

## Nicholas A. Puente

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### Education:

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- 2026 Estimated completion. Ph.D., University of Colorado Boulder, Department of Anthropology
- 2023 MA, University of Colorado Boulder, Department of Anthropology
- 2019 B.S., Loyola University Chicago, Department of Anthropology

### Primary Research Interests:

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Indigenous Maya Ontologies; Persistence and Sustainability; Religion; Sacred Landscape; Cave Archaeology; Materiality Theory; Inequality; Community-Based Participatory Research Methods; Mesoamerica.

### Peer Reviewed Publications:

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**Puente, Nicholas** and Sarah Kurnick

- 2025 Maya Roads as Kuxansumob: Analyzing an Intra-Site Sak-Be Assemblage at Punta Laguna, Yucatan, Mexico. *Latin American Antiquity*, In Press.

Kurnick, Sarah, David Rogoff, Iliana Ancona Aragón, and **Nicholas Puente**.

- 2023 Variable Precipitation and Maya Persistence at Punta Laguna, Yucatán, Mexico. *Mexicon*. 45(3): 59-65.

Ortman, Scott and **Nicholas A. Puente**

- 2025 Cubic hybridity in Colonial New Mexico. *Collected Papers in Honor of Steve Lekson and Cathy Cameron*. Archaeological Society of New Mexico (ASNM). Under Review.

### Grants

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#### External:

- 2024 Exploration Fund. Awarded by the Explorers Club (\$5,000)
- 2024 Ralph Stone Graduate Fellowship. Awarded by the National Speleological Society (\$2,500)
- 2024 Alice Hamilton Scholarship Fund. Awarded by the Colorado Archaeological Society (\$1,000)

- 2023 Alice Hamilton Scholarship Fund. Awarded by the Colorado Archaeological Society (\$1,000)
- 2023 The Spicer Foundation's Persistent and Enduring Peoples Mini Grant. Awarded by the Edward H. and Rosamond B. Spicer Foundation (\$750)

**Total External Funding: \$10,250**

#### Internal:

- 2025 Center for Native American and Indigenous Studies – sponsored Research, Creative Work and Outreach. Awarded by the University of Colorado Boulder (\$1,500)
- 2024 Graduate Research Funds. Awarded by the University of Colorado Boulder Anthropology Department (\$1,765)
- 2024 Museum Student Research Award. Awarded by the University of Colorado Museum of Natural History (\$1,103.00)
- 2024 Beverly Sears Graduate Student Research Grant. Awarded by the Graduate School of the University of Colorado Boulder (\$1,000)
- 2024 GPSG Travel Grant. Awarded by the University of Colorado Boulder Graduate and Professional Student Government to present research at a conference (\$500)
- 2024 Graduate School Travel Grant. Awarded by the University of Colorado Boulder Graduate School to present research at a conference (\$450)
- 2023 Willena D. Cartwright Scholarship. Awarded by the University of Colorado Boulder Department of Anthropology (\$2,500)
- 2023 Pre Dissertation Graduate Research Funds. Awarded by the University of Colorado Boulder Department of Anthropology (\$1,750)
- 2023 Graduate Student Award. Awarded by the Center to Advance Research and Teaching in the Social Sciences, University of Colorado Boulder (\$1,200)
- 2023 Museum Student Research Award. Awarded by the University of Colorado Museum of Natural History (\$1,196)
- 2022 Haskell-Houghtelin Scholarship. Awarded by the University of Colorado Boulder Department of Anthropology (\$1,100)
- 2022 Graduate School Beverly Sears Grant. Awarded by the Graduate School of the University of Colorado Boulder (\$1,000)
- 2021 Graduate School Beverly Sears Grant. Awarded by the Graduate School of the University of Colorado Boulder (\$1,000)
- 2020 University of Colorado Boulder Fellowship. Awarded by the University of Colorado Boulder Department of Anthropology (\$3,333)

- 2019 Anthropology Department Travel Funds. Awarded by Loyola University Chicago Department of Anthropology (\$250)
- 2019 Provost Fellowship Awarded by Loyola University Chicago, Loyola Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (\$3,000)

**Total Internal Funding: \$22,647**

**Total Combined Funds Awarded: \$32,897**

#### Fellowships:

- 2025 Social Sciences 50 % GA Grad Fellowship to complete dissertation. Awarded by the University of Colorado Boulder Anthropology Department

#### Awards and Recognition:

- 2025 Student Employee of the Year Nominee. University of Colorado Boulder Career Services
- 2024 Graduate Student Service Award. Department of Anthropology, University of Colorado Boulder (\$1500)
- 2020 Chardin Award. Conferred by Loyola University Chicago for outstanding academic performance and involvement in all fields within anthropology.
- 2020 Outstanding Student in Archaeology Award. Loyola University Chicago
- 2019 Research featured on Loyola University Chicago's College of Arts and Sciences web page. <https://www.luc.edu/cas/stories/archive/nicholaspuente.shtml>
- 2022 The featured research was updated after a second interview in 2022. <https://www.luc.edu/cas/stories/keystoourpastnicholaspuente/>
- 2019 Department Honors. Loyola University Chicago Department of Anthropology.
- 2018-2019 Transfer Student Honor Society member

#### Fieldwork:

- 2023– Director of the Punta Laguna Caves Project, a subproject of the Punta Laguna Archaeological Project, Yucatán, Mexico, directed by Dr. Sarah Kurnick, University of Colorado Boulder and David Rogoff, Independent Scholar.
- 2024 – 2025 Field Director and Excavation Supervisor, directed by Dr. Scott G. Ortman University of Colorado Boulder and Dr. Kaitlyn Davis, Northern Arizona University
- 2022 Excavation Supervisor, EL PROYECTO RÍO VERDE, Oaxaca, Mexico, directed by Dr. Arthur A. Joyce and Dr. Akira Ichikawa, University of Colorado Boulder.
- 2021 – 2022 Excavation Supervisor, Punta Laguna Archaeological Project, Yucatán, Mexico, directed by Dr. Sarah Kurnick, University of Colorado Boulder and David Rogoff, Independent Scholar

2019 Undergraduate fieldwork and laboratory analysis of archaeological materials from La Joya, Veracruz, Mexico. Directed by Dr. Philip J. Arnold III, Loyola University of Chicago Anthropology Department.

2017 – 2018 Field and laboratory analysis, Lost Town's Project, Edgewater, Maryland

#### Technical Reports:

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Kurnick, Sarah, David Rogoff, and **Nicholas Puente**

2024 Proyecto Arqueológico Punta Laguna: Informe Parcial de la Temporada 2023 para el Consejo Nacional de Arqueología de México (172 pages).

Kurnick, Sarah, David Rogoff, and **Nicholas Puente**

2023 Proyecto Arqueológico Punta Laguna: Informe Parcial de la Temporada 2022 para el Consejo Nacional de Arqueología de México (175 pages).

Rancaño Castillo, Saul, **Nicholas A. Puente**, Arthur A. Joyce, Elaine M. Aguayo Ortiz, and Jacklyn D. Rumberger.

2023 CAPÍTULO 2 – Excavaciones de la Operación A. In *EL PROYECTO RÍO VERDE: Informe Técnico de la Temporada de 2022*, edited by Arthur A. Joyce y Akira Ichikawa, pp. 19-180.

#### Academic Presentations:

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##### Conference Papers:

2025

##### **Nicholas Puente**

- Ritual Movement of Speleothems: Sourcing Speleothems via Trace Elements at Punta Laguna, Yucatan, Mexico. Presented at the 10th Annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association Research Colloquium Current Research in the Ancient Americas
- Where Water Becomes Stone: A review and methodological considerations of speleothem sourcing via trace elements. Presented at the Society for American Archaeology 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

Sarah Kurnick, David Rogoff, and **Nicholas Puente**

- Recently Excavated Postclassic Anthropomorphic Effigy Censers from Punta Laguna, Yucatan, Mexico. Presented at the Society for American Archaeology 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

2024

##### **Nicholas A. Puente**

- The Museo *Najil Tucha*: Fostering Local Maya Voices. The Spicer Legacy of Enduring and Persistent Peoples: A Panel Presentation. University of Alaska Fairbanks, Department of Anthropology and the Spicer Foundation
- Exploring Subsurface Worlds: The Punta Laguna Caves Project. Colorado Archaeological Society's 2024 State Conference. Grand Junction, Colorado.
- Talking with Stone: Sourcing Speleothems Manipulated by Ancient Maya Peoples. 9<sup>th</sup> annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association Research Colloquium Current Research in the Ancient Americas. Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Denver, Colorado

**Nicholas Puente**, Sarah Kurnick, and Ethan Abbe

- Entering *Chahk's* Realm: Ancient cave use and ritually deposited speleothems in Postclassic architecture at Punta Laguna, Yucatán, Mexico. Presented at the Society for American Archaeology 89th Annual Meeting.

**Nicholas A. Puente** and Sarah Kurnick

- Entangling Surface and Subsurface Worlds: The Movement of Speleothems and Creation of Space at Punta Laguna, Yucatán, Mexico. Presented at TAG (The North American Theoretical Archaeology Group), Santa Fe, New Mexico.

2023

**Nicholas Puente**, Sarah Kurnick, and Ethan Abbe

- Pursuing the Earth Monster's Fang: Initial Reconnaissance of Two Caves Utilized by Ancient Maya Peoples at the Site of Punta Laguna, Yucatán, Mexico. Presented at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association Research Colloquium Current Research in the Ancient Americas

**Nicholas A. Puente** and Sarah Kurnick

- Bundled Time: An Analysis of an Intra-Site *Sac-Be* Assemblage at Punta Laguna, Yucatán, Mexico. Presented at the Society for American Archaeology 88<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

2022

**Nicholas A. Puente** and Sarah Kurnick

- The Vibrant Road: An analysis of a sacbe at Punta Laguna, Mexico. Society for American Archaeology 87<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

Arthur A. Joyce, Akira Ichikawa, Saúl Rancano Castillo, and **Nicholas Puente**

- The Classic-Period Collapse on the Pacific Coast of Oaxaca from the Perspective of Residential Excavations in Operation A at Río Viejo. 7th Annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association Research Colloquium Current Research in the Ancient Americas. Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Denver, Colorado

**Nicholas A. Puente**

- Relations of Stone and Water: Postclassic Maya interactions in miniature masonry shrines. 7th Annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association Research Colloquium Current Research in the Ancient Americas. Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Denver, Colorado

2021

**Nicholas A. Puente**

- The Rhizomatic Road to Social Relations: An analysis of a *sacbe* at the archaeological site of Punta Laguna. 6th Annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association Research Colloquium Current Research in the Ancient Americas. Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Denver, Colorado

2020

**Nicholas A. Puente**

- Identifying the Archaeological Signatures of Inequality: An Analysis of Inequality at Late Formative La Joya and Bezuapan. Virtual Undergraduate Research and Engagement Symposium. Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, Illinois
- Identifying the Archaeological Signatures of Inequality: An Analysis of Inequality at Late Formative La Joya and Bezuapan. 43<sup>rd</sup> Midwest Conference on Mesoamerican Archaeology and Ethnohistory. Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, Illinois

Conference Posters:

2024

**Nicholas A. Puente**

- A Cave with No Teeth: Changes in ancient Maya cave use. Annual Graduate Student Research Symposium, University of Colorado Boulder

2023

**Nicholas A. Puente**

- Manifesting Rain: Rethinking Postclassic Maya miniature masonry shrines. Annual Graduate Student Research Symposium, University of Colorado Boulder

2022

**Nicholas A. Puente**

- The Vibrant Road: An analysis of a *sacbe* at Punta Laguna, Mexico. Annual Graduate Research Symposium, University of Colorado Boulder

2021

**Nicholas A. Puente**

- Identifying the Archaeological Signatures of Inequality: An Analysis of Inequality at Late Formative La Joya and Bezuapan. Society for American Archaeology 86<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

2019

**Nicholas A. Puente**

- Identifying the Archaeological Signatures of Inequality: An Analysis of Inequality at Late Formative La Joya and Bezuapan. Society for American Archaeology 85<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting\*

2018

**Nicholas A. Puente**

- Temporary Driver's Licenses for Immigrants in Chicago: Evaluating the Effects of SB957. Loyola University Chicago Anthropology Department Gala

**Invited Talks:**

2024 The Colorado Archaeological Society, Denver Chapter.

**Interviews:**

2023 Lizzie Wade. Archaeologists Study What Ruins Meant to People in the Past. *Science* 379(6639): 1282-1283,

**Teaching Experience:**

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**Instructor of Record:**

**Anthropology 2200:** The Archaeology of Human History, a fully online class. Responsible for teaching and grading twenty students. Summer 2025

**Graduate Teaching Assistant:**

**Anthropology 2200:** The Archaeology of Human History. Responsible for teaching and grading two 50-minute recitations a week. Spring 2024, 2021 and Fall 2021

**Anthropology 1155:** Exploring Global & Cultural Diversity: Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft. Responsible for teaching and grading two 50-minute recitations a week. Spring 2025

**Anthropology 1140:** Exploring a Non-Western Culture: The Maya. Responsible for teaching and grading two 50-minute recitations a week. Fall 2024, and Spring 2021

**Anthropology 1155:** Ancient Aliens and Contemporary Archaeology. Responsible for grading 42 students and presented one full 75 minute lecture. Spring 2023

**Anthropology 1190:** Origins of Ancient Civilizations. Responsible for teaching and grading two thirty student sections of 50-minute recitations a week. Fall 2025, 2023, 2022, 2020

### Archaeology Field School Teaching Experience:

**Anthropology 4350-100:** Archaeological Field and Laboratory Research. Organized and facilitated a five week-long field school as a teaching assistant. Supervised and trained students in archaeological excavation, laboratory analysis, site survey, and petroglyph analysis. Summer 2024 and 2025

### Community Archaeology Initiatives:

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2023 Collaborated with residents of the Punta Laguna village to develop a new archaeology exhibit with updates site information, purchased new exhibit cases with local artifacts. Display signs were written in English, Spanish and Yucatec Mayan. Created tour guide info sheets with information about the archaeological site for community tour guides.

2021 Los Antiguos Mayas y Punta Laguna: Un libro de colorear. Edited by David Rogoff and Sarah Kurnick. Translated by Nicholas Puente.

### Service:

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2024 – 2025 University of Colorado Boulder, Anthropology Graduate Student Association (AGSA) President. Responsible for organizing and securing funding for various Graduate Student events including conference travel, social events, and professionalization events. Helped secure \$11,000 in funding.

2024 – Founded and led the “Library Revitalization Project”. Worked with an undergraduate student and two fellow graduate students to develop a strategy for cataloguing the Anthropology department’s personal library. The project developed strategies for addressing foundational but outdated texts.

2023 – 2024 University of Colorado Boulder, Anthropology Graduate Student Association (AGSA) Secretary. Responsible for organizing and securing funding for various Graduate Student events including conference travel, social events, and professionalization events. Responsible for taking notes during AGSA as well as Department Faculty and Graduate Committee meetings. Helped secure \$9,200 in funding.

### Undergraduate Research Projects:

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2019 Anthropology Honors Thesis. Advised by Dr. Philip J. Arnold III

2018 – 2019 Applied Anthropology Project for Loyola University Chicago Anthropology Department. Temporary Driver’s Licenses for Immigrants in Chicago: Evaluating the Effects of SB957.

2016 – 2018 Museum intern, St. Charles Museum. St. Charles, Illinois

### Languages:

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English: Native speaker

Spanish: Fluent listener and speaker, advanced writing reading and writing skills.



### Professional Memberships:

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Society for American Archaeology

National Speleological Society member: 72786

### References:

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**Dr. Sarah Kurnick**, Associate Professor, Anthropology Department, University of Colorado Boulder. Email: [sarah.kurnick@colorado.edu](mailto:sarah.kurnick@colorado.edu)

**Dr. Arthur Joyce**, Professor, Anthropology Department, University of Colorado Boulder. Email: [arthur.joyce@colorado.edu](mailto:arthur.joyce@colorado.edu)

**Dr. James Brady**, Professor, Department of Anthropology, California State University, Los Angeles. Email: [jbrady@calstatela.edu](mailto:jbrady@calstatela.edu)