Promoting CED through Fine Arts Programming in UK’s Extension Service

By Chuck Stamper, Extension Program Leader for Community & Economic Development (CED) & Fine Arts

Happy Spring! This edition of our CEDIK newsletter focuses on our Kentucky Extension Fine Arts program, but more than highlighting existing positions, we wanted to show how fine arts educational programming can be successful in any county extension program. This year celebrates the 100th year of the national Cooperative Extension system, and we will also be celebrating 10 years of our Kentucky Extension Fine Arts program area. Alison, our CEDIK Extension Specialists and Associates, and I are more than willing to assist any county in integrating fine arts into county-based programming.

The Kentucky Extension Fine Arts (EFA) program began officially in 2004 with a full-time Extension Agent being hired in Pike County. The impetus for the position was an idea to bring the resources from the UK College of Fine Arts coupled with the community development resources from the College of Agriculture to the people in rural communities where local arts traditions were already strong, but not connected. Many thanks go to Drs. Henning and Shay for their diligence in making sure the program began.

The original goal of the program was to preserve the cultural assets that were already present in communities while supporting budding artisans. Currently there are three Extension Agents for Fine Arts in Kentucky: Melissa Bond, Whitley County; Stephanie Richards, Pike County; and Anne Stephens, Greenup County.

Today, the mission of the EFA Program is to create and support opportunities in the arts for citizens that will stimulate creativity, promote participation, and recognize artists, arts educators, and arts supporters at all levels and mediums.

In 2012 four state goals were developed for the EFA program:

GOAL 1: Arts Development - The EFA Program will support and develop performing, visual and literary arts in Kentucky.

GOAL 2: Arts Education - The EFA Program will provide life-long learning opportunities in all the arts.

GOAL 3: Arts Programming - The EFA Program will expand opportunities for showcasing and publicizing the arts so that the KY CES becomes known as a leader in and encourager of the arts.

GOAL 4: Arts Venues and Facilities - The EFA Program will plan new structures and facilities and use existing venues to create a cohesive and dynamic arts culture that is easily accessible to all citizens.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR...

I am extremely proud of our Fine Arts Extension Agents here in Kentucky. I am also pleased we are able to dedicate an entire newsletter to our Kentucky program, and the stellar work of these women to bring community arts development, education, programming, and venues to locations throughout Eastern Kentucky.

Unlike the other established program areas, our Fine Arts Agents do not have ready examples of effective, research based programming with proven success stories in Kentucky to deploy in their communities. Instead, our Fine Arts Agents had to spend time in their community listening and understanding the local arts and cultural needs and then build the relationships and volunteer networks to grow their programs.

What you will see in this newsletter are excellent examples of arts programming from our three Fine Arts Agents that incorporate community education, arts development, and support of venues that promote the arts. As Chuck mentioned in his cover story, please do not hesitate to contact us if your county is interested in hiring a Fine Arts Agent.

For counties who currently do not have a Fine Arts Agent, I want to draw your attention to two opportunities in May from the Kentucky Arts Council and the Citizen’s Institute on Rural Design. On May 9th in Morehead, KY there will be a Vibrant Communities Conference open to all who are interested in “creating innovative, collaborative projects to build stronger communities and stimulate economic growth through arts and cultural engagement” according to the description. And on May 13th in Hindman, KY there will be a conference event geared towards artists interested in developing and expanding their businesses. For more information, visit http://artscouncil.ky.gov/.

The arts is of national importance to community development Extension professionals around the nation. The National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP), will be hosting their annual meeting this June (22nd-25th) in Grand Rapids, Michigan where the theme of the conference is the “Art of Reinvention.” We have several concurrent sessions and mobile tours that emphasize the arts in building sustainable communities. We are also excited that we have representation from ArtsPlace to provide resources and guidance about creative placemaking in rural communities. If you are interested in learning more about or attending the June 2014 conference, you can find registration and agenda information here http://www.nacdep.net/event5.php.

Several CEDIK faculty, staff, and Kentucky Extension Agents will be attending the meeting and we would love to have you join us!

Alison
Fall 2013 UK Fine Arts Agent Professional Development Trip to New York City

By Sarah Bowker, CEDIK Program Coordinator

Each year our Fine Arts Agents have a November professional development conference, which is typically held in Lexington. At these conferences there is a mix of activities, ranging from training by Program and Staff Development faculty, planning sessions for the coming year, opportunities to connect with main campus faculty and staff from the College of Fine Arts, and at least one event dedicated to arts/culture in the city or on UK’s campus.

This past fall, however, the time had come to travel to New York City so that the Agents could immerse themselves in the many arts and cultural offerings of Manhattan. The Agents knew that there would be plenty of inspiration to bring back to their communities and their programming, and the trip did not disappoint!

The two day trip in mid-November included visits to the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the NYC Folk Art Museum, and a backstage tour of the Metropolitan Opera House. The Agents also attended Broadway shows, including a musical tribute to Janis Joplin at the Lyceum Theater, a live musical performance by singer Cyrille Aimée at Birdland Jazz Club, and the critically acclaimed, held over performance of Samuel Beckett’s play Waiting for Godot at Cort Theater, starring Sir Patrick Stewart and Sir Ian McKellen (which at the time was in its previews week).

The insights the Agents had at MoMA are illustrative of the value of the trip to their personal development; here are just a few that were discussed over a Thai lunch in midtown Manhattan.

Melissa Bond (Whitley County) enjoyed the varied layout and color schemes used for the different collections; the neutral blues, maroons, and browns were used for several of the older collections, while the typical white/black combination was used for the modern collections. She also appreciated that the artist tag and description of the work was colored the same as the wall so as not to stick out. Melissa has organized several art exhibits in her community, and the discovery of using neutral colors for an exhibit was something she was excited to try with the next exhibit.

Anne Stephens (Greenup County) appreciated the musical instrument collection at MoMA. She connected with the idea that students would likely be quite interested to learn the historical origins of the instrument they play; how this would be a great way to weave together history to engage her students with music.

Stephanie Richards (Pike County) reflected on the question, “How does an artist know when their art is complete?” She was noticing this as she viewed several of the MoMA exhibits. Stephanie connected this to her work in theater, where at some point in the rehearsal preparations, the director decides that the actors are “ready” to perform the work. And she realized how hard it might be to describe that “readiness” to someone, yet there is likely some criteria that directors use - and how much does this vary among directors?

The annual fall conference also gives these very busy Agents a chance to bounce programming ideas off each other, to connect on what programming is working, and to learn more about what each other is doing in their community.

Kentucky Fine Arts Agents outside The Metropolitan Opera House. Left to right: Melissa Bond, Stephanie Richards, Anne Stephens, and Cora Hughes.
Exciting events are happening in Pike County Kentucky! Located in the heart of the Appalachian Mountains, Pike County is the home to the Artists Collaborative Theatre. The Artists Collaborative Theatre (ACT), located in Elkhorn City, KY, recently attended the South East Theatre Conference (SETC). ACT entered the competition with their newest show, “Quilters: The Musical.” This season favorite told the stories of different pioneer women as they made their way out west. Each “quilt block” depicts different parts a pioneer woman’s life: girlhood, marriage, childbirth, spinsterhood, natural disasters, illness and death. Through love, humor, music and dance, the quilt blocks come together to create a “legacy quilt” that the actors hold up in celebration of the pioneer women. This year, the Quilters Cast took home Best Ensemble, Emily Chaney and Kaitlyn Howell took home Achievement in Acting Awards, and Lauren Stewart was awarded Best Actress.

The SETC provides services and educational programs for organizations engaged in theatre. Theatre arts are a necessary part of any human community and help to provide a creative outlet. The SETC recognizes this importance by celebrating the diversity and rich culture of the southeast. Members include: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. To have the opportunity to perform at SETC, the ensemble had to first enter into the Kentucky Theatre Association Festival. Cast members shortened their on stage production to under one hour with tech crews only allowed to set the stage in under four minutes and strike in less than three minutes.

From their lead actress to their light director, ACT only uses local talent. Anyone is encouraged to participate and they have volunteers ranging from age 4 to 84. Typically, ACT has between eight to nine productions each year with sixteen performances of each. Then, the show goes mobile and travels around to the local schools. The Pike County Extension program also partners with the ACT theatre to provide afterschool acting programs. The Extension office supplies vans that pick children up from school and take them to the ACT theatre. The scope of learning includes stage, sound, lighting, construction, design, costuming, teaching, arts administration and development, music and dance.

In an area where art isn’t a top priority, it is important to have a creative outlet for children and adults to encourage creative growth. “ACT gives members a taste of the outside world,” says Stephanie Richards who is the Fine Arts Agent in Pike County. Stephanie, along with many volunteers in the area, have taken the ACT theatre and turned it into the most award winning theatre in Kentucky!

The Fine Arts Extension program is also working with ACT on the production of “Blood Song: The Story of the Hatfields and the McCoys.” A local writer from Virginia worked alongside five historians to recreate the colorful history of the infamous family feud. Blood Song will be performed in McCarr, Kentucky in the Kentucky Outdoor Theatre and will open this summer.

For more information, please visit the Artists Collaborative Theatre’s website www.act4.org or call (606)754-4228/(606)422-7333.

Agent Spotlight: Stephanie Richards, Pike County Fine Arts Agent and Artists Collaborative Theatre, Inc.

The cast of “Quilters: The Musical” with their Best Ensemble Award.
Kentucky is home to artists of all kinds — from traditional basket-makers and ceramists, to contemporary artists producing works that push the boundaries of art — as well as talented painters, photographers, sculptors, fiber artists, printmakers and jewelry artists.

Join us on Friday, April 11th at 6pm for our opening gallery event of “Uncommon Wealth.” If you have not yet joined us for a gallery opening, what better way to spend a Friday evening than celebrating with our community? This exhibit celebrates 30 years of the Kentucky Arts Council’s Al Smith Individual Artist Fellowship Program and is on loan from the Kentucky Arts Council.

The fellowship program was established in 1983 to recognize creative excellence and to assist in the professional development of Kentucky artists. This fellowship serves as a benchmark of excellence in the careers of the state’s artists. Whitley County resident Russell Weedman will be among several artists featured at the Extension Community Arts Center from April 11th to May 9th. We are so excited to have the opportunity to showcase a piece of Russell’s work and so lucky to have many talented artists within our region.

We will be hosting art workshops throughout the months of April and May to coincide with this exhibit. If you have ever wanted to learn the art of poetry writing, Al Smith Fellow Marianne Worthington will conduct a poetry workshop on Thursday, April 17th at 6pm. This is an opportunity for individuals aged 15 and up to work with an excellent local author on strengthening your poetry skills.

We will also have an Earth Day celebration for all ages on Tuesday, April 22nd from 3-6pm with a Sidewalk Chalk art contest, book and tree giveaway, and wire leaf sculpture class.

To participate in these workshops or to schedule a private tour of the exhibit for your school or community organization, please call (606) 549-7373 to register or email melissa.bond@uky.edu. All workshops are free to attend and open to the public.
Agent Spotlight: Anne Stephens, Greenup County Fine Arts Agent & the Greenup County Summer Music Series

The Greenup County Summer Music Series takes place from June to September on the second Saturday of each month at the Greenbo Lake State Resort Park Amphitheater and is free and open to the public. The festivities start at 5pm and continue into the evening; the State Park dining room offers an expanded concessions menu so that attendees can plan to have a nice dinner at an affordable cost without leaving the amphitheater area of the park.

The music series is a family friendly opportunity and there is variety in the offerings with each month focusing on a different event. The June event features a Battle of the Bands, highlighting local and regional talent. The bands compete for a $500 purse and the opportunity for the winning band to perform at another Summer Music Series event. The July event is the Greenup County Country Music Festival, and the “Country” music designation is new to this year’s event. In years past, the majority of musicians and bands that performed at the July Festival are in the country music genre, therefore the event organizers decided to go ahead and name the festival a country music festival.

The August event is GreenboGrass, a music festival dedicated to the local bluegrass music and culture. This summer will be the second year that this event will be held, and features many local musicians. In September, the event will be the 7th Annual Colonel Bill Williams Blues Festival. This event in particular helps to educate community members about Colonel Bill Williams’ impact on the history of blues music, and his legacy as a blues performer. The organizers of this festival, which include Bill’s granddaughter, were able to find a recording of Bill’s blues music from the Smithsonian to play between the live musical acts that perform at the festival.

Each of the four events has a local volunteer from the Greenup Extension Arts Council that organizes the event, and Fine Arts Agent Anne Stephens provides them with resources and encouragement. They meet regularly as a group to support one another and keep Anne up to speed on the event details.

The Extension Arts Council hires a local sound and light company, and a local celebrity emcees each event. All musicians who perform at the July-September events are paid under contract, which supports the local economy and promotes respect for the value of a musician’s skill and time.

The funding for the Summer Music Series comes from a mix of state tourism grant dollars and sponsorships from local businesses. One printed program is designed for the series, and an insert is placed inside for each of the events. The sponsors are advertised in the programs, as well as on a screen near the stage. The Summer Music Series is also advertised locally on the radio.

Anne also uses the Summer Music Series as an opportunity to educate attendees on the other programs and services that the Greenup County Extension Office provides. A table is set up with flyers, brochures, and other materials that are put into a packet and given away, along with a few giveaway items to engage attendees.

For more information, please visit the Greenup County Extension Office’s website http://greenup.ca.uky.edu/ or call (606) 836-0201.
DEADLINE SOON!
Kentucky ARC Flex-E-Grants
The call for competitive proposals for Cycle II of the KY-ARC Flex-E-Grant (FEG) program is currently underway. The FEG Program, designed by the Appalachian Regional Commission, provides small investments in short-term projects that build community capacity. Grants are subject to approval for up to $8,000, require a 20% match of total project costs, and are to be completed within a 6-month timeline. Funds are made available on a reimbursement basis only.

The FEG program was generated from the ARC’s initiative to enhance assistance to distressed counties, and each approved project must demonstrate beneficiaries in a distressed Kentucky county. Please see the attached guidelines to determine eligibility.

Proposals are due to Brushy Fork Institute by Thursday, May 15, 2014. Award notification will be provided June 30. The period of performance for approved projects will be from July 1, 2014 - January 15, 2015.

For more information, please visit http://www.berea.edu/brushy-fork-institute/arc-flex-e-grants-for-kentuckys-distressed-counties/

Request for Proposals for Rural Communities Facing Design Challenges
The Citizens’ Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) has issued a request for proposals to rural communities facing design challenges - such as Main Street revitalization, how to manage and direct growth, design community-supportive transportation systems, preserve natural and historic landscapes and buildings, protect working agricultural lands, and provide adequate and affordable housing - who are interested in hosting a local workshop in 2014-2015. Successful applicants will receive a $7,000 stipend and in-kind professional design expertise and technical assistance valued at $35,000. The Request for Proposals is posted on the CIRD website: http://rural-design.org/request-for-proposals.

The deadline for submitting a proposal is Tuesday May 6, 2014 at 9:00 pm EST

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According to the Kentucky Tourism, Arts, and Humanities Council, Kentucky had tax revenues of $1.2 billion in 2012 related to tourism and the arts, and Extension Agents have played roles in developing venues that contribute to this revenue across the state. We are expanding our work in the fine arts within our system to address the needs Agents may have. Multiple counties have requested asset mapping of local fine arts venues as well as strategic planning for communities interested in developing local arts councils. Our CEDIK Extension Specialists and I are willing to work with Extension Agents interested in developing local arts programming.

We have also had inquiries from clientele and agents about the steps to adding an EFA Agent position in the county. We are open to that discussion. However, like any other new Extension position, there is a process. The first step is to make sure the Extension District Director is involved in the discussion. Contact Chuck Stamper or Alison Davis and we will lead the county office through the discussion process. The initial questions to ask are: Is this an issue of importance in my county and will my county be able to support the position? We are more than glad to have that discussion with you!
Upcoming Events & Important Dates

May 9, 2014  FORUM: Vibrant Communities: Putting Arts and Cultural Development to Work, 9am-4pm Morehead  info
May 13, 2014  FORUM: Artists as Entrepreneurs: Putting Arts and Cultural Development to Work 9am-4pm Hindman  info
May 14, 2014  WORKSHOP: Redevelopment and Revitalization of Land — How To and Funding 1-5pm London  info
May 15, 2014  WORKSHOP: Redevelopment and Revitalization of Land — How To and Funding 8-11:30am Hazard  info
May 15, 2014  WORKSHOP: Redevelopment and Revitalization of Land — How To and Funding 1:30-5pm Prestonsburg  info
June 2-4, 2014  Institute for Sustainable Development—Community & Economic Development Retreat in Nashville, IN  info

NACDEP (National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals) Annual Conference
June 22-25, 2014
Grand Rapids, MI
http://www.nacdep.net/event5.php

NACDEP will be celebrating its 10th anniversary by honoring past NACDEP presidents as well as the work of all members contributing to Community and Economic Development Extension. The conference will provide a forum for Extension educators, scholars, researchers, partners and government officials to explore the breadth of topics related to community development.

CDS (Community Development Society) Annual Conference
July 20-23, 2014
Dubuque, Iowa
http://www.comm-dev.org/

CDS furthers community work through teaching, practice, and research. The 2014 Conference will allow participants to join a national conversation between community development professionals and practitioners. The CDS Conference will also feature keynote speaker Chad Pregracke, CNN’s Hero of the Year.

RSS (Rural Sociological Society) Annual Conference
July 30-August 3, 2014
New Orleans, Louisiana
http://www.ruralsociology.us/

The topic of the 77th Annual Meeting of RSS will be Equity, Democracy, and the Commons: Counter-narratives for Rural Transformation. In 2014, RSS participants are encouraged to present work that engages with the key social issues of equity and democracy, and with various aspects of the knowledge and material commons.

CEDIK QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to building Kentucky communities with a true sense of pride and place, rich natural and built amenities, and a strong economic base.