



WORLD MONUMENTS FUND CELEBRATES GRADUATION OF STUDENTS FROM HERITAGE MANAGEMENT COURSE IN ERBIL, IRAQ

In November 2013, World Monuments Fund (WMF) celebrated the graduation of the first class of students from its heritage management training program in Iraq. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation and the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, the program grew out of WMF's ongoing work at Babylon as a means to increase site management capacity in the region.

The students were based at the Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage in the city of Erbil and led by U.S. faculty from the University of California, Los Angeles; University of Virginia; and University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). Coursework included classroom seminars and lectures, regional site visits, and practical exercises. The program also offered opportunities for Iraqi and Kurdish professionals to meet a range of international colleagues including scholars and preservation professionals from UNESCO, Institut français du Proche-Orient, University of Turin, Nature Iraq, and American University of Iraq. The success of the course has led to the opportunity to offer a similar training program in Erbil in 2014.

Lisa Ackerman, WMF Executive Vice President, stated: "We are delighted at the success of this program. Training a new generation of heritage specialists in Iraq will increase the capacity for proper management of historic sites in the country. We look forward to the 2014 program."

William Dupont, FAIA, UTSA Professor of Architecture, stated: "We were honored to offer our expertise to the highly motivated professionals in our classes during our time in Iraq. I'm happy to report the value of cultural heritage conservation is universally acknowledged."

World Monuments Fund in Iraq

World Monuments Fund has worked in Iraq since 2007. With support from the U.S. State Department's Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, and in collaboration with the Iraq State Board of Antiquities and Heritage, WMF is nearing completion of a site management and conservation plan for Babylon, one of the world's most important archaeological sites. In 2013, as a continuation of its commitment to working in Iraq, WMF developed the archaeological site management and historic preservation program to engage U.S. university faculty with local Iraqi

(more)

and Kurdish professionals, and to frame their work and knowledge within an Iraqi preservation context.

World Monuments Fund

World Monuments Fund is the leading independent organization devoted to saving the world's most treasured places. For nearly 50 years, working in 100 countries, its highly skilled experts have applied proven and effective techniques to preserve important architectural and cultural heritage sites around the globe. Through partnerships with local communities, funders, and governments, WMF inspires an enduring commitment to stewardship for future generations. Headquartered in New York, WMF has offices and affiliates worldwide. wmf.org, twitter.com/worldmonuments, and facebook.com/worldmonuments.

#

Media Inquiries

Ben Haley, +1 646 424 9594, bhaley@wmf.org