



Sketches

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CraftNet is an international network of community colleges devising innovative ways through partnerships to develop artisan-based strengths into a sustainable growth sector for each of their service areas. Projects at each college integrate various aspects of design, production, technology, marketing, collaboration, and business management skills, and include ways to attract low-income and nontraditional learners. CraftNet's **website** at <http://www.craftnetglobal.com> features a curriculum designed for artists who want to use ecommerce, galleries displaying work from students and faculty at member colleges, and past issues of CraftNet Sketches. For information about our host organization, RTS, please visit the website of **Regional Technology Strategies, Inc.** at <http://www.rtsinc.org> or call 919.933.6699.



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CraftNet Member News

Harlan County Trail of Storytelling Through Art: Southeast Technical Community College in Appalachian Kentucky partnered with the Tri-Cities Tourism Commission to develop three public art pieces celebrating different groups of people who came to the Tri-Cities to work in the coal mines. This project builds on the college's tile mosaic workshops that have been creating public art since 2004. It was conceived and organized by Robert Gipe and Tracy Bailey at the **Edsel T. Gobey Appalachian Center**, which is part of the college's prestigious Appalachian Program to generate cultural and sustainable development in a region that has a per capita income less than 60 percent of the U.S. average but has a rich tradition of folklore, music, and history.



Left: Creating the mosaic art; Right: Delivering the art; Below: The finished artwork.

The first artwork installation focuses on the experience of immigrants from central and southern Europe. It is based on the story of a woman who came from Hungary to the Tri-Cities area. Because she was multilingual, she would write letters home for families of many nationalities. She often sewed twenty-dollar bills into the hem of denim overalls to mail back to the families in the old country, hiding the money to guard against mail theft.

Each side of the mailbox tells a different story of immigrant life in Harlan County. The mosaics are based on photographs from the college's historical collections. Local artists worked with community members to construct the eight-foot tall, steel frame tile mosaic public artworks. Other community members filled in, leveled, and landscaped the site, laid a stone path through it, and constructed the concrete pad for installation of the work in downtown Cumberland.

A second artwork site is at the East Kentucky Social Club in Lynch, with interviews of project participants providing the stories. Eight young women in the **Work Now Kentucky** program joined the project as summer workers. They proved instrumental to the completion of the project, interviewing community residents were engaged in the storytelling portion of the program and developing into fine tile mosaicists.

Joe Scopa of the College's Art Department volunteered his time to supervise the construction, glazing, and firing of over two thousand handmade tiles used in the storytelling section of the mailbox sculpture. He worked with Southeast welding instructor Britt Lawson to weld the frame. Tracy Bailey and landscape designer Shirley Garland worked on the landscape surrounding the sculpture, and members of the East Kentucky Social Club in Lynch provided interviews and support. See <http://legacy.southeast.kctcs.edu/AppalachianCenter/blogs/wpctr/>



Former union hall to become studio for clay, wood, fiber arts for Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC) has signed a lease to convert a 12,000-square-foot former union hall located near the ARTgarage into classrooms and teaching studio for wood turning, pottery and quilting. This is the newest expansion of the College's **arts initiative** to support Northeast Wisconsin's art economy. The announcement underscores NWTC's support for the revitalization efforts to transform Olde Main Street into Green Bay's premier arts destination.

Activities are being coordinated with the ARTgarage, enhancing the camaraderie and community-building that the area's art culture provides. The two facilities have already issued joint course brochures, and NWTC students helped organize, promote, and host the Art and Soul annual art auction, which was conducted both in NWTC's Center for Business and Industry and online. Rotating art exhibits in the Library complement the works recently installed on all three NWTC campuses.



While NWTC will still offer art classes in area high schools, community centers, and other multi-purpose facilities, the Artisan Center will be the first college facility designed specifically for artist entrepreneurs. Because the facility doesn't need to be "re-purposed" after class, the College can install extensive specialized equipment that will be shared among artists, removing a significant barrier to entrepreneurship.

"Our vision is to pair art with the skills necessary to sell the items," according to Sally Martin, Dean of Community and Learning Services. "We're very employment-oriented, and this is no different." That's not to deny the merit of art for art's sake, she adds, and there will always be art hobbyists. "But part of the focus in our classes is to identify a business plan, analyze sales potential, project startup costs [even in] the wood-turning class." Similarly, the Jewelry

program's nine-month diploma "isn't just about looking good; it's about how to make a living."



The art initiatives spring from the belief that many areas of the economy could be strengthened if education and training were available. A survey of Northeast Wisconsin artists found many individuals who felt they had the artistic talent needed for success, but lacked the business expertise. The College determined that development of new business skills and new technical skills could help more artist-entrepreneurs thrive. For more details,

please see <http://www.nwtc.edu/academics/progteamsites/artsatnwtc/Pages/home.aspx>.

Southwest Virginia Community College in Tazewell County, Virginia is home to the **Appalachian Arts Center** (<http://apparts.sw.eu>), a 4,000-square-foot gallery, marketplace, and educational resource. Formerly a popular general store and community gathering place,

the college acquired the building in 1988, renovated it, and opened it as the Appalachian Arts Center in 2006. The Center is divided into seven gallery spaces for local craftspeople, students, authors, and musicians. A rotating exhibition space showcases regional artisans.



Southwest Virginia Community College now also offers its crafts courses during the day and in the evening in the

Arts Center, offering pottery-making, leather crafts, and visual arts to individuals of all ages, from public school students to senior citizens. These courses provide a general introduction to the crafts as well as in-depth skills and knowledge for those expecting to earn a living from their craft. The Arts and Crafts Production Certificate offers preparation for careers in craft shops, galleries, commercial design, and self employment in the arts. Artist and craft instructor Doug Branton works in multiple media, including industrial design and computer graphics. Each semester, about 80 to 100 students enroll in classes, with 10 to 15 pursuing a degree.

Leather made by SVCC graduate Peggy Keith and instrument made by Charlie Butcher.

Recent Research and Innovations

A new report released in November from NESTA's Creative Industries, titled **Creative Clusters and Innovation**, links the two, "putting creativity on the map" of the United Kingdom, as the subtitle suggests. Creative industries comprise more than six percent of the British economy and are growing twice as fast as other sectors. The report, written by a group of five authors from the Universities of Birmingham and Wales, begins with the obligatory mapping of the creative industries by region to compare the relative concentrations across the UK and see where the hot spots are. London, as expected, is the center of much of the advertising, music and performing arts, and video, film, and photography. But fashion design was much higher in the East Midlands, and arts, antiques, and crafts were more heavily concentrated in Yorkshire & the Humber and in West Midlands than in London. Architecture, surprisingly was higher everywhere than in London.

The real innovativeness of the study was its measurement of innovation in creative sectors that do not lend themselves to conventional measures such as patents or R&D investments such as confidentiality agreements, copyrights, trademarks, introducing new products, or using new processes. But soft innovations that are "primarily impacts upon sensory perception and aesthetic appeal" remain unmeasured. Using the broader measures, the creative sectors compare well to manufacturing, retail and distribution, and other services. London, the focal point of creative industries however, has the lowest rate of innovation or any region, perhaps, the authors suggest, because so much of it is unmeasured "soft" innovation. The full report is available at <http://www.nesta.org.uk/library/documents/Creative-Clusters-29Nov.pdf>.

Ann Markusen and **Anne Gawda** have a new white paper called **Creative Placemaking**, produced for The Mayors' Institute on City Design and published by NEA. The authors suggest decentralizing art spaces throughout a city with "creative crucibles" that are integrated with commerce and residences, not stand-alone edifices or complexes. Thus, economic and cultural activity is intertwined. The authors use data and case studies to bolster their argument. One in

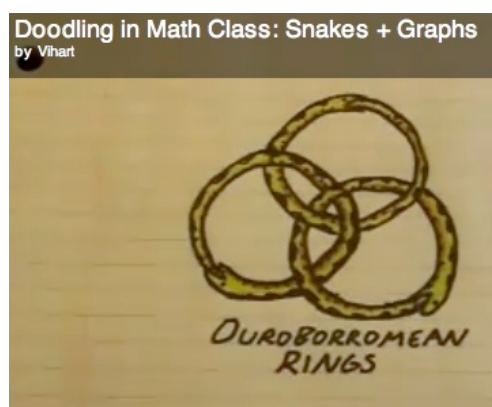
three creative workers, the research shows, is self-employed, as compared to one in 10 in the entire workforce. Combined exports of the Motion Picture and Sound Recording, Broadcasting and Telecommunications, and Publishing industries were \$39 billion in 2008, which was more than air transportation and about 85 percent of all farm exports. Their examples of creative placemaking include large cities of Cleveland, Buffalo, Portland, and San Jose as well as Araundville, Louisiana; Paducah, Kentucky; and Fond du Lac, Minnesota. The report is available at <http://www.nea.gov/pub/CreativePlacemaking-Paper.pdf>.

The Otis Report on the **Creative Economy of the Los Angeles Region** is one of many such reports recently released, this one from the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation for the Otis College of Art and Design. The very detailed analysis distinguishes self-employment from employment and compares growth rates of both. In Los Angeles County, for example, half of the communications art sector was self-employed, but self employment grew slightly more slowly between 2003 and 2008. Meanwhile, two-thirds of visual and performing arts were self-employed and grew three time as fast as employment. The study's definition of the creative economy, unlike most other such studies, includes the manufacturing sectors fashion, furniture and home furnishings, and toys, which accounted for about a third of total creative industries employment. The report is available at http://www.otis.edu/creative_economy/download/2010_Creative_Economy_Report.pdf.

The **2011 Craft Organization Development Association (CODA)** international leadership conference will be held in Portland, Maine, June 8-11, 2011 (Wed.-Sat.). The theme of this year's conference "Connecting the Dots...collaborating...fundraising...telling your story." More information is on CODA's web site at <http://www.codacraft.org/dnn/Conferences/2011ConferenceInfo/tabid/213/Default.aspx>

Math as Art, Art as Math: For those not yet convinced of the value of art to math, watch the recent National Public Radio-produced YouTube video of Vi Hart, who refers to herself as "a recreational mathmusician." It's available at <http://www.npr.org/blogs/krulwich/2010/12/16/132050207/this-is-for-the-i-hate-math-crowd-not-after-this-you-won-t>.

The article also links to Paul Lockhart's **A Mathematician's Lament**, where a musician wakes from a terrible nightmare. In his dream he finds himself in a society where music education has been made mandatory. "We are helping our students become more competitive in an increasingly sound-filled world," he asserts. "Educators, school systems, and the state are put in charge of this vital project. Studies are commissioned, committees are formed, and decisions are made—all without the advice or participation of a single working musician or composer."



Tidbits from **Handmade**, the official newsletter of the **Western Cape Craft Sector in South Africa:** The Cape Craft & Design Institute (CCDI) announced a Kellogg Foundation-supported residency for artisans, with the first one going to a recycled metal artist. Another example of sustainable art is the House of Ngamathuba, which turns used glass into art. And the Cape

Town Fashion Council, which is co-located at CCDI, alongside the new Fashion Technology and Innovation Centre, a collaboration with Cape Peninsula University of Technology. For more about CCDI, see <http://www.ccdi.org.za/>.

Member Profile: Eastern Maine Community College and the Maine Crafts Council

With a rich history of indigenous basket making, ceramics from native terra cotta clay, and a rural background of blacksmithing, Maine is a nexus for education in the art of crafting.

Although the state has a strong craft tradition, it previously has lacked educational programs to support these trademark crafts. **Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC)** and **Maine Crafts Association** formed a partnership in order to provide an accessible venue for local artisans to share the skills of their trade with a new generation of emerging artists. The result of this partnership has been to develop the Traditional and Contemporary Craft Degree Program at the community college, which first opened to students in the fall of 2009.



In an effort to extend the training to all communities throughout Maine, EMCC has the ability to broadcast courses to rural areas up to nine hours away from the nearest educational institution. Because the program integrates distance and hands-on learning methods, participants unable to attend classes at a local community college or university are paired with a Master Craft Artist in their area. Students are offered education in a variety of media, including fiber, metal, clay, and wood. They have

the added benefit of being able to immediately display their work at Maine Crafts Association's Gallery, the Center for Maine Craft.

"This degree program is specifically for entrepreneurs who will develop their own business. However, to help them get started, MCA offers exposure and marketing for their work through the Center for Maine Craft and other Access to Markets programs, such as participation in the MCA booth at the New England Products Trade-show, and seasonal Holiday Stores," said Lynn Thompson of Maine Crafts Association.

Thompson would like to see a market for handcrafted products among local manufacturers. "We want to develop a relationship between the TCC program at the college and Maine-based builders, architects, and designers that would encourage the building and design industry to purchase goods and services directly from craft artisans," she said.

To fulfill the requirements for an Associate in Applied Science for Traditional and Contemporary Crafts, students must successfully complete a



combination of two basic design classes, a "history of craft" class, and general education classes, along with 24 credit hours of "Prior Learning Experience and Apprenticeship" hands-on training as well as custom-tailored internships in the individual student's specialization. Entrepreneurial skills are taught through three required business management classes, including a course on business plan development and composition. Graduates of the program will be proficient in their specialized media and will be able demonstrate skills in product design, marketing, and accounting. A Certificate of Traditional and Contemporary Crafts is also offered at EMCC and requires 12 hours of Prior Learning Experience and Apprenticeship, Introduction to Design, 3D Design, and general education courses.

The practicum portion of the degree or certificate offers two options to enrolled students: Prior Learning Experience and Apprenticeship. Students with prior experience in their craft can present a portfolio to fulfill the 24 hours of required hands-on training. For those students who do not have a portfolio but have prior experience, a portfolio development class is offered. For students with no prior experience, Maine Crafts Association and EMCC have brought on board a group of Master Craft Artists to act as mentors to students of the program. Students also have the option of enlisting their own Master Craft Artist for mentorship once the program has certified the mentor.

Although recruiting for the Traditional and Contemporary Crafts Degree Program is done chiefly through area high schools, most of these high schools do not provide instruction in crafts. They focus instead on digital or fine arts. "MCA is working to encourage the inclusion of at least short modules of craft skills, in pottery, fiber arts, and mixed media, in high school classrooms," said Thompson. "Our greatest challenge is in marketing the program to potential students. Everyone who hears about the program's unique structure is excited about its educational potential. However, we need to help students understand the potential for their careers in the arts." Recruitment also focuses on retirees throughout the state, as many retirees are crafters that either have not considered craft as potential livelihood or do not have the resources or entrepreneurial education to promote their crafts in a business arena.

Eastern Maine Community College provides most of the funding for the program, supplemented by additional funding from two private foundation grants that support research and administrative fees for the development of the practicum portion of the degree program.

The Traditional and Contemporary Craft Program of EMCC and Maine Crafts Association is intended to serve as a pilot-program for community colleges across the nation. EMCC and Maine Crafts Association currently are working to prepare the model for presentation to other institutions with the interest of preserving and promoting the art of traditional and contemporary crafts.

—Profile written by Corinne Cain, RTS

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CraftNet Member Colleges

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Berea College, Berea, Kentucky
Danish College of Glass and Ceramics, Nexø, Denmark
Eastern Maine Community College, Bangor, Maine
Esaydi FET College, Port Shepson, South Africa
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology-Furniture College, Letterfrack, Ireland
Haywood Community College, Waynesville, North Carolina
Hazard Community College, Hindman, Kentucky
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, Green Bay, Wisconsin
Patrick Henry Community College, Martinsville, Virginia
Piedmont Technical College, Edgefield, South Carolina
Santa Fe Community College, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Sheridan College, Sheridan, Wyoming
Southeast Community & Technical College, Cumberland, Kentucky
Southern West Virginia Community College, Mount Gay, West Virginia
Western Piedmont Community College, Morganton, North Carolina

CraftNet Associate Members

Maine Crafts Association
Montana Arts Council



Happy Holidays