

Greek Heritage: The Exploration of an Ancient Sanctuary

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ABSTRACT

In the Summer of 2015, a team of faculty and students from IUPUI undertook the ambitious mission of traveling to the uninhabited Greek island of Despotiko to make the first cinematic documentary about an influential archeological discovery. This trip resulted in a thirteen-minute film about a wealthy and rebellious Greek island that challenged Athens for dominance in the ancient Greek world. This study abroad program provided students with a service learning experience that produced a significant documentation of Greek cultural heritage.

On their base Island of Paros, the team collaborated with members of the community to create a modern production facility. Led by two faculty members from the IUPUI School of Informatics and Computing, a team of eleven students conducted research, interviewed local scholars, and created 3D recreations of an ancient Greek complex. In addition to their academic achievements, interaction with the broader community provided a critical component to their experience.

The video, titled “Despotiko: An Unknown Treasure”, was well received locally and, in addition to being shown in the U.S., the film was debuted internationally in a Greek film festival. This combined effort laid the foundation of a new partnership with the residents of Paros and demonstrated how public scholarship can connect global communities towards mutual understanding and cooperation.