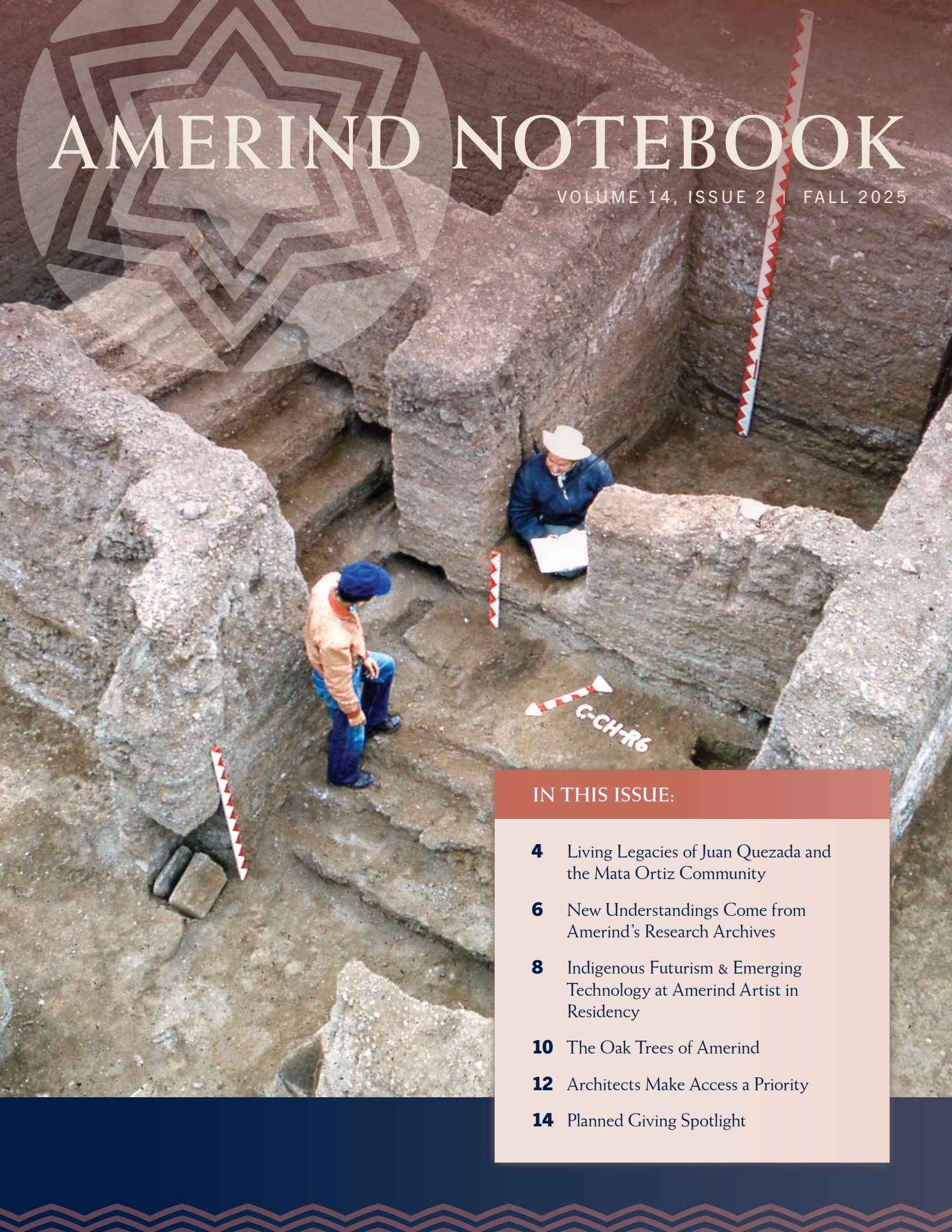




AMERIND NOTEBOOK

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 2 | FALL 2025



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Connecting People, Tradition, and History



ABOVE LEFT: Mata Ortiz potter Juan Quezada holding brown clay that he dug from the ground. *Photograph by Maren Hopkins, June 27, 2021.*
MIDDLE: View through the canopy of a Mexican blue oak. *Photo by Lyn Loveless.* RIGHT: One of the many recently installed ramps to help with Amerind's accessibility. *Photograph by Eric J. Kaldahl.*

AMERIND NOTEBOOK

Amerind Notebook

Volume 14, Issue 2, Fall 2025

AMERIND NOTEBOOK EDITOR

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Amerind Museum seeks to foster and promote knowledge and understanding of the Native Peoples of the Americas through research, education, conservation, and community engagement.

RECOGNITION OF INDIGENOUS LAND

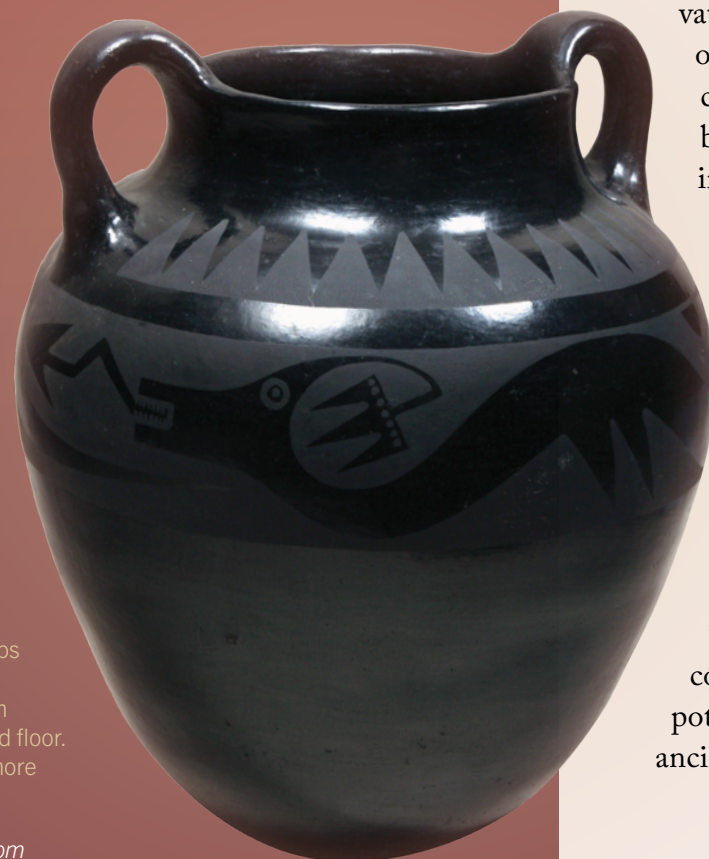
Amerind is located in southern Arizona on lands where O'odham, Apache, Hiaki (Yaqui), Hopi, and A:shiwi (Zuni) families lived for untold generations, and whose wisdom and traditions live on today in vibrant communities. We are grateful for all that these communities, rich in history, have to teach us.

FUTURE ISSUES DELIVERY PREFERENCE

If you would like to receive future editions of the *Amerind Notebook* electronically, please let us know via email amerind@amerind.org or by calling us at (520) 586-3666.

COVER: Photograph from the Joint Casas Grande Project (1958-1961) archives. These steps to the choir loft at the Convento site's 17th century Spanish church were built in a similar fashion to steps at ancient Paquimé (AD 1200-1400s). RIGHT: Ceramic olla created by San Ildefonso potter Maria Martinez (circa 1940), currently on exhibit on the museum's second floor. *Photograph by Joe Kozloski.* Amerind's new handicapped lift will make artworks like this more accessible to visitors.

GRAPHIC DESIGN: *Cracked Earth Creative, Principal Kathleen Bader, crackedearthcreative.com*



Dear Friends,

As I write this, there is a diamond saw cutting new openings for Amerind's latest handicapped accessibility project. The work of making Amerind's exquisite historic buildings better serve our community's needs is ongoing. This latest project will install a lift so that our guests can easily access the museum's second story. In this edition, we discuss the history of Amerind's accessibility improvement and thank the donors who made our latest project possible.

Scholar John Douglas (University of Montana) was in residence at Amerind, studying archival records from the Joint Casas Grandes Project. John is interested in the connections between ancient Paquiméans and historically documented Indigenous people in Chihuahua. He closely reviewed records from the Convento site excavation. Just a few kilometers from Paquimé, a portion of the Convento site was occupied in the Spanish colonial period. John argues for a lineal connection between the people of Paquimé and those who lived in later centuries at the Convento site.

For those of you have visited ancient Paquimé, you know the modern village of Mata Ortiz is a short drive away. Home to the legendary potter Juan Quezada, researchers Maren P. Hopkins (Anthropological Research, LLC) and Kelsey E. Hanson (University of Texas at Arlington) convened a group of scholars to consider the pottery techniques and clays used by Quezada. Maren and Kelsey's advanced Amerind seminar explores the development and spread of ceramic technological knowledge in Mata Ortiz. They also consider what the practices of modern Mata Ortiz potters can teach us about the ceramic technology of ancient Paquiméans.

Akilah Martinez is a rising star among artists who combine their creative vision with innovative technology. Akilah was one of Amerind's Emerging Indigenous Artists in Residence. In addition to her Diné heritage, Akilah is also a descendant of the Chiricahua Apache. In her article, Akilah discusses her artistic use of virtual reality technology, and the opportunity she had to connect with her ancestors' homeland. During her residency, she incorporated the area's natural textures into her augmented reality artworks.

Botanist Lyn Loveless (College of Wooster, retired) shares her knowledge about Amerind's beautiful oak trees. Amerind has been one of Lyn's study sites for her research into the genus *Erythrina*, represented at Amerind by the plant commonly called the "coral bean." Lyn is also voluntarily undertaking a comprehensive survey of Amerind's plants. In this edition, Lyn will help you learn to differentiate among the Texas Canyon oak species.

Underwriting scholarly discoveries, supporting young Indigenous artists, preserving archives for researchers, protecting natural wonders, and updating Amerind buildings—all of this takes the generosity of Amerind's community. In this edition, four of our supporters share their love of Amerind and their dreams for its future. They also discuss how they have a planned gift strategy to create a lasting legacy for our institution.

I am so grateful to all of you for your inspiring support. Your generosity makes everything you read here possible!

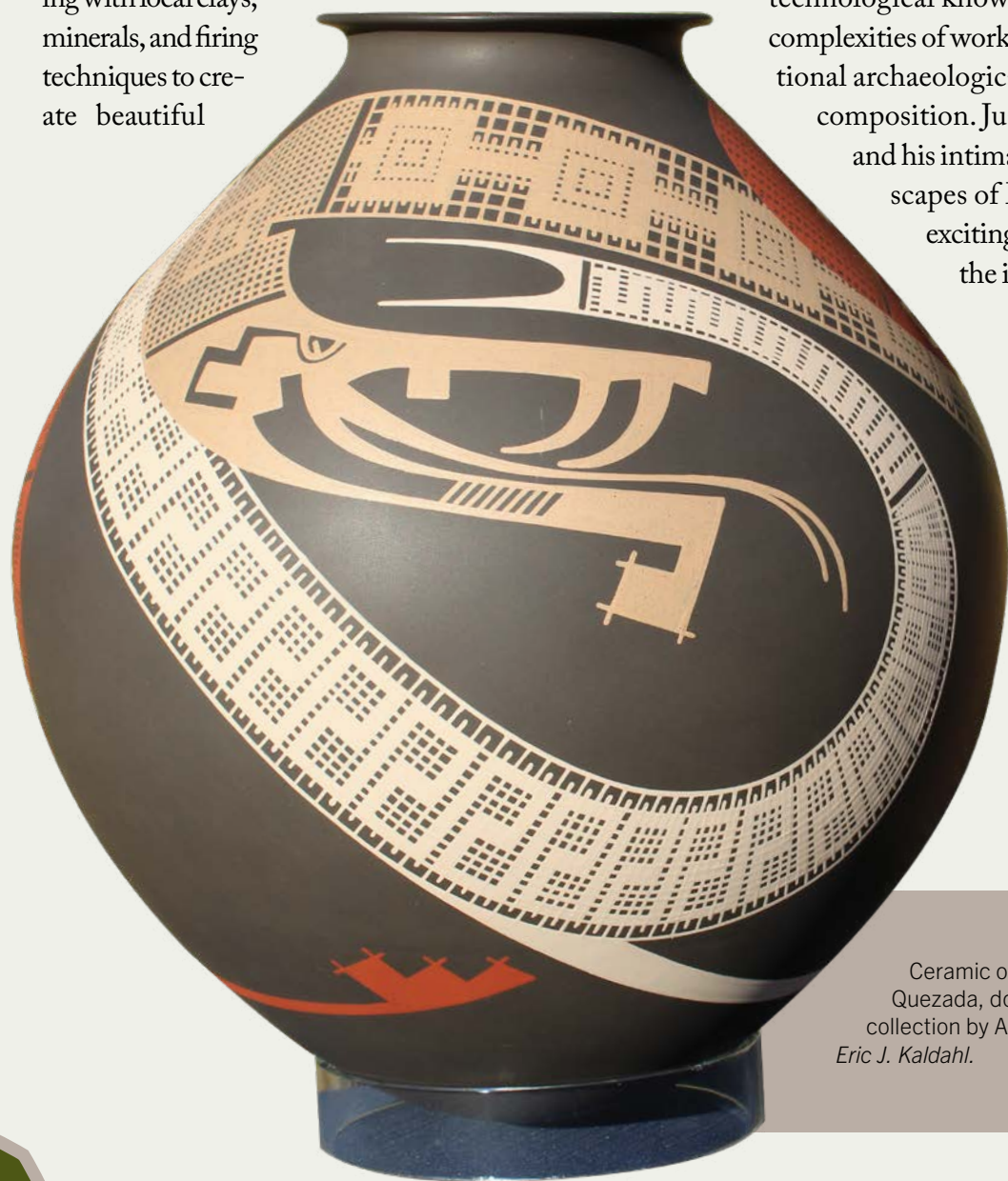
Eric J. Kaldahl, PhD
PRESIDENT & CEO



LIVING LEGACIES OF JUAN QUEZADA AND THE MATA ORTIZ COMMUNITY

BY MAREN P. HOPKINS, ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH, LLC &
KELSEY E. HANSON, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

An advanced seminar at Amerind brought together archaeologists, geologists, ethnographers, and potters from the U.S. and Mexico to explore different aspects of technology, innovation, identity, and history through the work of master potter Juan Quezada. Mr. Quezada, who is known for spearheading the ceramic tradition of Mata Ortiz, Chihuahua, Mexico, spent his lifetime experimenting with local clays, minerals, and firing techniques to create beautiful



Ceramic olla created by master potter Juan Quezada, donated to Amerind's permanent collection by Arch and Laura Brown. Photograph by Eric J. Kaldahl.

vessels that now adorn shelves, mantles, and museums worldwide. Sadly, Mr. Quezada passed away on December 1, 2022, but his legacy endures.

In the final year before his passing, Mr. Quezada collaborated with Maren Hopkins to systematically document many of the clay sources he used throughout his career and record his methods for transforming the clays into pottery. The work intertwines history, land use, and technological knowledge, and offers insights into the complexities of working with clay that enhance conventional archaeological approaches to studying ceramic composition. Juan Quezada's geologic knowledge and his intimate relationship with the local landscapes of Mata Ortiz are a lesser known yet exciting aspect of his legacy that has piqued the interest of the scientific community.

Our seminar explored three primary themes.

1. Geologic Knowledge and Innovation: Drawing from Juan Quezada's lifelong engagement with the materials and landscapes of Chihuahua, we explored how experimentation and relationships with the land drive technological creativity.

- 2. Communities of Practice and the Formation of Regional Identities:** Reviewing ongoing ethnographic and compositional analysis of pottery from the community of Mata Ortiz, we considered how land use, apprenticeship, and shared knowledge shape pottery traditions.
- 3. Living Histories and Geo-Identity:** Using the concept "geo-identity," we examined ways people relate to, use, and remember the land. Our discussions ranged from topics of land use and memory to thinking about legacies of knowledge, movement, and place-making.

A central goal of our seminar was to highlight how artisan expertise and community-based knowledge can challenge and enrich the approaches and perspectives taken in archaeological research. Ethnographic contributions offered by Juan Quezada helped us to reconsider and refine many of our theoretical and methodological perspectives on technology, innovation, and land use practices. This underscored the value of multi-disciplinary research as a way of transforming our assumptions, and helped us remember that community-based research should be iterative and interesting for all parties involved.

These insights will advance interpretations of compositional data and will offer new ways of framing archaeological studies more broadly. We are excited to be part of Amerind's legacy of research in the borderlands. We hope our work will underscore the enduring significance of the ceramic community of Mata Ortiz, whose members rely on the production of ceramics for their livelihood, creativity, and economic stability. By bridging artisan knowledge and expertise with archaeological science, the outcomes of this seminar deepen our understanding of the past while honoring the living legacies of Juan Quezada and the Mata Ortiz community.



TOP: Juan Quezada at his favorite white clay source. MIDDLE: Fired and unfired miniature vessels created by Juan Quezada to study composition using twelve different clays. Photographs by Maren Hopkins, 2021. BOTTOM: Participants in the Amerind advanced seminar *Tradition, Innovation, and Geo-Identity: Living Legacies of Juan Quezada and the Mata Ortiz Community*. Left to right: Jesús Roberto Vidal Solano; Matt Peebles; Barbara J. Mills; Jeff R. Ferguson; Maren P. Hopkins; Dave Killick; Kelsey E. Hanson; Matt Pailes; Natalia Martínez Tagüña and daughter Jade Martínez Tagüña. Photograph by Eric J. Kaldahl, August 30, 2025.



NEW UNDERSTANDINGS COME FROM AMERIND'S RESEARCH ARCHIVES

BY DR. JOHN DOUGLAS, UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

Anyone who visits an ancient, abandoned archaeological site inevitably asks: What happened to the people who once lived here? Where did they go? At Paquimé, also known as Casas Grandes, a vast UNESCO World Heritage Site in northwestern Chihuahua, we know that thousands of people left around AD 1425. Until recently, what happened afterward was unclear.

In 2021, supported by Amerind's Visiting Scholar program, I sought to answer that question, using Amerind's archives, not just for Paquimé but for the broader Casas Grandes Valley.

Across the Americas, many Indigenous communities have maintained ancestral ties and oral histories linking them to ancient settlements. Yet in this region, Spanish colonialism impacted that continuity. People called "Suma" by the Spanish suffered devastating losses

through disease, displacement, and violence. Survivors were scattered, and their traditions are now unknown.

In 1959, Amerind Director and archaeologist Dr. Charles Di Peso undertook one of the earliest efforts to trace the region's post-Paquimé trajectory. As part of the Joint Casas Grandes Expedition, best known for its bold excavation and interpretation of Paquimé, he investigated a 17th-century Spanish mission site a few miles to the north, known as the Convento site.

Di Peso had concluded that Paquimé was attacked and burned. At the Mission (the Convento), he found that the sophisticated polychrome ceramics and monumental architecture characterizing Paquimé had vanished. The Indigenous material culture there was simple. Finding no obvious cultural continuity, he concluded that inhabitants of Paquimé had dispersed far beyond the Valley and not settled at the Mission. He suggested

that its Indigenous population were nomadic newcomers from the east, the Suma, with no connection to the earlier culture of the region.

However, archaeological interpretations evolve. Today, we understand that burned buildings don't always signal warfare; fire ceremonies often mark the closure of a site. We also understand that when complex societies collapse, their most elaborate cultural expressions—particularly those dependent on specialists—usually disappear rapidly.

Linda Brown and I reexamined Di Peso's Convento site excavation records. We looked for more subtle signs of continuity between the mission-era Suma and the people of Paquimé. And we found them.

We highlighted shared practices between Paquimé and the later Convento site: the ancient people at both communities used cradleboards that shaped their children's crania in similar ways and ritually buried certain animals. Two hundred and fifty years after multistoried Paquimé incorporated puddled adobe staircases, the people at the Convento site built a similar staircase to their church's choir loft, contrasting with the wooden stairs frequent at other mission churches (see cover photo). These are unlikely to be mere coincidences. Instead, they suggest cultural memory, passed down through generations.

While the evidence is circumstantial, it points to a compelling possibility: the Suma were not outsiders but the descendants of ancient people from the Valley, conversant with Paquimé's traditions, who continued those traditions in less flamboyant ways.

Interpretations change. But the meticulous records Di Peso insisted on, preserved by Amerind, remain a vital resource. Thanks to his dedication and Amerind's ongoing stewardship, new generations of researchers can examine the archives with fresh eyes and find new ways of understanding the past.



Photographs from the Joint Casas Grande Project (1958-1961) archives taken at the Convento site. TOP: Church's baptistry after excavation. MIDDLE: Aerial view of the excavations at the Convento site. LOWER: Excavations near the church.



Photograph from the Joint Casas Grande Project (1958-1961) archives taken at the Convento site, showing the ruins of a 17th century Spanish mission church.



INDIGENOUS FUTURISM & EMERGING TECHNOLOGY

at Amerind Artist in Residency

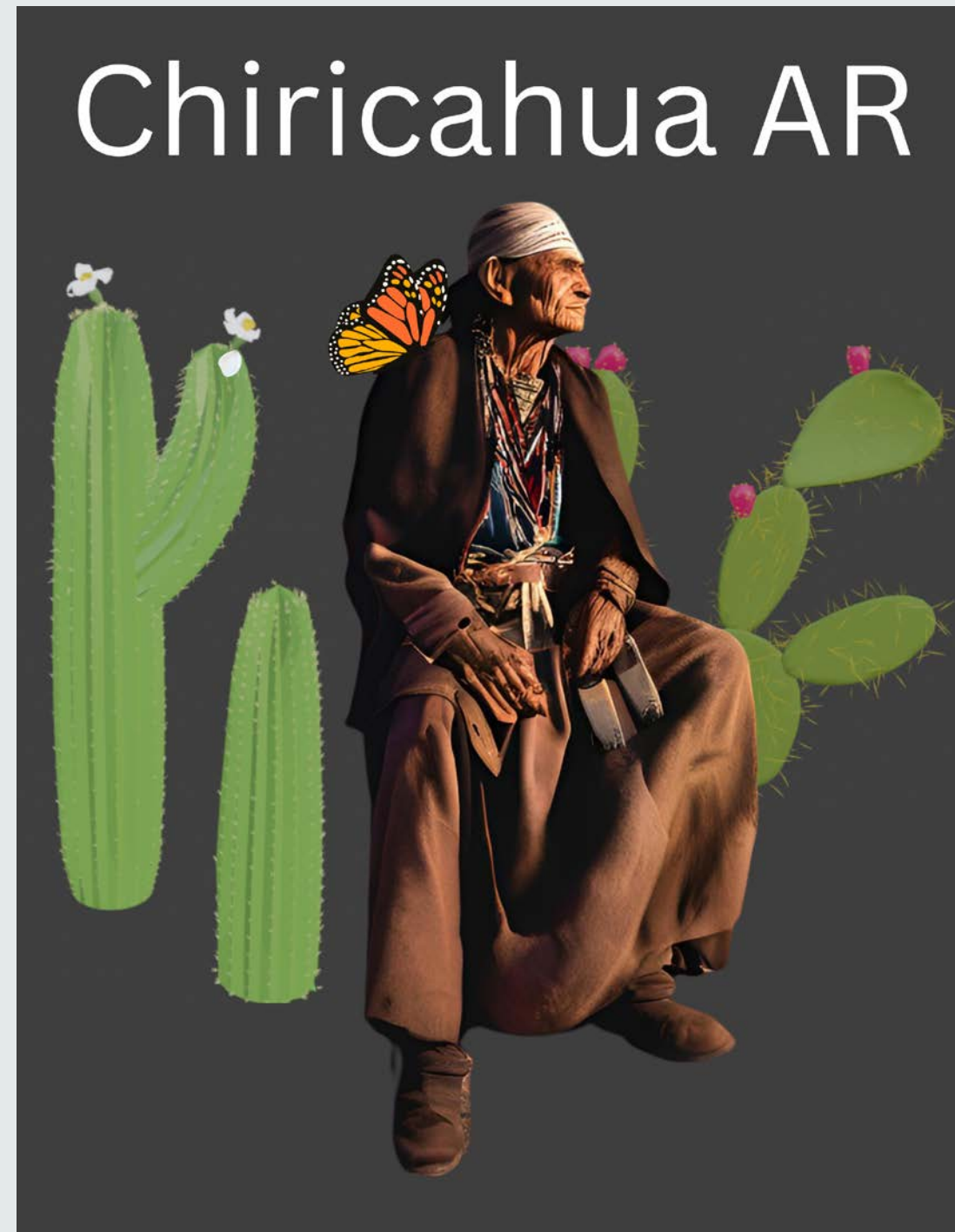
BY AKILAH MARTINEZ, CREATIVE TECHNOLOGIST, NAVAJO NATION

*A key aspect of Amerind's Arts programming is to support emerging and established Indigenous artists with a residency. We have hosted artists specializing in a range of media and approaches to those media. Akilah Martinez brought her fascinating lens on **Augmented Reality** to her residency at Amerind.*

Akilah Martinez, creative technologist from the Navajo Nation, was one of the Amerind's Emerging Indigenous Artists in Residence in 2024. For her residency, Akilah focused on improving augmented reality (AR) development by creating an AR experience inspired by her Chiricahua lineage and the

Chiricahua's connection to the land that the Amerind Museum sits on today. Augmented reality is a form of extended reality (XR) technology, which is an umbrella term for augmented reality, virtual reality, and mixed reality. Akilah's time during the artist residency gave her the ability to explore the region and take account of the textures of the plants and landscapes of Dragoon. Akilah also had the time and space to reimagine her creative processes.

After much exploration of the land surrounding the Amerind Museum, Akilah created 3D models of a flowering saguaro cactus, a lush flowering ocotillo, and a budding prickly pear cactus. Akilah also implemented a flying butterfly in the scene that was framed around a 2D image of what appears to be a Chiricahua warrior. These elements then went through an immersive design process and were turned into an AR experience. Later, this scene was implemented into a virtual reality world on the platform Engage and was presented to the global Women in XR community.



OPPOSITE PAGE: Akilah Martinez during her August 2024 Emerging Indigenous Artist Residency at Amerind. *Photograph by Maggie Ohensorgen.* Akilah shot high resolution photographs of the plants and textures she found at Texas Canyon to incorporate into her digital arts, including these photographs of prickly pear fruit, ocotillo leaves (opposite page) and cactus (far right). ABOVE: *Chiricahua AR*, Immersive Media, by Akilah Martinez.



THE OAK TREES OF AMERIND

BY DR. LYN LOVELESS, BOTANICAL RESEARCHER,
COLLEGE OF WOOSTER, WOOSTER, OH (EMERITUS)



ABOVE: A large Emory oak at Amerind. Note its upright shape, growing among rocks. *Photo by Lyn Loveless.* BELOW: The four Amerind oaks. In each photograph, the two leaves on the left show the top side, and the remaining leaves show the bottom side of the leaf. Note the scale (in inches). The leaves differ in size. *Photo composite by Sue Rutman.*

The oak tree is a symbol of strength, nobility, and fortitude in many cultures. In Arizona, oaks grow at mid- to high-level elevations. At Amerind, our oaks are compelling aspects of the landscape, with their often contorted forms providing dark contrasts to our vistas.

In the Southwest, oaks have been an important food source for Indigenous people, as well as for birds, deer, rodents, insects, and other animals. The acorns contain tannins and other bitter compounds, so they must be processed by grinding, soaking, or parching. Emory oak, our most common species, is one of the most palatable oaks, and at Amerind it was probably utilized heavily for food. The dried oak meal was eaten directly, pounded into meats, used in making bread, and added to stews and porridge.

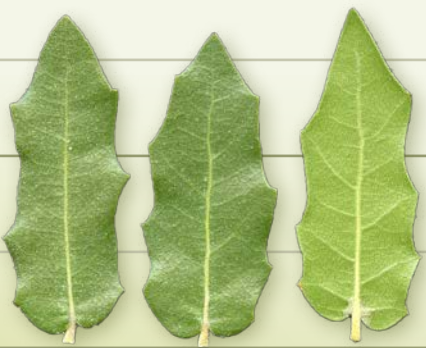
Appreciate this tree for its beauty, its durability, its persistence, and its many interactions with the humans who have lived alongside these lovely trees for thousands of years. Oaks are indeed noble elements of the Amerind landscape.

Of the 15 species of oaks in Arizona, four are common at Amerind. Though they differ in size and shape and in bark and leaf traits, telling them apart can be a challenge because they are highly variable. Traits may differ not only among species, but between leaves on different branches of the same tree.

Test your botanical skills on your next visit to Amerind. As you hike the trails or enjoy the picnic area, see if you can find these four species. Happy hunting in Texas Canyon.



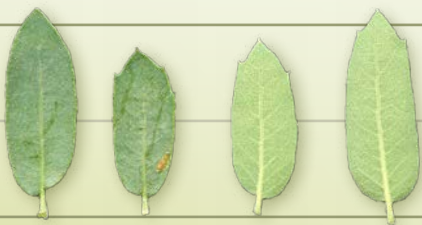
A lovely Mexican blue oak beside a boulder at the Amerind entrance. This species often has a spreading shape. *Photo by Lyn Loveless.*



EMORY OAK

Quercus emoryi

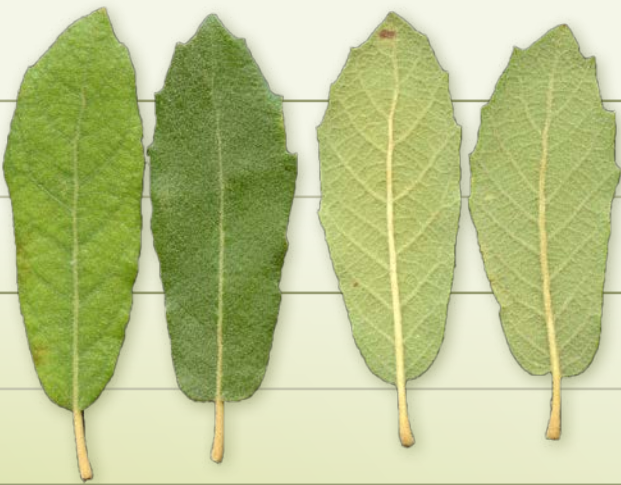
Leaves mid-sized, 1 ½ to 2 inches long, elliptical and narrow, tapered to pointed tip. Edges gently or sharply toothed, with 2-3 broad teeth along each margin. Leaves dark green and glossy on top, on back usually a little tuft of hairs along midvein where leaf meets stem.



TOUMEY OAK

Quercus toumeyii

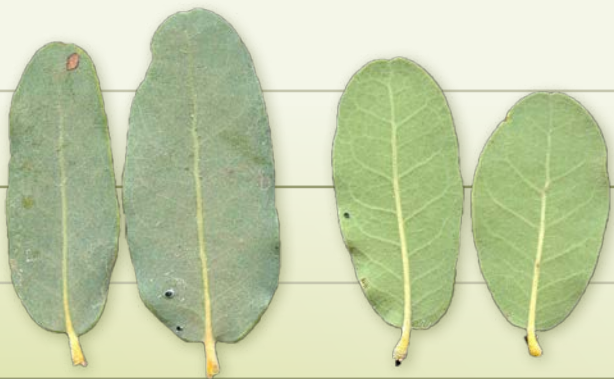
Leaves small, usually 1 inch or less, elliptical and narrow. Leaf edges thickened. Leaf margins may be smooth or have a few teeth near the tip, each tooth ending in a waxy prickle. Leaves have whitish cast. Tree often shrubby in growth form.



ARIZONA OAK

Quercus arizonica

Leaves large, 2-3 inches long, oval, usually shallowly toothed; teeth concentrated toward leaf tip; teeth have prickles at their apex. Leaves thick-textured and stiff, not shiny, and may be whitish beneath.



MEXICAN BLUE OAK

Quercus oblongifolia

Leaves mid-sized, 1 ½ to 2 inches long, elongate, straight-sided oval, without distinct tip. Leaf edges slightly wavy, almost never toothed. Leaves have distinctive blue-green cast and are often whitish on their surface.

2 in.

1 in.

0 in.



ARCHITECTS MAKE ACCESS A PRIORITY

BY NATHANIEL KRAUS & BOB VINT, VINT & ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS

Amerind is constantly seeking to improve the museum experience at our Texas Canyon home. Our most recent project was to add a lift within our Museum to improve access to visitors who find our staircases difficult. The historic status of our Museum, which we greatly value, complicates this kind of change. Thanks to the skills of our architects and the generosity of our community—the new lift is underway. You can try it out later this fall.

As this edition of the *Amerind Notebook* goes to press, the construction company Canyon Building & Design is adding an accessible lift from the ground floor Paquimé exhibition to second floor immediately above. This latest accessibility project is the fourth that Vint & Associates has designed for Amerind, beginning in 2011 with the curving flagstone ramp that leads to the main entrance of the

Museum, followed by an access lift and bathroom renovation in the Library/Art Museum in 2013, and a wooden ramp in the Paquimé exhibition hall in 2016—which connects to the current lift installation. Once complete, this 2025 project will provide full access to the second-floor level, including the original adobe museum rooms built in 1936.

A fifth project is now in design: a lift from the Museum entrance down to the sunken gallery floor of the main 1939 exhibit hall. Completion of this last project will fully realize Amerind's long-held goal of a universally accessible museum to further expand public access to Indigenous history and culture.

In design Vint & Associates has followed the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the treatment of Historic Properties.

DONORS HELP PRIORITIZE ACCESS

With help from Board colleagues and Amerind friends, we successfully raised \$100,000 to cover the construction for the lift designed by Vint & Associates; this support increases access for all visitors to extraordinary collections featuring the Chiricahua Apache, Indigenous dolls, and the Potters of Mata Ortiz housed on the Museum's second level.

Sincere thanks to those who supported our accessibility project and for your continued support for upcoming projects and exhibitions at the Amerind Museum.

—By Laura Brown, *Chair, Amerind Board of Directors*

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Thank you!



ABOVE: One of the newly installed ramps. Photograph by Eric J. Kaldahl. RIGHT: Cultural objects on the second floor that will soon be accessible to all. Photographs by Joe Kozlowski.





PLANNED GIVING SPOTLIGHT

BY ERIC J. KALDAHL

Four philanthropists share their thoughts about charitable giving and the nonprofits they love. Dr. Kelley Hays-Gilpin, Dennis Gilpin, Robert Alpaugh, and Rob Waters are generous donors who have carefully considered their planned giving strategy. Amerind is grateful to be among the organizations they support.

AMERIND SUPPORTERS DR. KELLEY HAYS-GILPIN AND DENNIS GILPIN

Kelley and Dennis are noted anthropologists with distinguished careers, working in Arizona since the early 1980s. Kelley is Curator and Chair of Anthropology at the Museum of Northern Arizona (MNA) and recently retired from the faculty of Northern Arizona University. Dennis worked for the Navajo Nation, several private companies, and is a research associate with MNA.

Kelley defines philanthropy as “supporting the people, places, and programs that you care about.” Each year they give generously to their favorite institutions, including Amerind. In addition to decades of annual donations, both have planned legacy gifts. Kelley and Dennis value the opportunities they enjoyed in their

careers—many of which were made possible by nonprofit institutions. They support nonprofits so those institutions can positively impact generations to come.

Both love visiting Amerind for writing, relaxation, and participation in Amerind’s research seminars. They admire how Amerind and MNA, two regional institutions, make national and international impacts through their programs. Kelley and Dennis want Amerind to be here for ages to come, holding on to its unique historic character and beauty, while updating Amerind to be resilient and capable of serving tomorrow’s needs.



AMERIND SUPPORTERS ROBERT ALPAUGH AND ROB WATERS

Robert and Rob have thrived in the arts community. Robert held key executive positions in numerous nonprofits in Arizona and New York, including the Arizona Theatre Company and Tucson Symphony Orchestra. Rob Waters is a fine artist who also had a successful career in graphic design. He has shown his paintings at the DeGrazia Gallery in the Sun, the Steinfeld Warehouse, and the Tucson Gallery among others. They moved to Tucson in the 1980s with a love of southern Arizona and a desire to make a difference in the arts. Now retired, they continue to give generously to many arts institutions, and both have a planned giving strategy to support the organizations they love.

On an overnight trip to Amerind, Robert and Rob were deeply impressed by the passion and conviction of Amerind’s board members, staff, and supporters.

“We believe and like the fact that Amerind will be around for generations.” They value the exhibits, programs, and residencies that Amerind provides. They appreciate Amerind’s research program, because they admire work that celebrates diverse cultures.

The arts nourished them; and giving back to the arts is their philanthropic cause. Robert and Rob find Amerind to be a solid institution with an important mission and an arts program that connects Indigenous artists with audiences, enhancing the careers of these creative people. “We know Amerind to be good stewards of one’s investments.” They hope their story will inspire you to think about your own planned giving legacy.



YOUR LEGACY AND APPROACHES TO PLANNED GIVING

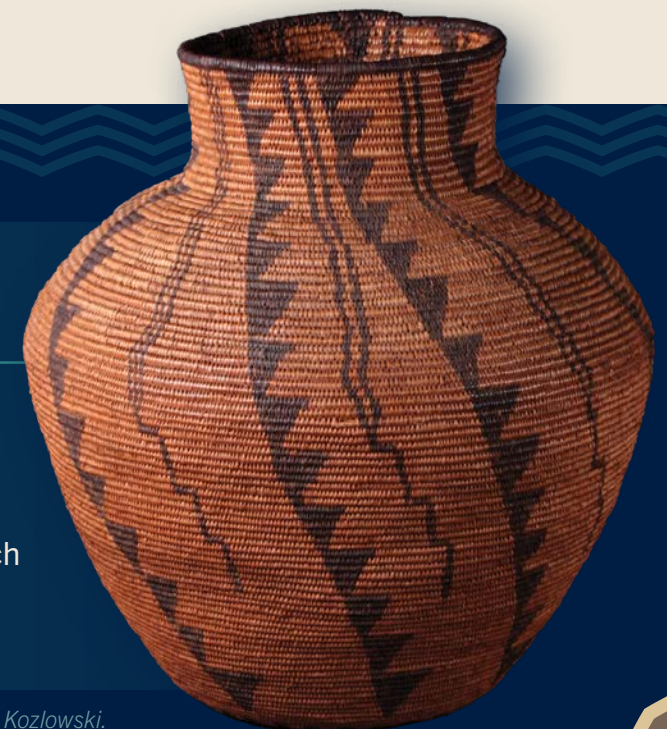
Planned giving helps sustain and advance your favorite nonprofits. Most people think of planned giving as making legacy gifts through their estates. However, many other planned giving instruments exist, including designated gifts through a charitable trust, gifts of appreciated stock, qualified IRA distributions, and donor advised funds. In addition to supporting causes you love, many giving methods can lower a donor’s tax burden. We encourage all philanthropists to speak with their financial advisors and legal counsel about their options.

If you would like to learn more about ways to support Amerind, contact Amerind Chief Development Officer Kelly Holt: kholt@amerind.org or (520) 686-6172.

PLANNED GIVING WORKSHOP

SAVE
the
DATE

Amerind will host a planned giving workshop on **November 12, 2025, 2–4 pm** at Amerind, led by attorney Jacquie Mingle and financial planning expert Bob Swift. Watch our website for more details.



Chiricahua Apache basket donated by the Magoffin family. Photograph by Joe Kozlowski.



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YOU CREATE DISCOVERY, ARTIST OPPORTUNITIES, NATURE, AND CONNECTION WITH AMERIND

Your generous commitment to Amerind and our mission is behind every discovery, creative expression, and story shared in the *Amerind Notebook*. You help uphold the pillars of our complex work in research, arts, nature, and historic preservation with your memberships and charitable giving. We simply cannot realize our potential for discovery and cultural connections without the extraordinary people who shape the Amerind community.

Amerind's dedicated community supports nearly half of our expenses each year. Every month, your overall community generosity directly invests:

- **\$30,000 in research activity** in care of our collections, exhibits, public programs, library archives, and ongoing archaeological discoveries with our seminars and publications.
- **\$10,500 in artist support** that benefits emerging and established Indigenous artists with gallery exhibits, campus residencies and stipends, public talks, and opportunities with the annual Autumn Fest event.
- **\$4,000 for community experiences in nature** by maintaining, programming, and managing the newly opened Texas Canyon Nature Preserve and its trail system.
- **\$6,500 to preserve, maintain, and continue improving** on Amerind's 1,900-acre museum campus and the historic buildings that protect our world-class collections.



Amerind would like to thank our sponsors for this edition of the **Amerind Notebook**, Gunnison Copper Corporation (gunnisoncopper.com) and TCI Wealth Advisors (tciwealth.com/).

Sponsorship is a wonderful way to support Amerind and let our community learn more about your business. If you have an interest in sponsoring future editions of the *Amerind Notebook*, program events, or exhibitions, please contact Kelly Holt kholt@amerind.org or (520) 686-6172.

THANK YOU for creating lasting differences with our beloved museum,
thriving campus, and the artists, scholars, and visitors we proudly serve.

