

Noémi Toroczka
Smithsonian Intern 2019, St. Lawrence Gateways Project

This summer I embarked on an incredible journey to the Arctic as an archaeological intern for the Smithsonian Arctic Studies Department. It was an experience of a lifetime, to say the least. I learned so much about the archaeological process, through the expertise of Dr. William Fitzhugh, an incredibly knowledgeable archaeologist who is known for his work in the Arctic. I lived on a 50 ft long boat named the Pitsiulak with two other interns from Dartmouth, our skipper Perry, two archaeologists with various specialties, and a crew of archaeological divers from the University of Montreal. While the divers went around looking for underwater sites and shipwrecks, the dig-team surveyed many areas along the northern coast of Quebec. We spent a lot of time excavating at two sites: Hart Chalet and Grand Isle. I learned many new skills such as how to use a trowel, how to map and record profiles, and how to map entire sites to scale on a piece of graphing paper.

Through this internship I was able to explore an area of the world that is rarely frequented by anyone. I saw icebergs, whales, puffins, dolphins, historical Norse sites, and much, much more. I met and interacted with the local communities we visited and learned about what it is like to live in such environmentally unfavorable conditions year-round. I learned about Inuit history and Basque trading and whaling practices.

This internship allowed me to form bonds with the rest of my team members that I know will last even after we all have parted ways. This was an experience of a lifetime, and I will always cherish the memories that come from it.

I'm incredibly grateful for the support of Ms. Virginia Coss and her family for giving me the opportunity to have such a fruitful experience. Thank you so much!

