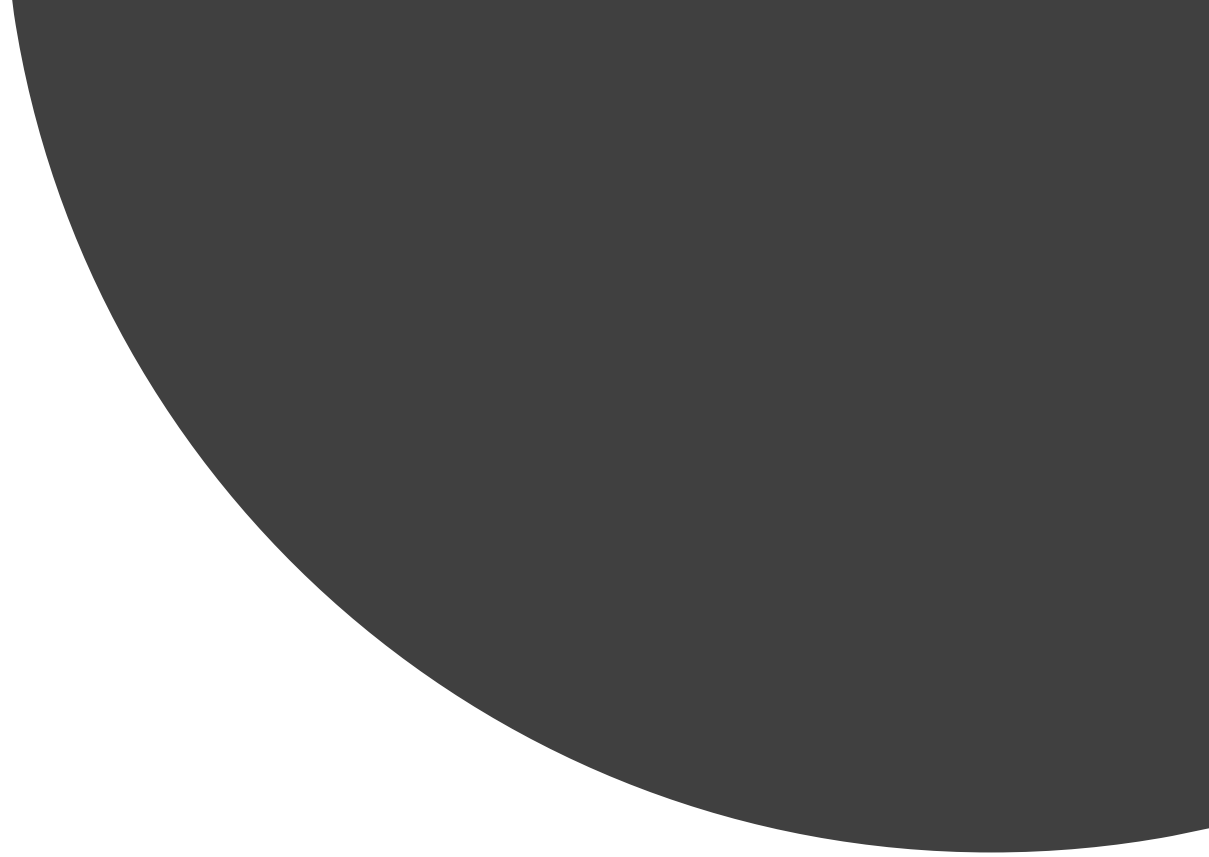
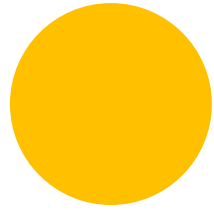
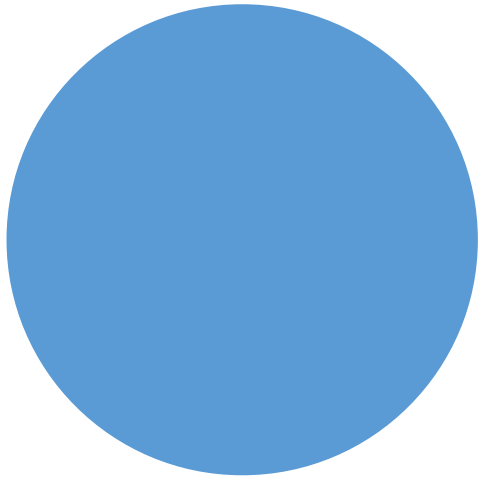


Bluefields Bay, Jamaica

Testimonials

from faculty and students
about their service, study
tour & research experience





From Faculty





Bob Pavlowsky, Distinguished Professor of Geography at Missouri State University, has directed many study tours and master's research projects in the Bluefields area since 2009

RAJ Tours is always willing to work with groups on specific needs for lodging, transportation, and tour services including community projects and nature tours. My students always rate the staff's helpfulness, knowledge, and friendliness at 110%. Plus, they provide authentic Jamaican cooking for excellent meals that you can get nowhere else. Bluefields Bay and surrounding communities are both accessible and safe. I always encourage my groups to go out to explore the town and meet people. Most of the students have stayed in contact with RAJ staff and other people they have met in Jamaica.

Heidi Savery is a Lecturer in Anthropology at Bridgewater State University and a PhD candidate at Binghamton University

The Bluefields community offers meaningful service learning opportunities that are mutually rewarding for guests and hosts. Local knowledge is actively shared, not just presented and project participants are given the opportunity to experience Jamaican culture, not just passively consume it.



Marilyn Wedenoja, a Professor of Social Work at Eastern Michigan State University, has led many student groups to Bluefields

Over the past eight years, I have learned to totally trust the safety and safe judgement of Wolde and his assistants Deceita and Veda. They help make things happen and take care of food, security, cultural side trips, and talks about the history of slavery in Jamaica.



Bill Wedenoja, Professor Emeritus in Anthropology at Missouri State University, has been working with the Bluefields community since 2000

I was initially attracted to Bluefields because of its long history of progressive action through the Bluefields Peoples Community Association. I have found it to be a beautiful seacoast community with warm and friendly people, and a pleasant and relaxing refuge from the hustle of resort areas. Bluefields has many important assets, including a rich history dating back to the prehistoric Tainos, a large marine sanctuary and fishers' society, an organic farmers group, outstanding schools, and a long-standing engagement with several universities.





Derek Armitage, PhD, Professor and Associate Director,
Graduate Studies, School of Environment, Resources and
Sustainability University of Waterloo, Ontario
(directed two study tours and master's research in Bluefields)

With my former student, Dr. Steve Alexander, I have co-lead two field courses in which we spent 3-4 days in Bluefields each time. The field courses had a big impact on the participants - they had a unique opportunity to interact with community members in Bluefields, and to learn directly about how they are protecting their environment while building more sustainable livelihoods.



Bluefields is a small, quiet fishing village with a fascinating history and a beautiful landscape. It is an ideal place to introduce students to the rich cultures of the Caribbean.

Scott Worman, an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Missouri State University, directed an archaeological field school in Bluefields in 2015

Candice Goucher, a Professor of History at Washington State University Vancouver, has brought students and faculty to Bluefields and assists with the archaeology project

The grassroots activism in Bluefields to date has accomplished an inspiring list of social and ecological changes and jumpstarted the connections that can build community through small, individual and collective actions and a future-oriented vision. Our University treasures the long-term partnerships with the people of Bluefields, where faculty and students can learn from their past and present.





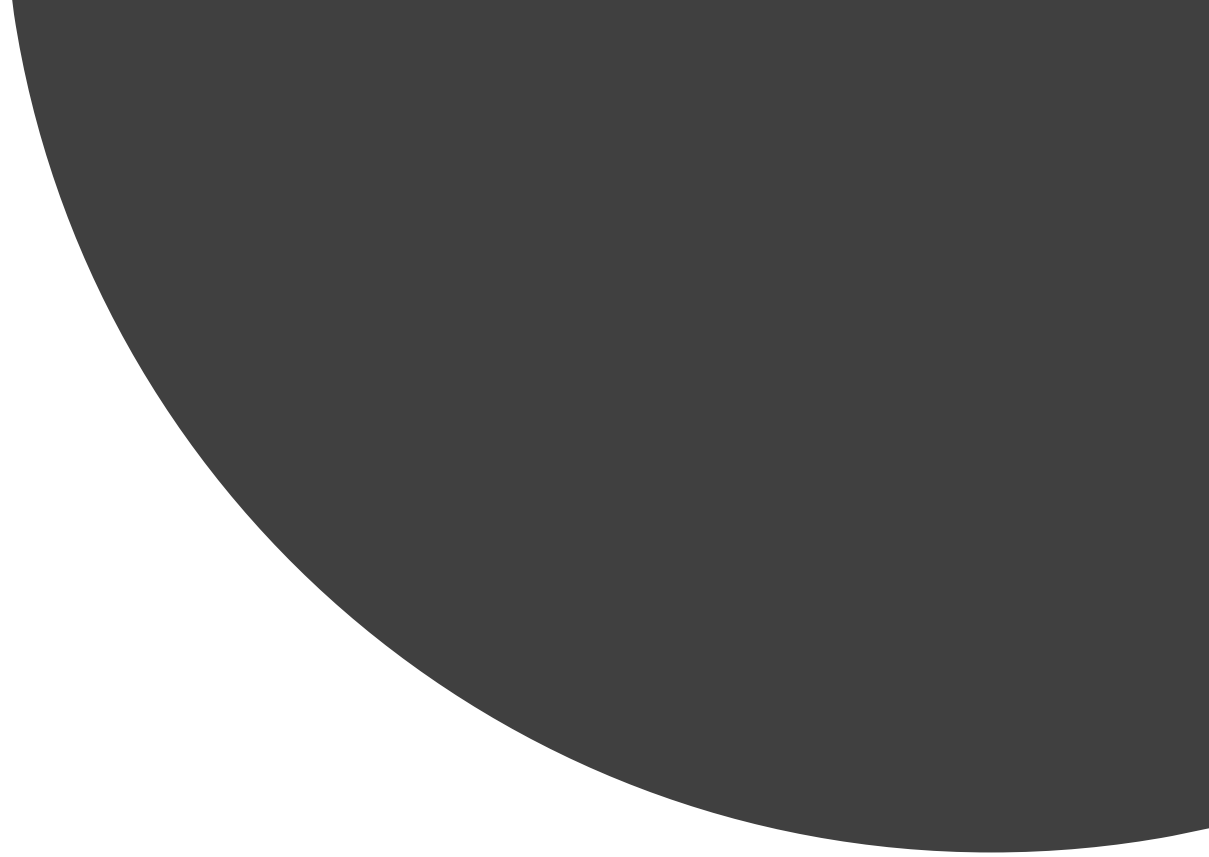
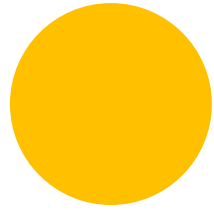
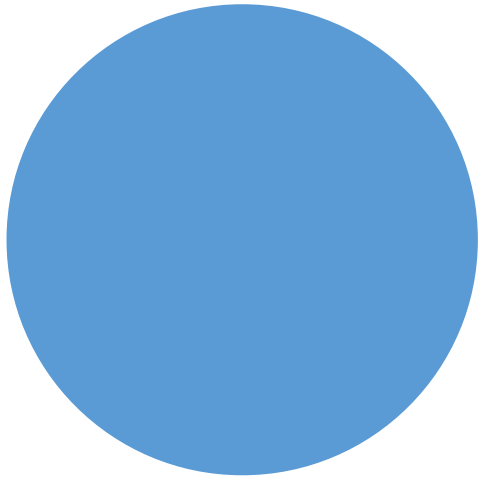
Jack Ray, a research archaeologist at Missouri State University, first came to Bluefields in 1986

Bluefields was my springboard for discovering Jamaica and later other Caribbean islands.

Marcie Venter (on right) is Assistant Professor of Archaeology in the Department of Geosciences at Murray State University and director of the search for the Spanish settlement of Oristan

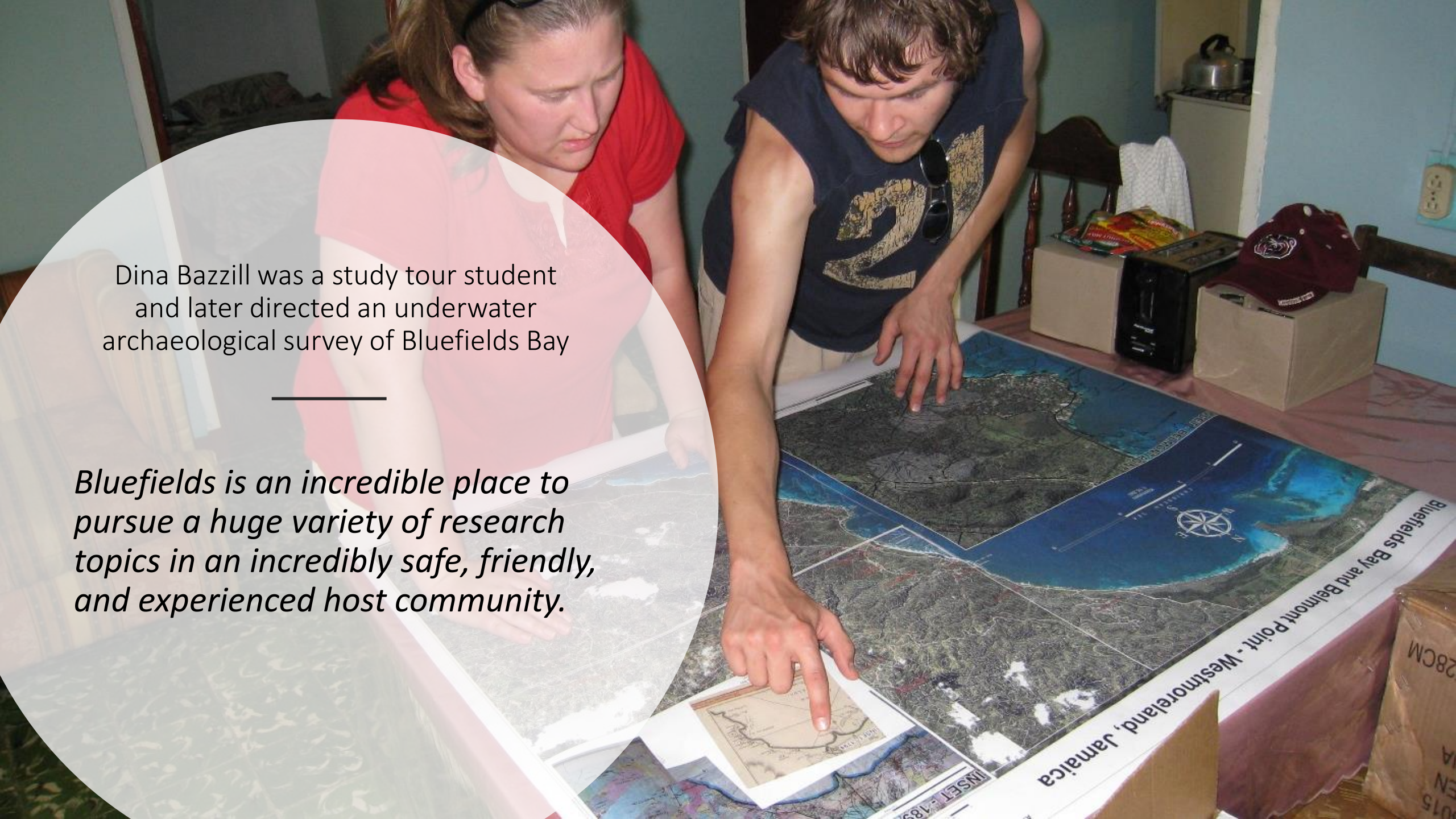
What a great alternative to "Big Box" tourism destinations for studies abroad!





From Students



A photograph showing a woman in a red shirt and a man in a dark blue sleeveless shirt leaning over a table. They are looking at a large, detailed map of Bluefields Bay and Belmont Point in Jamaica. The map is spread out on the table and features a compass rose and various geographical details. The man is pointing at a specific area on the map. In the background, there is a kitchen area with a stove and a kettle, and a chair with some items on it. The overall scene suggests a collaborative research or planning session.

Dina Bazzill was a study tour student and later directed an underwater archaeological survey of Bluefields Bay

Bluefields is an incredible place to pursue a huge variety of research topics in an incredibly safe, friendly, and experienced host community.




Casey Reid (far right), was in the first group of Missouri State students to visit Bluefields, in 2000

My experience at Bluefields helped me gain a cross-cultural perspective on community building that has been useful in my personal and professional life. It was an excellent opportunity to develop intercultural awareness and communication skills, as well as other skills relevant to any kind of community-based endeavors, and should prove useful to students going into a variety of fields.



Claire Thorpe (University College London) did her master's research on conservation in Bluefields Bay

During my time in Bluefields I was warmly welcomed by the community, allowing me to undertake the research and interviews I needed and felt very supported by everyone there over the 6 weeks I spent in the area.

A woman with freckles, wearing a black bucket hat, bright blue sunglasses, and a black tank top, is smiling broadly. She is on a red boat, with a body of water and green, hilly land in the background. The scene is bright and sunny.

Carly Wilson did an ethnographic study of environmental problems in the Bluefields area for her master's in applied anthropology

The Bluefields Bay communities provide an ideal study location, for two reasons: because the possibilities of study are endless and because the residents are so eager to share their home and learn more in-depth about it to ensure a sustainable future for the region. As a bonus, the views aren't bad either!



Jason Shepard (on right), an Anthropology Instructor at Missouri State University, participated in a study tour to Jamaica as an undergraduate and now leads study tours to Guatemala and Nicaragua and Ecuador and Peru.

It is hard to overstate the beauty of Bluefields, but the welcoming spirit of the people and the opportunity they give students to enter their lives is what made my time there unforgettable. I will always remember my time in Bluefields. The people were open and frank and treated me like a person, not a paycheck.



Kelli Keith participated in an archaeological field school

The people of Bluefields made me feel like I was part of the family.

Sharon Henslee and her husband were volunteers on the archaeology project

Bluefields is the best place to relax with good friends, enjoy sand, sun, and the very best sunsets!





Caitlyn Eberle participated in construction of a rain catchment and solar project for the Bluefields basic school

I have never been to a place that left such a lasting impression. Bluefields overflows with positive energy and incredible beauty, in both the land and the community.



