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CULTIVATING THE ARTS AT PENN STATE BRANDYWINE

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ABSTRACT

Cultivating the Arts at Penn State Brandywine is a project that involves fostering artistic expression at a small, commuter campus. For some time, students have expressed a strong interest in Brandywine showcasing the arts more on its campus. During my four years at Brandywine, I discussed with many students about an increase in music programs, art festivals, dance performances and the like. Because of these experiences, I was motivated to help the campus achieve a greater arts presence. For this thesis, the medium of art that I chose to use was photography. In order to cultivate the arts, I facilitated three events: a photography lecture, a photography contest, and a photography exhibition, “The Natural World.” With the data collected from these events, this thesis aims to answer two research questions: (1) How effective was “The Natural World” photography exhibition at cultivating any of the four roles (Container, Connector, Convener, and Catalyst) identified by The Walker Art Center's model of civic engagement? (2) Did the “The Natural World” photography exhibition effectively cultivate the arts at Penn State Brandywine?

From my research, I learned that when artistic expression is added to a particular environment, it can foster individual and social change. Specifically, I focused on three elements of artistic expression: arts-based programming, art as a medium for civic and community engagement, and photography as a means of presenting aesthetic qualities. The research conducted on civic and community engagement, a key component of this thesis, highlights how such engagement can serve to better one's community and provoke change.

Keywords: Art, Campus Culture, Civic and Community Engagement, Cultivating, Photography,
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Purpose

The idea of creating an environment with more artistic expression at Penn State Brandywine, a commuter college campus in Media, Pennsylvania, has necessitated a study on this topic. The basis for cultivating a greater arts presence on campus was determined by many experiences I had with fellow students, as well as faculty and staff members. For example, my first year of attending Penn State Brandywine, fellow first-year students had expressed the desire to see more arts, such as a jazz band, choir, art festivals, and theatrical performances, similar to what they had experienced in high school. These concerns encouraged me to offer more opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to participate in the arts at Penn State Brandywine.

Artistic expression is one of the ways in which we, as humans, communicate our thoughts and emotions. The objective of this study is to develop a greater arts presence at Penn State Brandywine through the medium of visual arts, specifically photography. By means of a photography exhibition, I wanted to facilitate an open event that would serve as a catalyst for artistic expression and civic and community engagement on campus. This particular goal derived from a model for civic engagement that is outlined in my review of literature in Chapter 2. There, I present four unique roles that the Walker Art Center created to evaluate the effectiveness of an event at engaging its audience. The roles are as follows: Container, Convener, Connector, or Catalyst. As mentioned previously, I sought for this project to serve as a Catalyst, or an event that provoked awareness and mobilized people to take action. Additionally, as a Connector, my project would be able to provide a space for individuals of various backgrounds to express themselves creatively through their photography (2003).
Focus

As a citizen of a campus community, I determined that students should develop an active voice on campus. This voice was in the form of a small exhibition, “The Natural World,” which included 14 solicited digital photographs from members of the campus community that will be permanently displayed in the four buildings at Penn State Brandywine. Digital photography, in this thesis, is a means to beautify the campus through creative expression and to make the campus more aesthetically appealing. This paper begins by providing the appropriate literature for implementing artistic expression on this campus, as well as how the use of photography ties in with definitions of civic and community engagement, an academic minor that Brandywine offers. In my research on this topic, I found that many colleges and universities use their grounds and facilities to showcase a wide variety of art, whether it is created by professionals or by students. Brandywine has made similar strides at displaying artistic expression, from its courses in visual art, design, creative writing, theater, and music. Also, the campus has a beautiful arrangement of metal sculptures. More recently, the campus has even renovated its largest classroom into a performing arts space. Still, arts-based events on campus have largely been facilitated by faculty or staff members. One medium of artistic expression at Brandywine that is carried out by students though is the annually-published literary magazine, *Penn In Hand*, which presents poetry, short stories, prose, fine art, and photography. Even though the magazine presents various art forms, its focus is still on literary work. As an editor for the magazine, I thought that engaging students in other forms of art would be beneficial for the campus.

Considering the lessons that I learned from my study of Civic and Community Engagement, which is discussed in my review of literature, I wanted to use my role as an active citizen of my campus community to affect the presence of the arts. The following research
questions were developed for this thesis: (1) How effective was “The Natural World” photography exhibition at cultivating any of the four roles (Container, Connector, Convener, and Catalyst) identified by The Walker Art Center’s model of civic engagement? (2) Did the “The Natural World” photography exhibition effectively cultivate the arts at Penn State Brandywine?

Overview

The foundation of this thesis was created with a review of literature on the following topics: Arts-Based Programming, Civic and Community Engagement, and Photography. In the section entitled, “Arts-Based Programming,” I present information on how arts-based service-learning has been used as a tool not only to beautify communities, but also to create active citizens. The next section entitled, “Civic and Community Engagement,” further discusses the effectiveness of being actively involved in one's community and the outcomes it creates. Also in this section, I highlight a key component for my thesis, the Walker Art Center's four roles of civic engagement that I used to evaluate my first research question. Lastly, the section entitled, “Photography,” describes how photography, a modern form of visual art, can be aesthetically pleasing and provide insights into society and culture.

Following the review of literature, in Chapter 3 “Cultivating the Arts at Penn State Brandywine,” a brief history of the campus is given along with its connection to arts-programming in the past. Next, I consider how the arts are represented at other local colleges and universities, which influenced my vision for this thesis. The duration of this project is covered in Chapter 4 “Research Methods,” in which I layout the process for developing all the needed components for this project to succeed. This particular section evolved dramatically, in that I had to continuously reconsider my methodology and thesis. Chapter 5 “Data and Results” provides the outcomes from the small events I facilitated on campus, a photography lecture, a
photography contest, and “The Natural World” photography exhibition. Attached to the data are my recommendations and evaluations, determining whether portions of this project were beneficial, sufficient, or successful.

It is hoped that this thesis can serve as the foundation for more artistic visibility in the future at Penn State Brandywine. The final chapter provides a synopsis of all of my research findings and includes a personal reflection of the project, in addition to feedback that I received from the campus community. This all serves as the basis for my recommendations to other small, commuter campuses that are striving to cultivate a greater artistic culture.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

An artistic presence is essential within the realm of higher education. Artistic expression creates a unique atmosphere for those that participate in it and to those receiving the benefits as a form of entertainment. For this thesis, the literature collected came from Proquest, ERIC database, articles, books, and websites. Using these sources, I identified key themes for this study: arts-based programming, art as a medium for civic and community engagement, and photography as a means of presenting aesthetic qualities.

Arts-Based Programming

Much of the research on arts-based programming is found in service-learning projects. The research in service-learning has focused on its broad definition and its applications to general community involvement. Arts-based service learning is similar to other forms of service-learning, which by definition is a tool for students to develop social responsibility and civic engagement (Frazer, 2007), but this engagement has to benefit both participants and those partners they are aligned with, such as the community. Additionally, the article, “Service Learning: Who Benefits and Why,” indicates that there are specific components for service-learning: community participation, academic study and discourse, and building a student’s knowledge of course material (Stukas, 1999). In Spheres of Possibility, Jeffers (2005) explores how to bring art alive to students by creating an interaction between the artists and the viewers of their work to help students understand art through service learning (Jeffers, 2005). This interaction is important because participation in the arts in the United States is at an all-time low. A study in the article “Arts-Based Service Learning: A State of the field,” states that service
learning aims to target newly active citizens by encouraging them to participate in art-based activities that focus on benefiting and engaging the community (Krensky, 2008).

Furthermore, Krensky (2009) discusses the concept of “community art” and how it serves as both a process and product for the community and practitioners creating the art. Krensky is adamant about the role of community art if structured properly. Discussing the power of community art, she provides some possible results: individual changes (self-identity and self efficacy) and social changes (sense of community and collective identity) (Krensky, 2009).

Civic and Community Engagement

Currently, there are a number of sources on how to implement arts-based programs into higher education through civic and community engagement. First, I considered the definition that Penn State provides for the academic minor. On their website the Civic and Community Engagement program is defined as follows: “The minor serves to encourage, recognize, and systematize student participation in public service or problem-based fieldwork and research that: is substantial, sustained, and includes structured opportunities for student reflection and critical assessment (The Pennsylvania State University, 2007). From this definition, civic and community engagement is presented as a process that allows individuals to confront problems within their communities, whether it is local, academic, etc., while providing sustainable solutions. The following are examples of programs that use civic and community engagement, each having varying definitions for the process.

In California College of the Arts Celebrates 100th Year, Gardner (2007) explains the mission of the California College of the Arts: “to educate students to shape culture through the practice and critical study of the arts.” She further discusses how the college prepares its students for creative work and service to the community through its curriculum. Her discussion can serve
as a recommendation for other colleges or universities that are not arts-based, as to the impact the arts can have on students engaging their communities. The fact that culture is a criterion for civic engagement appears in another source that states, “The scope and style of civic engagement is to a very significant extent culturally determined” (Watson, 2008). This statement is legitimized by Watson's previous statements that an academic citizen, or student, has a membership to his or her University. With that membership comes expectations or responsibilities that make up the campus culture. An example of an expectation at a college university is being self-motivated and having the ability to learn independently. In essence, civic and community engagement represents one of the expectations of the Penn State Brandywine campus community, to be actively involved as academic citizens. Next, information about the correlation between civic engagement and health will be considered.

In a publication by the National Endowment for the Arts, *The Arts and Civic Engagement: Involved in Arts, Involved in Life* (Gioia, 2007), a correlation is made between those who participate in the arts and the positive influence it has on their life in other areas such as civic behavior, volunteering, exercise, etc. Thus, Gioia implies that people who are engaged in the arts are much more active in their communities and are socially engaged. The data in this study presented surprising statistics: that art participants are far more physically active and healthier than non-art participants. Furthermore, Gioia suggests that art aids in a community’s overall health. This presents a fascinating theory when considering colleges or universities that have a limited arts presence: They can be referred to as an unhealthy community. This theory that volunteering, or involving one's self in community activities, such as the arts in school, parallels with a study done on building active citizens. In his article, Grimm links volunteering to civic engagement by stating, “volunteering plays a valuable role in shaping how youth learn to interact
with their community” (2005). By volunteering or participating in one's community, in this case, the campus community, one can acquire the necessary skills and values that create an active citizen. In a research abstract, Hicks describes how education that occurs outside of the conventional realm of the classroom that fosters social responsibility and community change can have a great impact (2009). The next example of the Walker Art Center is a pivotal one in which the premise for this thesis was developed.

The Walker Art Center (2003), located in Minnesota, proclaims itself as a catalyst for the creative expression of artists and the active engagement of audiences. The center defines civic engagement as “the exercising of personal or collective agency in the public domain for the betterment of one’s community.” That being said, civic engagement can imply a broad spectrum of fields, specifically for this project, the arts. Much of the literature that exists on civic engagement implies more politically driven efforts that influence public policy, while newer definitions present this form of engagement as participation in voluntary, community-based organizations (Hays, 2007). In an effort to create a link between art and social issues and concerns, an approach was created by the Walker Arts Center, dividing art-based events into four different roles: Container, Convener, Connector, or Catalyst. Each of these roles has precise definitions, but for this thesis, Connector and Catalyst will be considered. Art as a connector links people and their ideas together from diverse populations, cultural backgrounds, and experiences. Art as a catalyst can provoke awareness or a response from community members. In essence, art can move people to action and to make a change. For the purposes of this project, change is aesthetically improving Penn State Brandywine’s campus.
Photography

As an art medium, photography has numerous sources that speak about its aesthetic and practical qualities in our society. *The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* defines photography “as the art or process of producing images by the action of radiant energy and especially light on a sensitive surface” (2010). That being said, photography is not just simply using a point-and-shoot camera to capture that one-time shot for nostalgia. In fact, the very first permanent photograph was said to be captured naturally on a pewter plate in 1826. With the proper use of light and the altering of angles, an image of a painting was captured by Joseph Nicéphore Niépce (Harry Ransom Center).

Before snapshot photography and digital cameras emerged in the 20th century, in order to capture an image, a painting, etching, or other method was necessary. Personal portraits were common for wealthy and elite individuals, in which commissioned artists would capture a precise image of the client. It was not until the nineteenth-century, when photography became available, that ordinary people could have their own portraits created (King, 2008). Hosford, in an article about using digital photography for evidence, states that there is a misconception that the function of photography is solely to capture and preserve reality (2009). Renowned photographer Andreas Feininger once stated, “The camera is superior to the eye, and the photograph can, and ideally should, portray the world more graphic than reality itself” (qtd. in Gallery M, 1996). So the aim of photography is to take a step beyond reality. This parallels with the goal of this thesis project, in that photography is to be used as more than just a “snapshot” of our world. Photography, itself, is a “medium that has been used effectively. . .to change attitudes and perceptions” (Marshall, 2009). This should be obvious with digital photography being so prevalent in our society, whether it is amateur or professional. The issue of photography being
viewed as a valid art form derives from the typical use of photographs, renderings of everyday life. Because of this debate, photography has traditionally taken a backseat when being covered in art history courses because of the simplicity of taking a photograph (qtd. in Donoghue, 2009). Interestingly, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art challenged this perception of photography by hosting an exhibition entitled “Snapshots: The Photography of Everyday Life, 1888 to the Present” (Zuromskis, 2008). In this exhibition, amateur photographers presented traditional subjects, such as family and friends, vacations, holiday celebrations, etc. Though the majority of these photographs were ordinary scenes, the exhibition redefined snapshot photography as fine art and provided insight into societal culture from past to present.

The meaning behind photographs and pictures is far more fascinating to analyze. The age-old saying that “a picture is worth a thousand words” is to be considered for this thesis. Zuromskis (2008) states in his work that photography is “promiscuous,” in that it does not require endless devotion from viewers, but a few moments of fervent attention. Photography, by means of this definition, comes across as more ephemeral, in that it captures a specific moment.
CHAPTER 3

CULTIVATING THE ARTS AT PENN STATE BRANDYWINE

History

Penn State Brandywine, a commuter campus with a little under 1,700 students, offers ten majors in its curriculum: American Studies, Business, Communication Arts and Sciences, Communications, Elementary Education in Multicultural Settings, English, Human Development and Family Studies, Information Sciences and Technology, Letters, Arts and Sciences, and Organizational Leadership. As part of a much bigger university system that includes 24 other campuses, Penn State Brandywine specializes in certain areas of study. Only the University Park campus, the central location of the Pennsylvania State University, offers a large number of academic majors for individuals to complete, over 160. Besides the University Park campus, the only other Penn State campus to offer a B.A. degree in Art is Penn State Abington. Although Penn State Brandywine does not have an Art major, it does offer art courses, including: Introduction to Drawing, Introduction to Painting, courses in Art History, and in semesters prior, a course in design. Additionally, Brandywine offers courses in the following areas: theatrical arts, music, film, and creative writing, providing a well-rounded approach to the arts. Even with these courses, there is not one course that specializes in photography as an art medium, though photography has had a strong presence on our campus.

In 2009, campus alumnus, Aldo Magazzeni, showcased his photography of people he had met through his work in Kenya and Afghanistan. This inspiring exhibition was held in the Vairo Library for students, faculty and staff members to admire, discuss, and learn about issues in these parts of the world. Also, the campus literary magazine, *The Penn In Hand*, which publishes the creative works of the campus, such as poetry, short stories, and artwork, includes digital
photography each year. Additionally, the campus Honors Program has created many efforts to engage students through photography. Several online photography competitions have been held through the site Flickr. The purpose of these contests were to create meaningful discussions among fellow scholars while employing key principles that are tied to Penn State Brandywine's Honors mission: academic excellence with integrity, building a global awareness, and opportunities for leadership and civic engagement.

**The Arts at other Colleges and Universities**

Delaware County Community College (DCCC), a local college in Media, PA, offers an extended number of art courses. For example, courses in drawing, painting, and photography are offered. DCCC has a student population of approximately 10,000, about 8,000 more students than Penn State Brandywine. Though Brandywine’s population is much smaller than DCCC’s, this does not mean that an arts presence is not necessary. In fact, the point of considering this community college is to look at what it offers outside of the classroom. In addition to its courses, DCCC has its own art gallery. On its website, the following statement is posted: “We believe in showcasing the work of students as well as local, national, and international artists, all while making it accessible to everyone” (Delaware County Community College, 2009). Because Brandywine is so close to Philadelphia, a city nationally known for its artistic influences, our campus should be able to showcase a larger presentation of the arts.

In addition to community colleges, many other local colleges and universities in Delaware County have a great arts presence on their campuses. For instance, Neumann University, with approximately 3,000 students and Swarthmore College, with more than 1,500 students, both hold regular arts exhibitions during the year. Neumann University has a space called the Steckline Gallery. Swarthmore College for years has taken pride in the arts. The
following quote from their website gives an indication why: “Art is a place where history, religion, psychology, politics and culture converge” (Swarthmore College). Also on their website, one can find information about exhibitions conducted by art students doing senior theses similar to mine.

My purpose in mentioning these other colleges and universities is to stress the potential growth that can be fostered at Penn State Brandywine. For example, these local campuses are not as young as Brandywine, which was established in 1977. Also, Brandywine is connected to a larger university, which includes a central location, University Park, as well as 24 other campuses. It is not feasible to think that Brandywine can mimic the programs of other Penn State campuses when students can choose to attend them. More artistic expression though, which is not a curriculum, but rather events and activities on campus, can be instituted. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Brandywine has various forms of artistic representation on campus, from its sculptures to its newly renovated performing arts classroom. Perhaps, one day the campus can have a space exclusively for the arts, such as a small art gallery or hall. Penn State Brandywine can use other small colleges and universities as examples for how to cultivate the arts on our campus.

The Vision

The idea for this project initially developed during the fall semester of 2008. For HONORS 301H: The Role of Knowledge in Society, students had to design an innovative plan to benefit their local communities, or on a larger scale, to benefit a city or country in need of a sustainable plan for change. My innovation was “Bringing the Arts to Penn State Brandywine.” For this project, a small literature review, with remnants of it present in this thesis, was written. Additionally, a video was created to showcase this innovation. The video for my project included
details about how Penn State Brandywine could expand its arts-based education, showing footage of students dancing, singing, and displaying artwork and photography. Because this class assignment was a theoretical scenario, there were no boundaries as to what we could use in our innovations. That being said, the initial format for this thesis, which is now called, “Cultivating the Arts at Penn State Brandywine,” was too elaborate to conduct then. The intent of the class project was that one day Penn State Brandywine would have an art major on campus, with an actual department, where artwork created by students could be showcased. In order for that to take place, years of financial and strategic planning would need to be done. In addition to a new major and facility to be created, Brandywine would need the help of outside professionals to foster the growth of arts education. This also would have taken too much time and was beyond the scope of this project’s deadline.

In order for this thesis to be completed in a feasible time frame, the initial plan had to be reduced greatly. In the summer of 2009, a revision to my thesis proposal was made because I previously omitted the fact that outside professionals had visited the campus in the past, such as photographers, dancers, bands, singers, etc. Instead of bringing professionals to campus and focusing on various art forms, one specific medium of artistic expression was chosen, photography. The reason behind this decision was to choose an art form that could last after the completion of the project. Also, bringing outside professionals to campus would have been financially unfeasible and their duration on the campus would have been short. Thus, I refined my focus for this thesis and determined that I was cultivating something we already had. So instead of looking externally, the focus shifted inward, to faculty and staff members at Brandywine to provide more artistic expression. Initially, I wanted to work with Constance Kirker, the Assistant Professor of Integrative Arts, but due to sabbatical leave, she was not
available to serve as a resource for this project. Therefore, a search needed to be made to find a faculty or staff member who had knowledge of photography. This person would then be asked to give a lecture on photography. The purpose of this lecture was to offer students the opportunity to learn about something that Brandywine does not offer in an art course.

Following the photography lecture, there would be a period of time for individuals to submit photographs they had taken to be judged for a photography exhibition. Individuals would be given a specific theme to guide them when taking their photographs, and then they would send them electronically to me. To remove bias, a judge would be chosen to decide which submissions would be showcased in the photography exhibition and then dispersed throughout the campus. In order for the photographs to be printed and put on display, funding would be needed. At the time, the Student Activities Fee (SAF) and thesis grants were two options to receive funds. The end result of all of this would be a photography exhibition, which would display the works of students, faculty and staff members. Individuals whose photographs were selected for the exhibition would be asked to write short descriptions about what the photographs meant to them. The underlying purpose of the exhibition was to inspire meaningful discussion and to allow the participating photographers to have a voice through artistic expression. The basis for these goals derived from the study of the Walker Art Center's four roles of civic engagement. Based on my data, I would determine how effective the arts-based events were according to the four roles of civic engagement and how effective I was in cultivating the arts at Penn State Brandywine.
CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH METHODS

For this project, “Cultivating the Arts at Penn State Brandywine,” there were several methods used to develop research. This study sought to create learning opportunities based on the data and results I received from the arts-based events conducted on campus: the photography lecture, photography contest, and photography exhibition. Following these events, additional results would be needed to assess their value, in terms of whether they benefited the campus community. This information would be used to evaluate my two research questions: (1) How effective was “The Natural World” photography exhibition at cultivating any of the four different roles (Container, Connector, Convener, Catalyst) identified by The Walker Center’s model of civic engagement? (2) Did the “The Natural World” photography exhibition effectively cultivate the arts at Penn State Brandywine?

The beginning of the project involved a search for a professor who could conduct a photography lecture on campus. Initially, I planned for one lecture to take place in the fall semester and another to follow in the spring semester. This search required communicating with faculty and staff members who knew other individuals who had expertise in photography. Additionally, I utilized a list of adjunct-professors to find individuals who were teaching art courses during the fall semester. In order to find out whether any of these professors were capable of conducting a photography lecture, I sent out an e-mail letter introducing myself and explaining the purpose of my thesis project, as well as seeking their help.

Once a qualified person offered to give a photography lecture, it was necessary to advertise it. At Penn State Brandywine, the typical means of informing students about events is through a weekly listserv that the Coordinator of Student Involvement, Ronika Money, sends to
their Penn State e-mail accounts. For this listserv, a flyer was made that indicated the date, time, and purpose of the lecture. Because a photography lecture was something new to the campus, I wanted the flyer to be bright, bold, and concise. This process involved skills I developed from communications and marketing courses at Penn State Brandywine, such as the proper positioning of images along with text. Besides the weekly listserv, the flyer was used for conventional purposes, such as being placed in the four buildings on campus. Information about the lecture was also included in a bi-weekly newsletter that the Department of University Relations publishes. Also, the flyer was featured on the Penn State Brandywine homepage.

Some additional means of advertisement that were used for the photography lecture were social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. Because of the rapid growth of digital news and online information, people, especially students, ignore paper flyers and e-mails. The Office of Student Affairs often uses their Facebook fan page to post events for upcoming school events. Through these Facebook events, individuals have the opportunity to be informed, as well as to RSVP as to whether they will attend or not. This can be a very effective tool because the person creating the event can solicit all of their Facebook contacts, which can range in the hundreds. I took advantage of this online technology to create an event on Facebook about the photography lecture, inviting all the students I knew at Penn State Brandywine.

Constructing the photography lecture involved additional research aside from advertising it. I had to determine what I wanted the event to satisfy in regards to the Walker Art Center's four roles of civic engagement: Container, Convener, Connector, and Catalyst. Initially, I wanted the lecture to inform individuals about basic skills in taking a photograph. This was important for both amateur and experienced photographers participating in my thesis project. The photography lecture, as a means of informing, would serve as a Catalyst, in that it provoked awareness and
could “mobilize new players or get people to take action” (2003). The action that I wanted students to take part in was participating in my photography exhibition in order to cultivate the arts on campus. Additionally, I envisioned the photography lecture as a Container, with the potential to provide physical space for individuals to express themselves, one person being the lecturer, Dr. De Rosa, and the others being students who were interested in the subject matter (2003).

After the photography lecture, I planned to have a photography exhibition showcasing the submissions of those from the campus community: students, faculty, and staff members. In order to receive photography submissions, advertisement would be needed. All of the methods that I used for publicizing the photography lecture were used to advertise the need for photography submissions: weekly listservs, Facebook, Twitter, newsletters, and the campus homepage. These, though, were not enough. In order to receive a suitable number of photographs, I had to focus in on my target audience: the students. This involved contacting the adjunct arts professors again. I made the assumption that individuals who were interested in conventional art would also be interested in photography. I provided a flyer about digital photography submissions to the professors to give to their students. Once again, introductory information was needed. I detailed who I was, what the submissions were going to be used for, when the deadline for submissions would be, how individuals could submit their photographs, and why I was conducting this submission process. In addition to students in art courses, I targeted honors scholars on campus. Previously, I mentioned that the Honors Program has used several occasions to engage its students through photography, with good results. With this prior knowledge, I determined that this niche of the campus community would be perfect to solicit.
After I received a desirable number of 72 photographs, a process was needed for choosing which photographs would go on display. To eliminate bias, I could not judge these photographs. As with other photography contests on campus, a faculty member would be asked to judge all submissions I received. Again, I also searched for a professor to judge the photographs. This involved contacting individuals who were skilled and knowledgeable in photography. Once a judge was chosen, I had to determine the best way for him/her to conduct the judging process. I utilized the website Flickr to upload all of the submissions for the judge to view conveniently. The images were placed into groups, so photographs by the same person (anonymous) would be together. This was necessary to prevent one person from having multiple submissions in the selected photographs for display. The judge had the ability to comment directly on the page of each photograph, indicating which were suitable for the exhibition.

Initially, I wanted 20 photographs to be chosen for the exhibition, but I determined that this would offset the budget I requested, which included the printing and framing of photographs. I decided that 12-14 photographs were less expensive and would still satisfy my goal of beautifying the campus. Following the judge's selection of 14 photographs, appropriate measures were needed to plan the photography exhibition. I realized that my project's vision would require money. During the fall semester and in the beginning of the spring semester, I learned that the Student Activities Fee lacked the funds I needed to fulfill my project. I turned to the Director of Academic Affairs, Dr. Paul deGategno to submit a proposal requesting funds for research. This proposal listed the purpose and outcome of my thesis project, as well as the expenses I would incur during the process. I researched what the typical cost was for poster-sized prints, as well as frames to hold them. Overall, my total estimated costs came to $220 dollars. This $220 covered the cost of printing and delivering 14 12x18 poster-size photographs, as well as 14 frames to hold
them. Once my research proposal was approved, I began the preliminary methods for the photography exhibition. A good date and time were needed in order to get a large enough group of people for my data. Because the semester was coming to a close, I needed to pick a week that was not close to the time students needed to study for finals. That was an issue that arose for the photography lecture. After consulting the Office of Student Affairs and the Student Government Association, I decided to pair my photography exhibition, “The Natural World,” with the campus Spring Week on Tuesday, April 27. This week included performances by live bands, games, prizes, and delicious foods. In previous years, Spring Week has always been a success. The Office of Student Affairs often does thorough advertising with other clubs and organizations hosting activities. Because Spring Week was the last week of April, a time in which the weather had officially warmed up and students wanted to enjoy nature, I thought it would be a good positioning technique to host an event that centered around nature itself.

Preparing for the photography exhibition required much effort. Because Brandywine is a small campus, there are not many locations that can adequately display the number of photographs I had. Typically, photography displays have been held in the Vairo Library, but I felt as though that location was too dull. I wanted to choose a location that was spacious, well lit, and received a lot of traffic. I chose the Tomezsko Classroom Lounge as the exhibition’s location. The lounge is one of the campus’ most attractive spaces considering it's located in a building with contemporary style. To use this space I had to contact the appropriate individuals to make a reservation. Once this reservation was made, the rest of my effort was placed into making the exhibition come to life. To display photographs, I would first need to have them printed. Using the Google search engine I searched for websites that allowed me to upload pictures and also linked me to locations that printed them. After careful consideration, I chose the website
Snapfish.com to upload and print the 14 photographs. After the printing of the photographs, I traveled to arts and crafts stores to purchase the appropriate frames. Following these purchases, the rest of the work involved advertising the event. I designed a mini-campaign to alert students about the photography exhibition. In addition to attaching the information to flyers for Spring Week, I contacted the Office of Student Affairs to include information about the event in the campus listserv. Following this, I coordinated with the Department of University Relations to include flyers and information on the campus website. As an intern in the office, I used my position to advertise “The Natural World” exhibition in the bi-weekly newsletter, on the campus kiosk, and even the Facebook campus fanpage. Lastly, I used my personal Facebook account to directly invite friends and Penn State Brandywine students to the photography exhibition. For the electronic forms of advertisement, I created various graphics and flyers that were visually appealing to students, so as to encourage attendance.

I had goals that I wanted the “The Natural World” photography exhibition to satisfy in relation to my two research questions. Because I sought uniformity in my project, I chose the same roles from the Walker Art Center that I used to evaluate the photography lecture, Catalyst and Container (2003). I thought these were necessary roles because my exhibition was to create the foundation for more artistic expression on campus (Catalyst), while providing a physical space for individuals to feel empowered while expressing themselves (Container).
CHAPTER 5
DATA AND RESULTS

Photography Lecture #1

On Thursday, December 3, 2009, the first photography lecture for “Cultivating the Arts at Penn State Brandywine” was conducted by Dr. Michael De Rosa, a Professor of Chemistry. De Rosa was chosen after several attempts to locate an art professor on campus capable of offering the lecture. To my dismay, the original person I contacted to present was no longer able to assist me in this project. Through the aid of a staff member, I learned of De Rosa’s strong background in photography. The lecture was held in one of the larger classrooms that Penn State Brandywine offers to accommodate enough individuals. Excluding me, and De Rosa, ten people attended the lecture. This included five students, four faculty members, and one member from the community. All those who attended the event were informed about the purpose of the lecture, which was to provide individuals interested in participating in my project, with a few more extra skills before taking photographs.

With an overhead projector, De Rosa gave an informative presentation about basic photography skills. He covered everything from photograph composition to the right shutter speed settings needed for a great image (De Rosa, 2009). He also informed attendees about the proper amount of light exposure needed for images to look good without being oversaturated. Additionally, De Rosa gave useful hints about the best times for taking outdoor photographs, the early morning or evening, when the sun is not too bright to cause overexposure. Also, cloudy days are perfect for photographs, because harsh light that often overexposes an image is diffused. Overall, many of these tips given were for single-lens reflex cameras like 35 mm SLRs, standard
or digital. Though many of the attendees, including myself, possessed digital point-and-shoot cameras, De Rosa still applied these basic techniques to cameras with different formats.

**Photography Lecture #2**

After evaluating the data that I received from the first photography lecture, I collaborated with De Rosa to hold another during the spring semester. The information for the second lecture was not going to be different from the first, so I recycled the old flyer. I also created new graphics to attract people on Facebook through an event page made for the second lecture. Based on the information derived from the Facebook event, 19 individuals, who were students and staff members, confirmed their attendance for this event. This would have almost been double the number of individuals who attended the first lecture.

**Evaluation**

The first photography lecture was very informative. De Rosa delivered a presentation that I thought individuals would enjoy. Following the lecture, some of the attendees informed me of what they thought. As a whole, the lecture was very well received and was viewed as high-quality information. Though the information discussed was useful, the event’s attendance was much lower than I had anticipated. I had done a substantial amount of on-campus and online advertisement to invite students and other members of the campus community to attend the event. Half of those who attended the lecture were students, and the other half were faculty members. Considering that this lecture was planned to benefit the campus community, which predominantly consists of students, I was disappointed. That being said, the photography lecture did assist me in answering my first research question. This event in itself served as a Connector. As highlighted in the Walker Art Center's roles of civic engagement, this role linked people and their ideas together. Though attendance was low, the lecture still brought together community
members from various backgrounds (2003). For instance, there were male and female students, faculty, and individuals from the local community who all varied in age.

There are several factors to take into consideration for the low attendance of the photography lecture, many of which were out of my control. Initially, I wanted the first photography lecture to take place mid-semester. Because my initial contact to offer the lecture was no longer able to accommodate me, this portion of my project was delayed. More time was needed to find a suitable, competent faculty member to offer the lecture. When this individual, De Rosa, was found, it was already close to the end of the fall semester. The bad timing of the lecture was due to final examinations, thus serving as a deterrent for students because of the importance of their studies. Although I had done a thorough job to advertise the event, more could have been done. Following the event, individuals expressed their interest in such a program but were not aware of it taking place.

A lot was learned from the mistakes of the photography lecture. I decided to use my initial data from it to formulate a test. I wanted to analyze whether or not more individuals would attend a second lecture if circumstances were more favorable, such as a date earlier in the semester, and if more effective advertisement was done for the event. However, because of a snow storm and family issues on the part of the speaker, the second lecture never took place.

Photography Submissions

Submission Process

For the photography exhibition, I wanted to collect a wide variety of photographs from many people on campus, primarily students. The theme for the photography exhibition was, “The Natural World,” so I expected to receive photographs of people, places, and things. Overall, I received 72 photography submissions from 15 individuals on campus: 12 students, two staff
members, and one alumnus. The goal for this process was to engage students at Penn State Brandywine to take part in an effort that would beautify their own campus. I provided the medium, photography; students had the tools, cameras, the object for improvement was the campus.

**Evaluation**

The number of photographs received for the photography exhibition was sufficient. In Chapter 1, I highlighted how my experiences with my peers encouraged me to make a change to affect the arts on campus. I was pleased to see that a large number of the submissions were from students that had expressed an interest in more artistic expression on campus. This was an opportunity for them to share their voice by means of the arts.

Initially, I stated that I would like to choose 15-20 photographs for display on campus. Although it was not my decision as to which photographs were chosen for display, not all submissions were desirable. Some submissions were very beautiful, while others were ordinary photographs. This was to be expected because the project was open to beginners, amateurs, and professionals alike. For the most part, the submission process was used to test if individuals would become engaged to participate in this project and to cultivate the arts.

*Photographs*

Figures 1.1 to 1.14 are the photographs that were chosen by the faculty judge, Instructor Karrie Bowen. Above some of the photographs are comments the instructor provided to give depth to the submission process. Some photographs that were not chosen to be displayed in the photography exhibition also received comments. In addition to comments, above the photographs are personal descriptions that each participant provided for his or her photograph. These descriptions were placed with each photograph that was on display at the exhibition.
**Judge's Comments:**
This is probably my favorite. I love the color, I love the line, I love the angle, I love the shadows. It is really well framed, nicely set up and tells a great visual story!

**Artist's Comments:** I took this photo while taking a walk through West Chester in November of my second year in grad school. I was walking through the borough, and ended up in park a few blocks from campus. While taking some pictures of a gazebo in the park, I looked up and saw this tree towering over me. The contrast of the yellow leaves and blue sky caught my eye, so I aimed my camera up and took one shot.

Figure 1: Photograph submitted by Jennifer Traubel (2010).
Figure 2: Photograph submitted by Kate Sowinski (2010).
Judge's Comments: Really nice macro. It has lots of clarity, contrast is beautiful. I love the way it is framed with the shadow. Gorgeous shot.

Figure 3: Photograph submitted by Laura Boyd (2010).
Judge's Comments: This one is gorgeous and really meets the theme. You have the colorful soft beauty of the rainbow contrasted against the stark death of the tree.

Figure 4: Photograph submitted by Laura Boyd (2010).
Judge's Comments: I love the macro. The clarity is fantastic, the color isn't overly done, and it looks very vivid and real.

Figure 5: Photograph submitted by Laura Boyd (2010).
Judge's Comments: The framing is a bit tight, but overall, I think it is a really nice photo. I like the birds against the orange and it isn't overly processed or saturated.

Figure 6: Photograph submitted by Laura Boyd (2010).
Judge's Comments: I really like the contrast in this one! Great use of color, tone and framing.

Artist's Comments: I took the picture at Longwood Gardens in 2008 while on a casual photo shoot with my dad. Not long after entering, I looked up and saw some kids had climbed a huge hill curving up against the sky. I feel the three elements in the photo - grass, sky, and young people - represent the clean simplicity of the natural world and the generations yet to come to whom we owe that world.

Figure 7: Photograph submitted by Mary-Therese Capaldi (2010).
**Artist's Comments:** Last year’s honors theme was competing forces, creative tensions. Looking at this picture, one may not be able to see the relation. This picture was taken in a garden at London Town located in Annapolis, Maryland during a city-as-text tour. The other location for that tour was the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC) where we learned about runoff, the flow of water in many forms over land, and how it affects ecosystems when it contains pollutants. The topics learned at the SERC were then applied to our London Town tour, where it was mentioned that often the water of those individuals many years ago, was unsafe to drink because of contaminants, or the runoff over human waste. So in the midst of these devastating issues, this garden, and flower that I captured in this photo, thrives beautifully within the tensions of the region.

![Figure 8: Photograph submitted by Teron Meyers (2010).](image)
Judge's Comments: This photo is really beautiful. The color is breathtaking, the framing is exquisite. The definition of the flowers is really nicely focused and the photo just breathes springtime.

Artist's Comments: Throughout my life I never had someone to really look up to, friends come and go while family feuds always came between a bond. However, I was always told that there's always light at the end of the tunnel. So capturing this picture gave me hope on what I would accomplish and strive for, for my future. I would just have to make it though all the obstacles given to me. I'd do what's best for me and the ones who are with me to share them with.

Figure 9: Photograph submitted by Melanee Jeker (2010).
Judge's Comments: I really like this one. It is nice and abstract to a point as far as framing, but it is very Ansel Adams like in content.

Artist's Comments: This picture was taken with your typical Sony Cybershot digital camera. I was in Ocean City, NJ with some friends, obviously laying out on the beach, when I noticed the natural beauty of the clouds and the ocean. It was an image that I never wanted to forget about, especially the way the clouds were in that moment. There may have been a storm approaching, which explains the slight darkness, but otherwise it was a beautiful day at the beach -- compliments of the sky.

Figure 10: Photograph submitted by Nancy Perone (2010).
**Judge's Comments:** This is great! I love the way they utilized tone to give it an overall black and white feel when it is actually a color shot. Really nicely framed as well.

**Artist's Comments:** Last spring, my mom, sister and I went into Philadelphia to see Riverdance perform at the Academy of Music. I’ve been into photography since high school, so I was snapping some photos I thought would look cool. Since we were on Broad Street, and I was documenting our time in Philadelphia that day, I snapped the picture of the sign.

Figure 11: Photograph submitted by Dana Colosimo (2010).
Judge's Comments: I love the composition of it. The line and shape are really dominant and the use of the gray scale is really well done. Good artsy shot.

Artist's Comments: This photograph was from my photography class my sophomore year of high school. For our final project of the semester, we had to choose a theme and take an entire roll of film on that theme, then develop five of them for the project. My theme was “body”, so I snapped pictures of a classmate’s body parts, and these were her legs. It was one of my favorites because of the shadows and angles.

Figure 12: Photograph submitted by Dana Colosimo (2010).
Judge's Comments: I actually like the fact that this one is overly photoshopped because it gives depth and clarity to the sand. It really makes the color pop and makes it so there is no dead space in the shot.

Artist's Comments: While taking this photo, my best friend and I spent our first summer in Ocean City, Maryland. Walking along the beach we saw clusters of broken sea shells. Further down the shoreline, we saw this beautiful shell all by itself. It reminded us of society, how some people are shunned from society, even ones that have the potential to stick out.

Figure 13: Photograph submitted by Melanee Jeker (2010).
**Judge's Comments:** Beautiful use of macro, nice color, really artistically done.

**Artist's Comments:** This picture is of my friend, Dan Michelow that I took a few days before he moved back to Chile. The composition of the picture is rule of thirds and I chose a red background to draw the audience's eyes to Dan's, and then to the rest of his face.

Figure 14: Photograph submitted by Samantha Garcia (2010).
Photography Exhibition

On the day of the photography exhibition, 52 people attended. Among the 52 were faculty, staff, students, and other members of the campus community. Some that were a part of the campus community were a mother and her two daughters, who both had active participation in voting. The number of attendees was derived from an attendance sheet that I used for the event, in which individuals signed their initials. In addition to signing their initials, I asked attendees to use the next column to vote for their favorite photograph at the exhibition. Each photograph was numbered from 1-14. Figure 15 represents the voting process that occurred during the exhibition.

Out of the 14 photographs, photograph #4 (Figure 4) and photograph #8 (Figure 8) were chosen as the favorites of those who had attended the exhibition. There were a total of 85 votes from the 52 attendees. Participants were allowed to vote for more than one picture to give them greater freedom. In addition to the written feedback from attendees of the exhibition, I received oral feedback about the photographs. The general consensus was that the exhibition was very
well done, presenting a beautiful collection of the campus talent. Other individuals expressed interest in a photography course if Brandywine offered it, while some were still surprised the campus did not have such a course after all these years.

**Evaluation**

The number of people who attended “The Natural World” photography exhibition was adequate. Considering that the photography lecture during the fall semester only brought in 10 people, it was pleasing to see five times as many individuals attend this event. The larger attendance helped me in evaluating my first research question, in that the exhibition fulfilled the role of Container, an event that provides a space for people to be or create (The Walker Art Center, 2003). Some of the attendees were individuals that I had spoken to about the arts on campus previously, making me happy to know that I motivated them to celebrate photography.

The voting process for the photographs was something that I chose to implement not long before the exhibition. This would allow the campus community to choose what photographs they enjoyed the most, thus engaging the campus to take part in a process that would beautify the campus and bring about the “betterment of one's community,” bridging together the civic engagement components (The Walker Art Center, 2003).

Because I planned this event during Spring Week, an annual campus event, I was competing with other activities during common hour, which is a time set aside for students to have lunch, study, or rest in between classes. Although the Tomezsko Classroom Lounge is a beautiful building, it is not an area that everyone passes through on a day-to-day basis. The Commons Building is usually a location that receives traffic from the majority of students on campus, but unfortunately other events that day occupied this space. Ultimately, considering the
timing, the end of the semester, and the competition of other activities, the exhibition turn-out was sufficient.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

“Cultivating the Arts at Penn State Brandywine” involved the fusing of two academic disciplines: the arts and civic and community engagement. To cultivate is to foster the growth of something, while nurturing it with care, as if a plant. Through this thesis, I was not implementing or creating anything new that the campus did not already have. Instead, this project allowed me to utilize the many resources that this campus has to offer, its talented students. My aim was to engage them in a manner that they may not have been used to. So, in an effort to cultivate the arts, I also cultivated these students, assisting them in their growth as academic citizens. Prior to “The Natural World” photography exhibition, there were several art-related events that the campus had hosted, but few that were initiated by students. Considering that thought, I initially saw this project as a novelty for Penn State Brandywine.

This thesis offers insights about arts-based programming, civic and community engagement, and photography. For the thesis project, I planned three events that were documented for research: a photography lecture, a photography contest, and a photography exhibition, “The Natural World.” In Chapter 5, information about the success of the lecture is provided. Initially, the goal of the photography lecture was to allow students to engage themselves outside of the typical classroom setting. The lecture, which was held during the campus common hour (11:30 am), required students to independently attend without the influence of faculty members. As seen in the results section, few individuals attended the lecture, displaying little success in this part of my project. In an effort to make up for this low-point of my project, I scheduled another photography lecture. Through careful research and planning, I anticipated an increase in attendance, but due to unforeseen occurrences, I was unable to collect
this data. Although I was not able to document the success of a second photography lecture, the cancellation provided me with a lot of experience. I was able to see first-hand how difficulties can arise when putting together events. Often there are obstacles that can hinder our goals. In my case, there were many problems that arose throughout the planning of my thesis project, which altered the timeline of events I had set in place. Ultimately, the original vision (Chapter 3) that I had for this thesis changed dramatically, causing me to alter the date, arrangement, and layout of the “The Natural World” photography exhibition.

In the first chapter of the thesis, I presented two research questions that I sought to answer with the data I collected from the three campus events. The first research question was: How effective was “The Natural World” photography exhibition at cultivating any of the four different roles (Container, Connector, Convener, and Catalyst) identified by the Walker Center's model of civic engagement? To analyze the effectiveness of the photography exhibition at accomplishing these roles, the criteria for success has to be listed. In Art and Civic Engagement Mapping the Connections: The Workbook, the Walker Art Center states that there are different kinds of energy that one wants to achieve when implementing a program, and for each role there is a checklist of items to determine if an individual is on track (2003). The following is the checklist I used to evaluate my arts events on campus:

**Container:** This role may be appropriate when the work or program
- Provides a physical space for people to be or create.
- Provides an atmosphere in which people feel empowered to express their opinions.
- Helps boost a community's collective self-esteem by celebrating an achievement or success.
- Provides a safe and encouraging atmosphere for the discussion of difficult community issues.

**Convener:** This role may be appropriate when the work or programming
- Is in response to an event that has captured the community's attention or requires a communal response.
- Can help mark a community's life cycle or important historical events.
• Brings people together for deliberation or collective decision-making.
• Is of broad interest to the community and provides common ground for consensus-building among people with similar interests.

**Connector:** This role may be appropriate when the work or program
• Ideas being addressed are linked together in unusual or novel ways.
• There are opportunities for participants to connect to their own heritage and culture.
• The work or program can bring together community members from different generations, cultural backgrounds, faiths, and lifestyles for shared experience and interaction.

**Catalyst:** This role may be appropriate when the work or program
• Brings people together to discuss a topic that lacks consensus or is a source of disagreement.
• Has the potential to mobilize new players or get people to take action on an issue.
• Assists in revealing the assumptions in a community regarding divisive civic issues.
• Serves as the focal point for the exploration of an issue, and allows participants to experience its different perspectives (The Walker Art Center, 2003).

First, if a program is to be seen as a Container, one can consider the following two examples: “provides a physical space for people to be or create,” and “provides an atmosphere in which people feel empowered to express their opinions.” Thus, this particular role emphasizes the need to provide a space for the expression of emotions. Considering these factors, the photography exhibition can be seen as a Container, in that it was capable of providing a space for individuals to express themselves, or feel empowered. In fact, many of the photographers who submitted photographs were appreciative that they had the opportunity to take part in the exhibition, expressing how necessary it is to continue the process.

Second, if a program is to be seen as a Connector, one can consider the following two examples: “Ideas being addressed are linked together in unusual or novel ways,” and “The work or program can bring together community members from different generations, cultural backgrounds, faiths, and lifestyles for shared experience and interaction.” Considering these factors, the photography exhibition can be regarded as a Connector. The primary goal of this role is to link people together by their ideas. Every photograph in the exhibition was of a different
object, whether it was a flower, person, animal, etc. Each person took his or her photograph for different reasons, but all of the photographs were united in a common goal, to beautify the campus through artistic expression. Additionally, each of the photographers, though not documented, came from different demographics, such as age, race, and religion, all facets that make Brandywine one of the most unique and diverse of the Penn State campuses.

Third, if a program is to be seen as a Convener, one can consider the following two examples: “Is in response to an event that has captured the community's attention or requires a communal response,” and “Brings people together for deliberation or collective decision-making.” This role, which highlights the purpose of impetus or impulsive gathering, is probably the most irrelevant for my research question. To fulfill the criteria for the Convener role, my photography exhibition has to be linked to something taking place in the community, perhaps an injustice or some other matter. For instance, if a member of the campus community was suffering from an illness or disease that did not have a cure; someone could sporadically start a fundraising event to help that individual. Although having a greater arts influence on campus is valued, it would not accurately fulfill the criteria for a Convener program.

Lastly, if a program is to be seen as a Catalyst, one can consider the following two examples: “Brings people together to discuss a topic that lacks consensus or is a source of disagreement,” and “Has the potential to mobilize new players or get people to take action on an issue.” This particular role focuses on provoking awareness. This awareness can be of a particular change that needs to be made in a community. Considering Gioia's study of civic engagement, people who participate in the arts are more likely to be engaged in their communities (2007). Through the medium of photography, a form of visual art, students were quickly mobilized by offering photography submissions to affect the presence of the arts on
campus. In that sense, “The Natural World” photography exhibition can be seen as a catalyst for students to offer creative contributions. In Chapter 3, I discussed the literary magazine, The Penn *In Hand*. As the editor for that publication for three years, I saw how it had the power to draw in individuals to express themselves creatively, thus it served as inspiration for this thesis.

In the workbook, The Walker Art Center's four roles of civic engagement are supposed to be used individually, in that a program coordinator would seek to satisfy only one role. For example, if I was hosting an event that was Catalyst, I would utilize the checklist to insure that the event met the criteria for that role. However, I wanted to document how “The Natural World” photography exhibition was capable of fulfilling multiple roles. Utilizing the checklist that the workbook provides, the photography exhibition was more of a Container and Connector than a Convener and Catalyst. In my review of literature, I stated that my project was more related to the roles of Connector and Catalyst, but after evaluating my data, I determined that this was not completely accurate. I believe the descriptions for both the roles of Container and Connector satisfy my goals for my first research question in that my photography exhibition provided a physical space in which students could express their feelings with others in the campus community, at the same time advocating the arts, despite vast differences among the participants.

Additionally, by creating arts events on campus, I sought to engage the students. Although I facilitated the events, they were the ones who made it happen by means of their photography submissions. In Chapter 1, I stated that “the basis for cultivating a greater arts presence on campus was determined by many experiences I had with fellow students, as well as faculty and staff members.” Though many of these students that I referred to had left Penn State Brandywine since my freshmen year, there still were a few present that not only participated in the photography lecture, but also submitted photographs that were accepted into the photography
exhibition. In addition, many other students that I have encountered these last few years were able to attend the exhibition, thus showing the power of engaging the campus community. This came as no surprise, for Gioia (2007) stated in his article about the arts and civic engagement: “Arts participants are measurably different from non-participants, more active, more involved, and more socially engaged,” all things that define students that attend college universities.

The second research question that this thesis sought to address was: Did the “The Natural World” photography exhibition effectively cultivate the arts at Penn State Brandywine, in addition to beautifying it? Based on the definition that I used in the previous paragraphs, to cultivate is to refine or improve something. In this case, I wanted to improve the representation of the arts on campus, as well as its physical appearance. First, the issue as to whether or not the arts were cultivated depends on some factors. In Krensky’s discussion about community art, she states that it is both a process and product (2009). For my thesis, the “process” would be engaging students to take photographs, submit them, and then have them showcased in “The Natural World” photography exhibition. Following the exhibition, plans were developed to disperse the 14 photographs, some in each of the four buildings on campus. Essentially, the permanent display of the photographs is the “product” that Krensky spoke about, which serves as a legacy of these talented students. Another point to gauge whether the arts were cultivated is what exactly the photographs did for the community. In my review of literature, in the section, “Arts-Based Programming,” I highlighted how civic engagement has to benefit both participants and those partners they are aligned with to be successful. Not only did the photography exhibition provide a contribution that naturally sustains itself, thus drawing attention to the talent the campus attracts, but the photographers also received recognition for having their work on display.
Additionally, in the “Photography” section of my review of literature, I discuss how photography, as a medium, can be used to change the attitudes and perceptions of people (Marshall, 2009). Although, the photographs used were nothing dramatic, they reflected the inner-thoughts of the photographers who captured them. Some who attended the exhibition were surprised as to what could be classified as “natural.” For instance, Figure 1.14, a picture of a person, was used for the exhibition. Though not a flower, stream of clouds, or sunset, that person was still natural. In my review of literature, I mentioned how photography as an art form is very modern compared to the fine paintings and sculptures that were once considered to be “true” art. My use of a photography exhibition paid homage to other exhibitions that took place on campus such as Aldo Magazzeni’s that I referred to in Chapter 3, which also cultivated the arts.

Lastly, as to whether or not the “The Natural World” photography exhibition beautified the campus is still in progress. The photographs will be put on display before the 2010 fall semester. Although I am not able to document whether or not the 14 photographs contributed to greater aesthetics on campus at this moment, the feedback I received on the day of the photography exhibition provided valuable information. As mentioned in Chapter 5, many attendees enjoyed the various photographs that were displayed, so much that they all took part in ranking which ones appealed to them the most. The photographers, too, were excited to know that their photographs were soon to be displayed on campus for students, faculty, and staff to see. Although I achieved success in what I intended to fulfill for this thesis, it is my goal that the process of a photography lecture, contest, and exhibition, continues each year in an effort to cultivate the arts on campus. Essentially, my desire is for each of the four buildings on campus to be filled with photography and other mediums of visual art. This means that the arts, and my efforts discussed in this thesis, would be sustained. The topic of sustainability and how my
cultivating of the arts at Penn State Brandywine can create lasting benefits is a potential topic for future research. With such a study, one could test the best methods in keeping events like mine going.

My experience with “Cultivating the Arts at Penn State Brandywine” was a very rewarding one. Throughout the entire process, I had to learn to adjust to different situations as they presented themselves. I learned from this experience that Penn State Brandywine possesses a wealth of full-time faculty and staff members that have skills in areas outside of their discipline. De Rosa was one of my biggest surprises in this project, for I initially sought an art professor to offer a photography lecture, but he is a Professor of Chemistry. Similarly, Ms. Bowen, whom I had for several communications courses, was my faculty judge for the project’s photography contest. I believe that these small surprises further exemplify the title of my thesis, because in contrast to my initial thesis proposal, I did not have to look for external resources to offer additions to the campus’ arts presence; I was able to cultivate it internally. What started off as a much greater vision in HONORS 301H, fall semester 2008, under the guidance of Dr. Laura Guertin and Dr. Myra Goldschmidt, turned into a much more narrowly focused project that sought to provide lasting benefits for Penn State Brandywine by means of engaging its campus community. Through this engagement, I hope to provide the campus with a bright future that includes artistic expression for its students, faculty, staff, and the surrounding community.

As an agricultural definition, to cultivate involves a process of nurturing or tending to, so I applied this term to Penn State Brandywine. As a student leader, I always sought to tend to or improve the betterment of the campus. Years ago, students informed me that they wanted to see “more arts,” so this was the result, a project that engaged the campus community to cultivate artistic expression.
REFERENCES


ACADEMIC VITAE

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EDUCATION
The Pennsylvania State University, Brandywine Campus, Media, PA August 2010
- Schreyer Honors College
- Bachelors of Communication
- Minor in English and Civic and Community Engagement
- Honors in Civic and Community Engagement

HONORS THESIS
Cultivating the Arts at Penn State Brandywine Spring 2010
Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Myra Goldschmidt, Associate Professor of English; Thesis Reader: Dr. Paul Greene, Associate Professor of Integrative Arts

WORK EXPERIENCE
Orientation Leader, Penn State Brandywine, Media, PA, Student Mentor Summer 2009
- Worked with incoming freshmen as their mentor and guide
- Provided students with personal campus experiences, as well as information about campus resources

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE
The Office of University Relations, The Pennsylvania State University, Spring 2010
Brandywine Campus, Media PA
College Intern, 3-credit internship
- Created a bi-weekly newsletter for the campus
- Interviewed students about their stories to write in the campus alumni magazine, Brandywine Pride

AWARDS
Deborah J. Erie Student Leader Award Winner, Penn State Brandywine Spring 2009

SCHOLARSHIPS
- The Suburban West Realtors Association Scholarship 2009-2010
- Mark Endowed Award Visual Arts Scholarship 2008-2009
- The Suburban West Realtors Association Scholarship 2007-2008
**PUBLICATIONS**

**Peer Reviewed:**

**Campus:**

**Online:**

**PRESENTATIONS**

**EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND SERVICE**

**THON, Penn State Brandywine**

*Co-Fundraising Chair, 2008-2009, and Overall Chair, 2009-2010*
- Organized fundraising events to benefit children with pediatric cancer
- Coordinated with the Office of University Relations and the Office of Student Affairs to establish a strong visibility of the organization

**Penn In Hand Literary Magazine, Penn State Brandywine**

*Editor, 2007-2009, Co-Editor, 2009-2010*
- Performed editing/layout duties, budgeting, advertisement, and publication deadlines for the magazine

**Student Government Association, Penn State Brandywine**

*Events Coordinator, 2007-2008, Vice-President, 2008-2009, Community Service Chair, 2009-2010*
- Organized campus events with fellow officers and committees
- Served as a liaison for community service efforts on campus
INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION
Penn State Brandywine’s International Program in Florence, Italy
January 1-7, 2008
- Enrolled in CAMS 045H – Classical Mythology (3 credits)
- Traveled throughout Italy, including Florence, Rome, and Venice
- Experienced first-hand classical art education by visiting places such as the Uffizi Museum

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY
French, proficiency in reading, speaking, and writing
Chinese, beginner