



DONOR IMPACT REPORT

# Shepard Urgent Action Grants 2020-2025



asor



# 2025 Donor Summary Impact

## \$15,000

awarded to  
emergency  
conservation  
efforts

## 4

emergency/  
stabilization  
projects  
funded

### 2025 Grant Recipient Names:

- *Khaled Abu Jayyab (University of Toronto)*
- *Julia Nikolaus, Nick Ray, (Ulster University) and Ahmed Emrage (University of Benghazi)*
- *Tiffany Earley-Spadoni (University of Central Florida)*
- *Libyan Department of Antiquities*

### Names of Projects & Initiatives:

- *"The Tell 'Arna Site Preservation Initiative" Iraq*
- *"The Al Haniyah Emergency Documentation Project" Libya*
- *"Conservation of Cuneiform Tablets from Kurd Qaburstan" Iraq*
- *"Transport, Repair, and Preservation of Tocra Mosaics" Libya*



Seal recovered from Khaled Abu Jayyab's excavation



## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT



# "The Tell 'Arna Site Preservation Initiative" -Re Tell 'Arna, Iraq

Khaled Abu Jayyab  
University of Toronto

Mosul

Tell 'Arna

Today, Tell 'Arna is located in an ever expanding slum where we see the intersection of farmland, factories, and illegal housing encroaching on the site. A **Shepard Urgent Action Grant** allowed the team carry out excavations in the in the lower town (J20), two full excavation units in the southwest of the tell (F17 & G17), and a section cleaning along the west central side of the tell (D14).

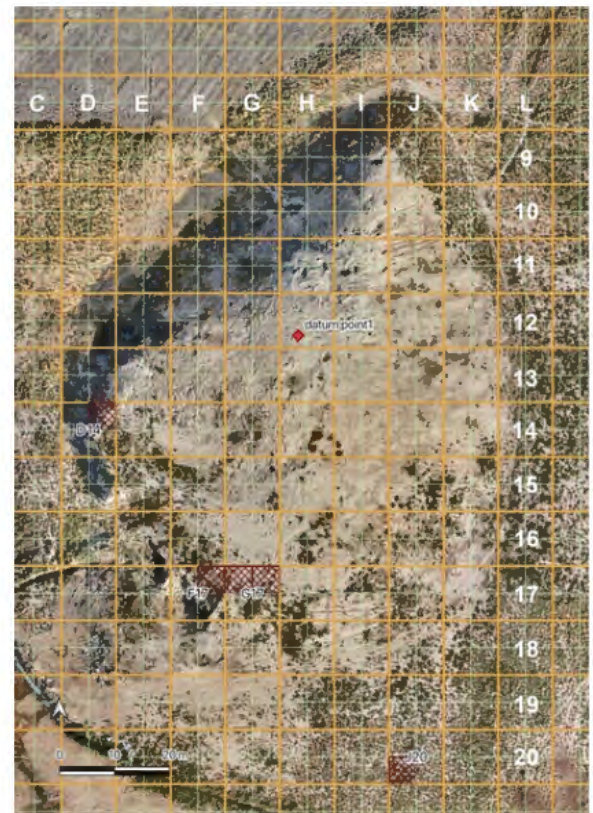
The results of their work has proven to be significant for a number of reasons. First, settlement at the site seems to have extended beyond the main mounded area and secondly, the findings suggest that nucleation and the formation of aggregated proto-urban settlements was not unique to Tepe Gawra, but was a regional phenomenon.



*Infant jar burial in the southeast corner of the trench*



*Members of the Tell 'Arna team*



*Tell 'Arna 10x10 m grid (orange) and 5x5 m sub-grid (green) with excavation units indicated with red cross-hatching.*



# ***"The Al Haniyah Emergency Documentation Project" – Libya***

**Julia Nikolaus & Nick Ray, Ulster University;  
Ahmed Emrage, University of Benghazi**

*In 2025, with the support of the **Shepard Urgent Action Grant**, an international team of archaeologists completed a critical emergency documentation project at the endangered site of Al Haniyah (ancient Aptouchus), on the Cyrenaican coast of Libya. This urgent initiative responded to escalating threats from coastal erosion, unregulated agricultural development, and expanding infrastructure—pressures that have already caused widespread and irreversible damage to the site*



The team began with a detailed site survey, identifying and mapping architectural features as well as recently disturbed areas. High-resolution drone photography was used to create 3D digital models of the site and surrounding terrain, including the vulnerable cliff face. In the locals where bulldozing had exposed ancient structures differential GPS and photogrammetry was used to document the area. A preliminary underwater survey examined submerged archaeological features of the harbour. Several stone blocks and cut features were identified, consistent with ancient maritime use.



## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT



# "Conservation of Middle Bronze Age Cuneiform Tablets from Kurd Qaburstan" - Kurd Qaburstan, Iraq

Tiffany Earley-Spadoni  
University of Central Florida

Archaeologists excavating ancient Qabra, uncovered a remarkable group of air-dried cuneiform tablets and sealings dating to the early second millennium BCE. A **Shepard Urgent Action Grant** made it possible to respond immediately, addressing ancient objects in need of immediate care.

Conservator Carmen Gütschow, one of the most experienced professionals working in Iraq today, joined the team in Erbil to lead the conservation efforts. Using scalpels, soft brushes, and magnification, more than 80 sealings and a group of tablets were successfully treated. In several cases, broken fragments were rejoined with impressive results: inscriptions that had been illegible became clear again.

ASOR funding allowed the Kurd Qaburstan Project to organize a workshop at the Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage (IICAH), where Gütschow shared her methods with local museum professionals.



A young visitor joins the conservation team at IICAH



2025 excavations in the lower-town east



Dr. Abdullah Khorsheed, director of the IICAH, greets workshop participants with Carmen Gütschow. Pictured right in the photo is Muhammad Hamakharib Muhammed, simultaneous translator.



# Before & After: Completed project photos.



Top row photos: **The Tell 'Arna Site Preservation Initiative", Re Tell 'Arna, Iraq - Khaled Abu Jayyab**In

In addition to the excavations, the team was able to construct a fence around the western edge of the site to preserve and protect what survives of the main mound. The fence runs roughly 70 m and aims to demarcate the archaeological zone from architectural expansion.

Bottom row photos: **The Al Haniyah Emergency Documentation Project", Libya - Julia Nikolaus**

A key component of the work involved recording the exposed stratigraphy of the eroding cliff. Here, archaeological layers are visibly collapsing into the sea at an alarming rate. This emergency project represents a crucial step in preserving the cultural heritage of Aptouchus.

# Lifetime Summery Donor Impact



## \$85,425

awarded to  
emergency  
conservation  
efforts

## 15

emergency/  
stabilization  
projects  
funded

Year	Recipient	Country	Project	Organizations & Universities of Recipients
2020	Tobin Hartnell	Iraq	The Tabira Gate Stabilization Project at Ashur	American University of Iraq, Sulaimani
2020	Lindy Crewe	Cyprus	Stabilisation and refurbishment of a Chalcolithic roundhouse visitor centre at the archaeological site of Kissonerga-Mosphilia, Paphos District, Cyprus	Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute
2021	Wahid Omran	Egypt	Safeguarding and Documentation the Akhmim Tomb C4	Fayoum University
2022	Maria Elena Ronza	Jordan	Emergency Conservation of the Roman Bathhouse in Petra	SELA for Training and Protection of Heritage
2023	Anke Weber	Egypt	Stabilizing History. Emergency documentation and consolidation of the pillars in the burial chamber of the tomb of pharaoh Ramesses III in the Valley of the Kings	Humboldt University of Berlin
2023	Mariam Eloshvili	Georgia	Emergency Excavation for Data Collection from the Late Neolithic Settlement at Khramis Didi Gora	Ilia State University
2023	Murat Akar	Turkey	Post-earthquake Action at Tell Atchana/Alalakh	Hatay Mustafa Kemal University
2023	Paula Sconzo	Iraq	Rescue Operations at the Site of Cham Pashaya, II	University of Palermo

2024	Gia Chilingarashvili	Geogia	Rescue Excavations of a Chalcolthic Settlement in Southwest Georgia	Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University and Georgian National Museum
2024	Rajwan Al-Maiyali	Iraq	Restoration of Umm Al-Qurun's Minaret on the Hajj Pilgrimage Routes: The Darb Zubayduh	Univeristy of Al-Qadishiyah
2025	Khaled Abu Jayyab	Iraq	The Tell 'Arna Site Preservation Initiative	Univeristy of Toronto



2025	Julia Nikolaus	Libya	The Al Haniyah Emergency Documentation Project	Ulster University
2025	Tiffany Earley-Spadoni	Iraq	Conservation of Middle Bronze Age Cuneiform Tablets from Kurd Qaburstan	University of Central Florida
2025			Transport, Repair, and Preservation of Tocrá Mosaics	Libyan Department of Antiquities



***Thank you for all you do to support ASOR's mission to protect and conserve cultural heritage.***

