

Rafael Guerra was born in San Ignacio, Cayo, Belize. After completing his Junior College Degree he worked as a tour guide with several operators in the Cayo district (1996 – 2004). Rafael first joined the BVAR project in 1999, as part of a scholarship program (run by the project for Belizeans) to enhance his guiding skills by augmenting his background in archaeological methods and theory. After successfully completing the field course he returned to the project as volunteer and junior staff member (1999 – 2002). During this time Rafael worked at several sites with BVAR/WBRCP including Baking Pot, Cahal Pech, Caracol, Pook's Hill, Actun Tunichil Muknal, Actun Uayazba Kab, Actun Nak Beh, Actun Yaxteel Ahau, Chechem Ha cave and Actun Chapat, where he learned numerous skills including excavating, reconnaissance and surveying. He was later hired to work as part of the Tourism Development Project, Caracol (2001 – 2003), where he served as the Camp Manager.

In 2004 Rafael took over supervising salvage excavations and settlement surveys in the Chalillo area of the Upper Macal Valley (northeast of Caracol) in preparation of hydro-electrical development in the area.

In 2009 he completed received B.A in Anthropology from the University of Indianapolis (program offered in Belize at Galen University).

Currently Rafael is in employment with the Belize Institute of Archaeology, as an Archaeologist. His responsibilities include the development of a multivariate database, for all known archaeological sites in Belize, spanning from the Archaic to Historic Periods (8,000 BC – AD 1900's), and conducting reconnaissance and mapping of newly discovered sites. This database will eventually be part of a nation-wide GIS Project. He is also a Community Associate with the Institute for International Studies.

At present Mr. Guerra is the surveyor for the Belize Valley Archaeological Reconnaissance Project focusing on the monumental and settlement survey of the Lower Dover Maya Site in the Cayo District.

Recent Projects have included: the BRASS/EL Pilar Project (2004), working with John Whittaker and Kathryn Kamp (Grinnell University) where he learned the basics of flint knapping and lithic technology, as well as serving on the Northern Vaca Plateau speleoarchaeological project with Dr. Philip Reeder (University of South Florida), learning vertical Caving techniques.