Creative Arts through Community Engagement

WCU & Asheville Community Theatre: Applying Costume Technology Design Skills

Faculty Susan Brown-Strauss (bstrauss@wcu.edu) with students in the Costume Technology class partnered with Asheville Community Theatre (ACT) and North Carolina Stage Company (NC Stage) in Asheville in a collaborative project to create eighteenth century costumes for a production of Amadeus, March 2015. Costumes were designed by Brown-Strauss and WCU students were involved with all aspects of creating the costumes including patterning, construction, alterations, and modification of existing costumes. This is the second collaborative project with Asheville theaters and WCU costume students. Previous collaboration included a production of In the Next Room with NC Stage in 2012.

About this collaborative project as an example of community engagement, Professor Brown-Strauss said that “collaboration is central to any theatre production and collaboration is integral to my teaching and creative activities. Making connections between new information learned at conferences, research, classroom theory, experiential learning and application is core to my work as a designer and as a teacher. Community engagement such as this project provides broader types of activities and new ways of informing students taking them beyond the classroom while providing them with opportunities to make new connections within the context of the creative process and as part of being a contributing member of the larger community.”

If you would like your community engagement work recognized through the STAR Engagement Projects program, please submit your proposals through the Community-based Activities Faculty Survey administered annually in the spring semester from early April – late May.