

Award Honoree

Dr. Joyce White, Consulting Scholar and archaeologist at the University of Pennsylvania Museum and Executive Director of ISEAA, was honored for her work as an Expert Witness in the US Justice Department's Operation Antiquity. The award was bestowed at the Fifteenth Annual Law Enforcement Award ceremony of the United States Attorney's Office Central District of California in Los Angeles, October 21, 2016. The occasion recognized more than 300 Federal and California agents ranging from the Secret Service to the Federal Bureau of Investigations, plus White as the sole Expert Witness.

Joseph O. Johns, Chief of the Environmental and Community Safety Crimes Section of the United States Attorney's Office for the Central District of California, recognized the investigating team stating that the "complex, international undercover investigation headed by these outstanding individuals determined that the... Markells (two of the OA defendants) were illegally importing and selling ancient, archeological resources from China, Thailand, Burma, and Cambodia. Amongst the sites ravaged by the... criminal activity was Ban Chiang, Thailand, a United Nations World Heritage Site dating back to the Bronze Age... The Markells were convicted of tax fraud and smuggling conspiracies and ordered to repatriate hundreds of looted artifacts. Jonathan Markell was sentenced to 18 months in prison." White wrote a declaration and testified at the Markells' sentencing hearing in December 2015.

Johns furthermore said regarding Dr. White, "Typically, expert witnesses are not recognized -- but then again, you were not the typical expert witness. Your experience, expertise, and advice were woven by... the agent team into the very fabric of the investigation."

The etched glass award plaque from the US Department of Justice states White is recognized for her "integrity, commitment, and outstanding service to the people of the United States of America."