CHC Professor Ventura Pérez Excavates New Knowledge from Old Bones

Commonwealth Honors College Professor Ventura Pérez, along with his colleagues, were recently published in *Science Advances*. Funded by Thomas Edison, *Science Advances* is an academic journal that publishes research across the sciences. Previous research published by *Science Advances* includes the first entire human genome and the first studies tying AIDS to human immunodeficiency virus.

Pérez and his colleagues’ research focused on the bones of an extinct Madagascan elephant bird. Through a cut-mark and tool-mark analysis, performed by Pérez, they discovered that human presence on Madagascar dated back 10,500 years ago — about 6,000 years earlier than previously believed. The new evidence tells us that humans and nature coexisted together without environmental loss, poignant given the rate at which species today are going extinct.

In addition to his research, Pérez teaches courses in the Department of Anthropology and the Honors college. Every spring, he teaches “Violence in American Culture” (Honors 321H), which explores the social and cultural factors and interactions that potentially leads to violence, particularly through a historical and anthropological lens. It is open to senior, junior, and sophomore Honors college students.

Read more about Pérez and his colleagues’ research, [here](https://www.honors.umass.edu/braggingwrites/chc-professor-ventura-p%C3%A9rez-excavates-new-knowledge-old-bones) and [here](https://www.honors.umass.edu/).