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### Team member spotlight: David Salge protects and preserves lands, history, and heritage



David Salge records pottery fragments found at an archaeological site.

From EIT Communications  
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Technology Manager **David Salge** is a volunteer avocational archaeologist, site steward, author, photographer, and llama rescuer who works to protect and preserve archaeological sites in Arizona.

#### Volunteering focus

Salge lives in Snowflake, Arizona, where he works in Enterprise Technology Infrastructure. Even though he grew up in Iowa, Salge found an appreciation for his current home in the Southwest at an early age. "We would load up the car and head west for a summer camping vacation every year. The trips to Arizona just had a lasting effect on me. I fell in love with the land and the cultures," Salge said.

Today, Salge is involved with many organizations that help monitor and protect lands and historical archaeological sites through public education and community outreach efforts.

Salge says we can learn a lot from the historical sites of the Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, and other nations. "We learn about their social interactions, diets, travels, crafts, health, medicinal plants, and information about farming, which we still use today," he said. "Archaeologists call these sites ruins, but native people do not. These places are still alive as spiritual sites."

Salge has grown to respect the people of the Southwest — their sense of community, respect for nature and environment, and respect for history. "That belief system is something I respect and want to learn more about," he said.

#### Volunteering Q&As

In the following section, David answers a few general questions about volunteering.

##### What gives you the inspiration to volunteer?

For me, volunteering is just an extension of an interest or a passion. In my case, it's the history of human habitation and migration in the Southwest, coupled with a desire to explore and photograph the areas around me.

In 2014, I joined the Arizona Site Steward Program, which consists of nearly 500 dedicated volunteer stewards whose mission is to protect historic, archaeology, and paleontology sites in Arizona. Deliberate and unintended vandalism is a major problem for our public lands in Arizona. For many native people today, these areas of previous habitation are a vital connection to their ancestors and culture, so it's important to protect these sites.

##### What rewards have you experienced by volunteering?

As a site steward program regional coordinator, I help monitor more than 70 archaeological sites managed by multiple federal, state, and private land owners. The role gives me an opportunity to work side-by-side with volunteers and professionals with diverse backgrounds and knowledge, and I am entrusted with unique knowledge of these sites. From a personal development perspective, my knowledge of the Puebloan people's history and culture has grown beyond expectations; moreover, I am continuously learning.

In 2002, I was elected as president of the San Tan Historic Society and have served the organization in multiple capacities. In 2007, I used a Wells Fargo Volunteer Leave opportunity to author a book on local history entitled, *Images of America, Around San Tan Mountain*.

And in 2018, I was appointed to the Governor's Archaeology Advisory Commission and became a member of its Public Education Committee.

##### What other causes or organizations do you support in your community — or beyond?

In 2007, my wife and I established Arizona Llama Rescue, a nonprofit organization that provides rescue, adoption, training, and mentoring services for llama owners in Arizona. Our home in eastern Arizona doubles as a foster facility for over a dozen llamas.

##### How do you find the time to volunteer and maintain work-life balance status?

For me, it's a personal lifestyle choice, one that provides its own balance. I'm especially lucky to be able to start each day with the llamas. Every day, I get up and take about 30 to 40 minutes to feed and check on everyone. As I'm out walking the property, I might see a pottery fragment. With the weather and animals stirring things up, they just sort of appear.

What would you say to other team members to encourage them to volunteer?

#### Support your community

##### Volunteer

Discover how you can support the nonprofit organizations that benefit your community through [volunteering](#).

##### Share your story

Do you want to share your volunteering story? Send an email to [EITcommunications@wellsfargo.com](mailto:EITcommunications@wellsfargo.com).

Pursue your interests. Rewarding volunteer opportunities will open up with little effort.



Annabelle, a current rescue llama in search of a home, poses for a photo.