

# Heart for the Arts: Campus job opens up new opportunities

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On a Thursday afternoon, Matt Pitcher gingerly carried a large painting into the Darwin R. Wales Center, with SUNY Broome archivist and art curator Robin Valashinas following closely behind.

Art thrives at SUNY Broome, and not just in the classroom or the gallery. Paintings and other artwork grace the halls of many campus buildings, featuring both local and prominent artists. Walk outside, and you can also see sculptures glinting in the sun – the most prominent being *Quatrain* by Edward Haugevik and Linda Spirit, a lightning-bolt shaped piece commemorating the college's fortieth anniversary.

Careers in art, however, can involve more than wielding a paintbrush – something that Pitcher is learning firsthand. In his campus work-study job, he helps curate SUNY Broome's art collection – exposing him to a potential career choice and life's path.

During the course of a day, you can find him working on the campus art catalog, installing tableaus in the Applied Technology Building, or working on new exhibits for the Gallery @ SUNY Broome.

"The Flood exhibit will feature Ed Aswad's aerials," he said of an ongoing project – an exhibit of the local photographer's work, donated to the college. "I made the PowerPoint. The exhibit will run through August and September in the Gallery at the library."



## Drawn to the arts

When Matt Pitcher first enrolled in SUNY Broome, the arts and the campus' extensive art collection weren't on

his radar. The Union-Endicott graduate first majored in Business Administration, but found it a poor fit for his interests.

A switch to Liberal Arts helped him raise his GPA from 2.0 to a solid 3.7. In Professor Mark William's course on Modern Art, Matt really hit his stride.

"I loved it," he said of the art history course, during which he researched fantasy landscape artist Roger Dean. "When I came here, I didn't initially think anything about art."

Matt, who draws as a form of relaxation, learned about the Art Club through Williamson's class. The Art Club led him to Valashinas, and ultimately to his work-study job.

"I first met Matt last semester when he volunteered to help with the work we were doing in the Decker building. His interest in the Arts on campus led him to volunteer for several other projects," said Valashinas, who is SUNY Broome alumna.

"When we saw his dedication and interest in our department, he was hired as a work-study," she continued. "Matt has become an invaluable asset to the work we are doing to enhance the beauty of our campus. As we work with the art and resources available, his initiative and intelligence have proven him to be one of a kind. Matt is a gem!"

Pitcher's exposure to the visual arts has expanded beyond his work-study job and classes. He's been visiting different museums, including the Johnson Art Museum at Cornell, the Roberson Museum and Science Center, and the Bundy Museum. He has plans to visit the acclaimed Maxfield Parrish exhibit in Cooperstown this summer and recently had the opportunity to meet artist Daniel Mosner, whose paintings are featured on campus and include "County Fair Tilt-A-Whirl" on the first floor of the Wales Center. That last opportunity came through Valashinas, who wanted Pitcher to experience a working artist's studio firsthand.

He also discovered a new favorite place: the dark vault on the third floor of the library where the college's art collection resides when it's not in rotation.

When he's not working as campus curator or taking classes, Pitcher works at Consol's for much of the week, and spends his leisure time drawing.

He's looking into art programs at Binghamton University and Cornell, although he's not entirely decided on his future path. In the meantime, he is grateful for his SUNY Broome experience and confident that it will make a good impression on a future resume or college transfer application.

"I feel like since doing this work study, I've been drawn more toward the arts. We're doing different things every day here," he said. "It's given me so many opportunities."

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