

Interdisciplinary Collaborations

Partnership for the Missouri Folk Arts Program

Collaborations in Arts & Sciences

The Missouri Folk Arts Program (MFAP) is dedicated to building cross-cultural understanding of Missouri's folk arts by documenting, conserving and presenting Missouri's living folk arts and folk life. The most obvious manifestation of our mission statement is Missouri's Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program, which in the past twenty years has paired over three hundred teams of artists to convey folk arts traditions from one generation to the next. However, the MFAP has long been involved in cross-disciplinary programs, in agency-to-agency partnerships and with individual staff members serving as consultants or advisors.

For instance, the MFAP works closely with the Folklore Studies professors Elaine Lawless and Sw. Anand Prahlad in MU's Department of English. MFAP staff provides guest lectures for courses like *Introduction to Folklore, Folk Religion & Belief, Women's Traditions & Feminist Theory* and *American Folklore*. The MFAP Director, Lisa Higgins, has been an advisor for the *Student Folklore Society* since its inception in 1999. The folk arts program has also hosted graduate student interns from the Folklore Studies Program since 1993. Interns work at the MFAP offices and in the field with Folk Arts Specialist Debbie Bailey for two consecutive semesters and earn course credit.

Since at least 1999, the MFAP has also collaborated with MU's Art Department. With guidance from Professor Deborah Huelsbergen, students in Graphic Design competed to create a new logo for the MFAP in 2000, transitioning the artwork from an image of a finished object (an intricate piece of ironwork) to a logo that evokes the MFAP's focus on people and their interactions with Missouri's cultural and ecological landscape. In the upcoming year, a team of Graphic Design students will work with the MFAP staff in an artist/client setting to design and produce interpretative materials for the program's twentieth anniversary.

New Partnerships with Agriculture

In keeping with our penchant for collaboration, the MFAP recently began a partnership with the Department of Rural Sociology in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. Since 2001, the MFAP Director has served on an



Intern David Allred photographs master blacksmith John Glenn in his St. Joseph workshop. Photo by Deborah A. Bailey



Map prepared by Tim Nigh, Missouri Ecological Classification Project, and Andy Dolan, Department of Geography, University of Missouri-Columbia

