

Dean's Report
February 2009
College of Fine Arts
Submitted by Chuck McWeeny

Thanks to the hard work of the faculty, the support of our staff and our directors' leadership we have had a successful year in the College of Fine Arts. Much has been accomplished and there is much to do. The art world, academia, and the world in general are rapidly changing and we have to adopt a more facile and adroit approach to the delivery of our curriculum and the development of our programs. Our strategic plan calls for us to be "a model for excellence in our specialized programs and interdisciplinary collaborations." It also calls for our students to be fluent in emerging technologies. The College of Fine Arts, Ohio University and higher education in general are at a critical point. A fast moving networked culture, diminishing resources, and the accessibility of technology and information are all driving us toward rapid change, challenging art production and adaptation. For all of its challenges, this is an exciting time to be the Dean of the College of Fine Arts.

The continued support by the Provost for Arts for Ohio and the hard work and dedication of Maureen Wagner and her staff has made the arts more accessible and raised the profile of the arts on campus and in the community. We are also much further along the path of integrating the arts into the curriculum of Ohio University. Another aid to progress on this path is the recent acquisition of the Athena Theater. The theater was launched this year and is thriving. Ruth Bradley is successfully providing the students and the community with high quality film experiences by working closely with dozens of faculty to help support their academic offerings. These are just a couple of ways the college is integral to the academic and broader community.

Our college has made tremendous progress in a challenging environment in part due to the support of the university administration. The leadership team in the college has been working hard in support of all the college and school initiatives and they have been very successful. Keeping the goals of the college in mind, we have made some major changes and advancements. Some of the accomplishments of the past year are:

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Athena Theater

The college acquired the Athena Theater and opened the doors in September of 2008. We accepted it as a self-supporting unit at no cost to the college but with an expectation that we would run it as a business. The purpose of acquiring the Athena is to create more of a presence, to integrate the arts into the curriculum and to provide quality arts experiences to a mass audience. We are confident that the theater can meet these goals while building a more accessible place for the arts in the Athens community. The process that led to the Athena coming to the college, the implementation of scheduled movies and a professional movie going experience was years in the making and much more complicated than it looks. Navigating the industry, the legalities, the business plan and the facility was very complex and time consuming but in retrospect I believe it was worth it.

Fine Arts Residential Learning Community (RLC)

The college's RLC program moved into to the newly renovated Lincoln Hall this fall with collaboration and assistance from the Offices of Residence Life and Housing and the dedication of Norma Humphreys, Assistant Dean. This residence hall contains arts friendly spaces recommended by the College of Fine Arts representatives from all four undergraduate schools. Specialized spaces include, an art studio with natural lighting, easels and drafting tables; a music and art computer lounge with licensed software, electronic keyboards and a scanner; a seminar room with a cushioned floor and a portable bar for dancers, mirrored walls, curtains, upright piano, props and lighting for theater majors; and a secure glass display unit for artwork in the lobby.

Student participation is up from last year. In 2007-08 approximately 25 students opted to live in our former RLC housed in Mackinnon Hall with another class of 25 students made up of COFA freshmen housed in other areas. This year we had @ 100 applications for Lincoln with 60 students enrolled in the RLC classes. The overflow students were housed next door in Jefferson Hall. More students could have been accommodated but we were limited by bed availability in Lincoln and curriculum delivery personnel/scheduling.

The RLC worked in collaboration with the Kennedy Museum of Art to house artwork from the museum in the Lincoln display unit for the fall quarter. Students in the RLC visited the KMA twice during the fall which led to a final project "labeltalk" in which they provided their insights into the Lincoln works. The students' work is now on

exhibit at the KMA through the Spring quarter.

Development

This year with the help and guidance of the Office of Advancement, the college completed a strategic plan for development. This plan lays the groundwork for better communication with our alumni, the eventual solicitation of major gifts and establishes a culture of giving to help support the college. This strategic plan has already been implemented and what follows are a number of related activities that are underway:

- An e-newsletter template has been designed and e-mailed quarterly to alumni and friends of the college. We have now completed and sent our fourth edition. It has been very well received. The goal of the newsletter is to connect alumni with the current activities, direction and accomplishments of the college.
- We established a Friends and Alumni Board. Eleven individuals, mostly alumni of the college, have agreed to come to campus in April to learn more about us and to work and advocate on our behalf. The frequency, location and other details will be worked out at our first meeting this spring.
- The college is seeking corporate sponsorship of the arts. To this end, we are printing materials that promote the college and articulate the benefit to the corporate sponsor. These materials have been designed and we will be meeting with select corporations in the near future.
- Alumni events in major alumni locations like New York are a part of the strategic plan. The first such event is planned in New York for March 15th.

Creative Research

The College has continued to invest in faculty research and professional activities. Last year nearly \$29,000 was awarded in Creative Research Awards to six of our group one faculty. This academic year the College has increased the Faculty Professional Activity Fund to \$450 (formerly \$350) for domestic activities and \$500 (formerly \$450) for international activities to reflect the increased travel costs.

It is worth encouraging our faculty to continue to actively pursue Baker & OURC Awards. According to statistics dating 1995-2008 that the university has recently released, our college ranks second in the number of applicants for each award. More

importantly, we enjoyed a 15% success rate with OURC proposals and 22% success rate with Baker proposals.

College of Fine Arts students also very actively pursue internal university grants, especially the Student Enhancement Award. From 1995-2008, 20% of the total proposals came from College of Fine Arts students, while 23% of these students were awarded grant funds.

International and External programs

Despite the worsening global economy and a weak US dollar, the College of Fine Arts continued to sponsor active and diverse programs throughout the world. Successful programs were held in Ghana, Great Britain, Hungary, Mexico and Spain. While our own students enthusiastically participated, large numbers of students also participated from other colleges, including many who were immersing themselves in an arts experience for the first time. We also offered a summer theater program in New York for the first time. We hope this will be expanded to include the School of Art this coming summer.

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

An administrator accomplishes little without a very competent and dedicated staff and the support of the faculty. Dedication, teamwork and a consistent vision have led to a number of accomplishments throughout the college.

Academic Support

- Continued a three-year computer refresh program for faculty. All faculty have laptop computers that are less than three years old.
- The former Visual Resource Library is currently undergoing a major renovation.
- Contributed matching funds to the School of Art computer lab to match the 1804 proposal that was awarded in AY 2007-2008
- Increased maximum faculty travel awards to reflect increases in travel costs.
- Advocated successfully for a second year of funding for Arts for Ohio.
- Managed and updated internal communication through flat screen monitors.
- Negotiating with web designer to contract new college and school web sites.
- There is a new Art History HTC program with a Music HTC program in development.

Student Awards

- Annual Student Research & Creativity Fair: Three 1st Place awards, Three 2nd Place awards.
- Provost's Undergraduate Research Fund (PURF): 13 awards.
- COFA Deans Undergraduate Creative Research Award: 14 awards.
- Student Enhancement Award: 5 awards (19 for entire university). 2 graduate students, 3 undergraduates.

Nationally Competitive Awardees

- Jennifer Goodlander - Interdisciplinary Arts - Fulbright Indonesia 2008
- Kimberly Vandegrift - Music, German - Fulbright DAAD, Germany 2008
- Avery Blair-Wilson - Painting- Teach for America Corp 2008
- Sergey Kahn - Photography w/ Film minor – Fulbright, Germany finalist 2008
- Mahlon Huston won the National Council on Ceramic Education's Regina Brown fellowship for undergraduate research. He is the second student from the college to win this national award in three years.

Service

- Ohio Arts Council Board Member
- Member, Budget Planning Council (BPC)
- BPC ad-hoc committee for non-medical benefits
- BPC sub-committee of internal fees
- Member, Information Technology Advisory Council (ITAC)
- Member, Facilities and Planning Advisory Committee (FPAC).
- Member, Compensation Committee.
- Member, Space Management Advisory Committee (SMAC).
- Member, Percent for Arts Committee.
- Member, University Curriculum Committee.
- Member, UCC Programs Committee
- Member, Academic Leadership committee.
- Chair, Ad-hoc Five-Year Academic Action Plan feedback committee

Teaching

Although I did not have any scheduled classes this year, I did continue to attend graduate critiques in ceramics whenever I was available. I also continued to meet individually with a small number of graduate students about their work.

Professional Associations

- International Council of Fine Arts Deans (ICFAD) Attended national conference in Portland, OR
- National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) Attended national conference in Pittsburgh, PA
- College Art Association (CAA) Attended national conference in Dallas.