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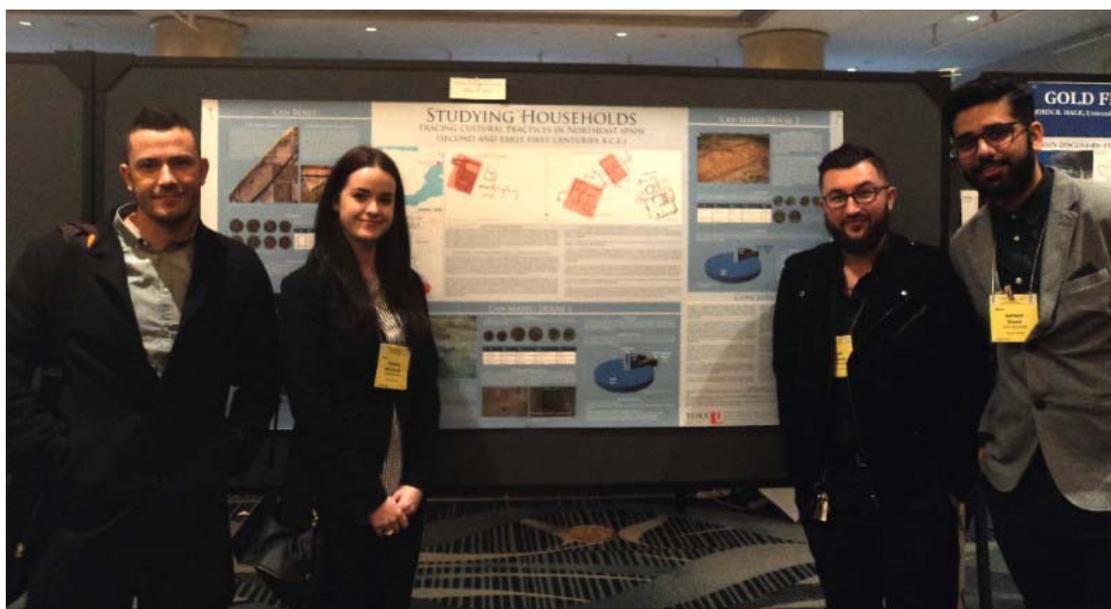
York University students win AIA's Best Poster Award for research on Roman Spain

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Following our participation in the excavations at ancient Ilduro (Cabrera de Mar, Spain, 30 km east of Barcelona) in May and June 2015, and thanks to generous funding provided by York International, we were given the opportunity to attend the 117th Annual Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America in San Francisco last month (January 6 to 8, 2016). The purpose of our attendance was to enter the poster session displaying our recent work on Roman Spain, an archaeological project directed by Dr. Alejandro G. Sinner.

At each AIA Annual Meeting, one session of the conference is devoted to the display and discussion of 25 posters selected for presentation. Each year since 2005, three awards have been made by the Program Committee: Best Poster Award (first), Runner Up (second) and Best Poster designed entirely by a student or students. Even with a team comprised mostly of undergraduate students, our poster was presented with the Best Poster Award, an award that comes with a generous prize of \$500.

Our poster, "Studying Households and Tracing Cultural Practices in Northeast Spain (Second and Early First Centuries B.C.E.)," was divided into three sections, each discussing the research findings from three archaeological households uncovered in ancient Ilduro (Cabrera de Mar). Many scholars and members of the archaeological community approached our poster with intrigue, which led to questions and answers about the research project and its methodological approach. Near the end of the session, we were greeted by a member of the adjudication panel who awarded us the distinction of best poster at the conference. With great excitement, we attended the awards ceremony that same day, an event at which we were honoured to share the room with remarkable scholars and professors who have displayed excellence in the archaeological community.



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their award-winning poster at the AIA Annual Meeting in San Francisco, California.

Our poster was inspired by Dr. Sinner's excavation project at the ancient archaeological site of Ilduro. Dr. Sinner's research focuses on redefining the perceptions of Roman provincial communities, arguing that each had its roots in a unique and dynamic culturally-heterogeneous milieu. The heterogeneous makeup of the local community allows us to trace a wide range of different cultural practices within the archaeological record. Further details about Dr. Sinner's excavations and research may be found at: www.ilduro.org. The fieldwork project in Cabrera de Mar encompasses a detailed analysis of three distinctive households: the Can Benet *domus*, Can Mateu House 1, and the most recently excavated household, Can Mateu House 2. These houses, inhabited approximately between 125 and 90/80 B.C.E., were located near public baths, thereby occupying one of the most privileged areas of the ancient urban plan.

This past summer, students from York University, working in collaboration with the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies and York International, were given the opportunity to work on the first campaign of the excavation of Can Mateu House 2. Using historical data and methodologies taught in the classroom, we were able to gain first-hand experience in the field, applying our knowledge throughout the four weeks of archaeological excavation in May and June 2015. The objective of this field work was to begin the excavation of House 2 in Can Mateu, providing students with the opportunity to be a part of an ongoing research project. It also enabled us to put various features of archaeological methodology into practice, including the process of excavation, the recognition of soil and stratigraphy, and the analysis of material finds. As a result, this preliminary campaign provided valuable information regarding the surface area of the house and the overall preservation of its remains. We hope that future campaigns will continue to reveal House 2 and its material culture, shedding further light on the dynamic and ever-changing cultural practices of the site's ancient inhabitants.

One of the overall goals of the Ilduro research project is to trace cultural practices amongst the inhabitants of this Late Republican settlement. Occupied from the second to early first centuries B.C.E., the site was in use at a time of rapid change. By approaching the household as the core unit of society, it is crucial to privilege material culture—coinage, epigraphy, pottery, burials of human fetuses, and construction techniques, among others—as the key evidence used to trace and understand the cultural practices of the sites' inhabitants across time at two different levels: the household and the settlement.

We were fortunate enough to present both these research aims and the preliminary results of the York University excavations at Ilduro, in our poster, "Studying Households and Tracing Cultural Practices," at the 2016 AIA Annual Meeting.
