

Joara receives \$50K grant

Plans to hire an executive director

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To help with its growing organization, the Exploring Joara Foundation was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina last week which the foundation plans to use to hire an executive director.

“We are extremely grateful to the CFWNC for their support of our mission and our vision for the future,” said EJF Senior Archaeologist Dr. David Moore. “We have been overwhelmed with the response to last summer’s discovery of the actual remains of Fort San Juan and the grant. The grant from the Community Foundation will allow us to hire an executive director for the first time.”

Moore said the new director will be responsible for the day-to-day operations and long-term growth of the organization.

“This will enable our staff archaeologist to concentrate on programming to reach even more people throughout North Carolina,” Moore added. “We are especially eager to share our unique curricula to as many school groups as possible and we are excited to offer STEM/STEAM oriented classes that offer a different perspective on our significant local history.”

Staff Archaeologist John Krebs said no timetable has been set for the new hire, but EFJ hopes to have position filled by May. The hire will help the Foundation follow its new strategic plan.

In addition to the new executive director position, the funds will be used for a marketing campaign.

Along with the most recent grant, EFJ received an \$8,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Burke County to help develop the Catawba Meadows Archaeological Interpretive Center.

“EJF is also grateful for the years of local support that has allowed us to grow so successfully,” Moore said. “In the past year, we have made public presentations to more than 2,000 people in school workshops at the Catawba Meadows

Interpretive Center, the Berry site and to local civic organizations.”

In other fundraising efforts, Nan and Mark McMahon hosted a benefit for EFJ last Saturday at the North 40 Guest House to help continue to grow the educational outreach programming.

The past year has been an exciting time for EFJ, as archaeologists at the Berry site discovered the 16th-century Fort San Juan which Discovery Magazine ranked as the 29th most significant scientific discovery in the world in 2013.

Also, the first of two dwellings is near completion at the Interpretive Center. Krebs said a dedication ceremony will be held on April 5 and a groundbreaking ceremony for the second dwelling take place the same day. On May 18, the EFJ will host a pottery festival.

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