve students are currently working on the site one day a week, digging in two shifts throughout the day to provide for social distancing measures.

"You might not know the answers to everything, but you have this hands-on experience where you can start to learn about what might have been going on in a specific area and a specific culture," said archaeology student Bill Dundas.

Phase one of the dig should be done in early December, but more work will uncover the site in 2022.

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