

Service Learning in Technical Programs: Not a Bridge too Far

Northwest College of Art and Design Creates a Children's Book for Seattle Children's Hospital

By Susan Ogilvie
Director of Education
Northwest College of Art and Design, Tacoma, WA

Service Learning is a component of education that is sometimes undervalued in the effort to focus on career-based skills. But, there is opportunity to infuse service learning into technical skill programs with great positive effect for the institution, students, and the community. To this end, Northwest College of Art and Design in Tacoma, Washington has developed a pilot model of bridging advanced studio experience and service to the larger community in a new project of illustrating a children's book for our regional children's hospital in Seattle.

The idea came through a senior student who double majored in entertainment art and illustration and also had recently been advanced from the Seattle Children's Hospital program from many years of treatment and care. It was an idea that sparked great enthusiasm with the other advanced illustration students and their instructor. That spark caught fire.

The group of 26 advanced illustrators selected a public domain topic of *Alice in Wonderland*; renaming their version, *Alice in Washington*, feeling that the patients at Children's Hospital could relate to the fun, classical story framed in the state of Washington.

Each of the 32 full color illustrations are created from the unique style of each artist yet continues the recognizable characters of Alice and friends. The original book will be published and all rights to the sale of the book will be given to Children's Hospital, Seattle. Copies of the book will be provided for the children who are patients to enjoy during their stay or medical visits to comfort and entertain them.



Illustration Credit: Emilie Santos



Class of 2019. Credit: S. Carlson

Given the success of this project, NCAD plans to develop a new similar project each year, whether through a non-profit or charitable organization, utilizing our core majors of illustration, graphic design, entertainment art and motion graphics. The experience and compassion to use one's talents for the support of others is an element of education that Northwest College of Art and Design strives hard to promote within the whole professional graduating from our school. By building a bridge between service learning and technical skills, we are showing students

– and ourselves – the importance and value of giving to others and how sharing talent and can touch the lives of others in truly profound and remarkable ways.