

Art show accepts all

Student-led art show, Tom Thumb, accepts all submitted pieces

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Sixteen years ago, two Truman State students were tired of art selection processes that relied on a jury to determine what student art was good enough to be displayed at the University Art Gallery. So, they started their own art show in their apartment.

Since then, the show has bounced from houses to schools, and this year it will be at Pickler's Famous. Regardless of the venue, Tom Thumb, a

student led art show, continues to offer students and Kirksville community members a chance to display art without fear of rejection.

Truman alumnus Matt Johns has helped plan Tom Thumb for the past five years and submitted his art for display. Despite knowing all art is accepted, he said it is an honor.

"One of the best things about

Tom Thumb is when you're hanging out at the event and people come to talk to you about your art," Johns said. "That reaction from your peers is something really awesome."

Tom Thumb accepts all art forms including painting, performance and written pieces. Because of this wide



Submitted photo
Alumnus Nick Bitikofer, left, and senior Peter Schaffner, right, perform at Tom Thumb last year. Tom Thumb, which features artists, musicians and writers, will be 7 p.m. April 13 at Pickler's Famous.

Tom Thumb
7 p.m. April 13
Pickler's Famous

Drop off your art for Tom Thumb
5:30 - 9 p.m. April 10
BH 309

range, Johns said he has seen some odd displays, including a toilet made of Oreos and a performance piece during which an artist taped a fish to his body and smashed eggs on himself.

Graduate student Allison Sissom is a Tom Thumb planning committee member. She said unusual displays like an artist shaving his head or encouraging viewers to throw food are what make Tom Thumb special.

"Stuff like that wouldn't make it into our traditional gallery, and so this is a platform for them to display whatever art they've been working on," she said.

Students who don't submit art still can be involved. Tom Thumb can be a valuable experience because it is planned entirely by students and funded by donations.

Because it isn't hosted in a formal art gallery and pieces aren't selected by a jury or an art director, Sissom said the students who plan it get to experience art from a different point of view.

"Everything from advertising to planning to creating is dependent on the committee of five to 10 students," Sissom said. "So we kind of get to do it all."

For sophomore April Johnson,

Tom Thumb offers a way to let Kirksville community members and non-art majors become involved in the art community.

By allowing all art, Johnson said the show encourages people to be creative and the display showcases talent not often seen. Johnson said this year's theme, Kim Jong Ill's sweet 16, is another example of how Tom Thumb is quirky and fun.

While the theme is only used for the advertisements, Johnson said the art, venue and performances will be different from what viewers would expect to see at a regular art show.

Students work with local businesses

BY KATE LINMAN
Staff Reporter

Aside from traditional employment, some Truman State students are receiving the opportunity to work as interns with small businesses like Pickler's Famous and Blink of an Eye.

The Small Business & Technology Development Center bridges Truman students and faculty with local business owners, SBTDC Executive Director SBTDC Charlene Boyes said.

The SBTDC brings the expertise of students and staff, through internships and class projects, to fulfill the needs of small business owners in the Kirksville and Northeast Missouri communities.

Each semester the SBTDC works with a total of 15 students, interns and classes, from Truman's School of Business to help business owners with financial planning, market research and business planning, Boyes said.

Students who inquire to SBTDC or are referred to it by faculty or previous interns go through an interview process prior to receiving an offer, Boyes said.

Boyes said all different kinds of business-

es seek out SBTDC for help. Everything from retail to restaurants and recycling business come through their doors, she said.

She said interns are heavily involved with the work SBTDC does for local businesses. Students are partnered up with a client and work with them for the semester, Boyes said.

Businesses come to SBTDC for a variety of reasons, she said, including getting financial reports to apply for loans or grants, find investors and market research to learn more about the competition.

"We have a limited amount that have innovative ideas that are looking for help commercializing, maybe prototyping an idea, maybe launching a new project," Boyes said.

Boyes said SBTDC's work with Truman allows students' expertise at the School of Business to be shared with the community and region at large.

"It makes sense to transfer that knowledge

in a real way for students have real experience with real clients," Boyes said. "It's outreach for Truman, and it allows for the community to tap into some major expertise at Truman."

Alumna Ruby Ou started working as an intern at SBTDC during September. She learned about the internship through her roommate, who used to intern at SBTDC. Ou earned her degree in accounting and has used her knowledge to help businesses with financial projections and learning basic accounting principles. She works two afternoons a week, spending seven to eight hours working — unpaid.

"I find it really enjoyable to help people, and it's helpful to practice my accounting," Ou said. She said she thinks that without SBTDC many people wanting to start their own business would have no idea what the risk is and how much money they need and wouldn't get they help they need.

Pickler's Famous owner Todd Kuhns said he has worked with SBTDC on and off since he started conceiving the business during 2008. Last fall he worked with a market research class at Truman through SBTDC and he tasked the class with two objectives. The first group focused on how to get general events to want to use the space.

The second group focused more specifically on getting birthday parties to rent Pickler's Famous. Kuhns said the groups came up with prices, and used focus groups and surveys to conduct their research. Kuhns met with the groups several times throughout the semester.

"[The students] has a great presentation, very professional-bound result findings for us and very detailed reports," Kuhns said at the final presentation. "This is something you'd pay thousands of dollars for a marketing research firm to do and these students produced very high caliber work for free."

He said his work with SBTDC and the market research class has definitely helped his business and they are booked every weekend through the second week of May. Kuhns also said he recommends other businesses in the community to tap into the resources of SBTDC.

Local businesses that have worked with SBTDC

Pickler's Famous
Jacob's Vineyard and Winery
Blink of an Eye
Dave's Studio

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