

Professional Narrative
Nate Nixdorf
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As both an educator and artist, I feel fortunate. Being in a position that can open the eyes and mind to something new is a job that can never grow old. No matter the age of the student, the “a-ha” moment exists in everyone, and it’s that moment that I seek in everything I do.

I was the benefactor of a quality art education growing up in central Pennsylvania, and was lucky to be influenced by great teachers at both the secondary and post-secondary levels. Although, I didn’t take the traditional path to art education. I was able to find my true passion through first exploring other areas. My post-secondary pursuit began in the Physics and Computer Science fields, seeking out a job in the computer-engineering field. Through all the analytical work, the art lingered. It was the topic that kept calling to me, and it was the place I wanted to spend my time. During the summer after my sophomore year, I took a job teaching art at an 8-week sleep-away camp in the Poconos, and from then on I never looked back. I got my feet wet teaching in a high school in Northern Virginia right out of college, and then received the call that my former high school teacher, the person who got me started in clay, was retiring. Fortunate to receive her praise and recommendation, the torch was passed, and I was given the opportunity to continue the high level of education given to me, as well as extend the courses based on my developing expertise.

I feel that my own personal education in clay is never-ending. Whether as a student, apprentice, assistant or observer, I thrive on new information, and continuously seek out more. The ceramic world is a collaborative one, and it constantly amazes me how much people are willing to share. A piece of advice that was given to me, and one that I try to pass to my students is simple: work for knowledge. Find someone who has information that you want, and offer to help at no cost. Do something, do anything, and do it for the exchange of information. I’ve done this countless times, and it’s amazing how much I’ve learned, how many doors it has opened, and how many incredible connections it’s provided.

My work in public education as well as my work as an artist has planted the seeds of a dream. My ultimate goal is to open an art center where I can bring together my two passions. I want not just the opportunity to teach the school-aged students, but everyone. I want a place to teach, a place to create, and a place for all to be inspired. It’s my hope to be the avenue for learning that so many before me have demonstrated to me.