The Creative Job Pursuit: The Ability to Follow One’s Dream Fearlessly

Jennifer L. Newman
Buffalo State College

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The Creative Job Pursuit: The Ability to Follow One’s Dream Fearlessly.

By

Jennifer L. Newman

An Abstract of a Project
In
Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements
For the Degree of

Master of Science

May 2007

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
Department of Creative Studies
ABSTRACT OF PROJECT

The Creative Job Pursuit: The Ability to Follow One’s Dream Fearlessly.

This project contains a resource guide that will assist students applying and exploring for jobs. The project also shows how divergent and convergent tools can aid in this experience and includes information on divergent and convergent tools such as Pluses, Potentials, Concerns, and How to overcome those concerns (PPCo), Brainstorming, and Storyboarding. These tools were needed in order to develop the risk-taking skill that was pertinent to this project. The tools and skill applied in this project allowed for the search for an ideal job that fosters and nurtures creativity and its many facets. The project report incorporates my own personal job seeking stories for inspiration and strength for others.

______________________________
Date
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A Project in
Creative Studies

By

Jennifer L. Newman

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
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Dates Approval:

__________________________
Dr. Mary Murdock
Associate Professor of Creative Studies
Project Advisor

Dates Approval:

__________________________
Jennifer Newman
Student
Dedication and Acknowledgments

To my family for their continuous support and love;
To my friends for their kindness and understanding;
And to the Creative Studies Department for their dedication and support throughout my educational journey.
Thank you to everyone and good luck to all 😊

“Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which [s]he has overcome while trying to succeed.”
-Booker T. Washington
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Appendix A: Concept Paper
The Creative Job Pursuit: The Ability to Follow One’s Dream Fearlessly

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May 2007

State University of New York College at Buffalo State College

International Center for Studies in Creativity
SECTION 1: BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop a resource guide that would be a reminder to me of all I could and will accomplish, in the present and the future. This guide was meant to help in my job search and assist those who face the same obstacles as me. I have been constantly looking for that ideal job. I did not limited myself to one specific field because I felt that I have the skills and knowledge to adapt easily to any environment. I wanted to remain open to any possible professions or opportunities that arise. Because I have been in school for the majority of my life, I have only focused on the education aspect of the future. I have always had dreams and aspirations, but often they would change or turn out to be a profession I was hesitant or scared to persist. As I approach my last semester in the Creative Studies program, I finally realize my potentials and goals. In order to fulfill the goal of finding a job I am fulfilled by, I needed to overcome my fear of taking risks and opening myself up to the outside business world. It is truly my time to face the “real world” This is something I am excited to pursue, and I hope to inspire others who are in the same position as me.

Description

The amount of job resources in today’s society can be overwhelming. I wanted to focus on certain search engines, agencies, and career services workshops that would assist with finding the ideal profession that I felt comfortable and challenged by. I want a job that allows for growth and development not only for me but also the organization. The main resource I have referred to has been Career Services at (http://www.BuffaloState.edu). The information can be found under Online Resource
for Career Advancement (ORCA), simply type this in by the word search. This website lists job fairs, workshops held by the college and jobs available to students. The job search engine allows individuals to explore opportunities that they might miss or not be aware of at particular times.

**Rationale for Selection**

I chose this project because I wanted other students to know about and have visual examples of all the job possibilities that we as Creative Studies majors are qualified to fulfill. I wanted the students to know that there were difficult obstacles that one must overcome but that the skills and tools learned from this major should help us turn those obstacles or weaknesses into potential and learning experiences. I felt that the ability to signify the importance of creativity in organizations was the leading edge for us as students. I have always had dreams and goals, and now it is time for me to turn these into reality, one at a time. I am determined to find my dream job that will allow for my development creatively and professionally.

**Creative Additions**

The creativity tools and skills that were utilized in this project have allowed for my growth both personally and professionally. The ability to learn and prosper from the resource guide is one method acquiring that goal of finding one’s ideal job. This project was a way for me to express my love and knowledge of creativity and its benefits to society. I now view and live life from a new positive perspective.
SECTION 2: PERTINENT LITERATURE

This section contains abstracts of key literature that allowed me to explore all the benefits of creativity within an environment, and a bibliography of useful sources. Using this literature also allowed me to research ways in which I can become more creative and how I can personally release my true creative potential. I learned about myself along with the importance of a positive creative environment in any organization.

Abstracts

I selected these three books to abstract because they influenced and enhanced my development of creativity. They also educated and inspired me throughout my journey through the Creative Studies Master’s Program.


- The author inspired me by introducing tools that can assist in releasing one’s emotions and creative potential.
- The in-depth reflection on the author’s life and others close to her truly impacts the importance of creativity and life.


- Everyone has the potential to be creative.
- Creativity can be discovered and enhanced at any age.
- The significance of finding the creativity one possess can be a daily challenge but knowing and practicing exercises such as “Write in the Dark” and “Retirement Kit” can assist in the process.

• Creative Problem Solving (CPS) is a way to focus and come up with solutions on an idea.
• The team building or individual use of this tool can be essential in most situations.
• The steps involved in the creative process are outlined in great detail.
• The divergent and convergent tools are explained and examples are provided for a clear understanding of the material.
Bibliography of how to be creative in seeking a profession


SECTION 3: PROCESS PLAN

The process plan allowed me to organize the steps I needed to take in order to complete my project. It allowed me to be very detailed in planning my events and research surrounding the project. I have remained on schedule, and I have met my goals I established for this project.

My process involved distributing my resume to numerous organizations. I also attended several events held by the Buffalo State Career Services and received knowledgeable feedback from my fellow Creative Studies peers. My process focused around me so I spent countless hours facilitating myself through preparation for interviews and applications for job positions. I wrote in my journal constantly so I could capture all the details whether they were positive or negative. And because of all of these attributions I developed a resource guide as my tangible product for this project.

Timeline:

**FEBRUARY 2007**

February 1, I worked on the outline and timeline for my concept paper (4 hours)

February 3, I researched job networks online (1 hour)

February 4, I worked on researching literature for my project (3 hours)

February 5, I sent my resume out to 8 different companies (2 hours)

February 5, I researched available temp agencies in the Buffalo and Binghamton area. (2 hours)

February 2-6, I worked on my draft concept paper (5 hours)

February 7, I got the draft of my concept paper approved and worked on the bibliography (2 hours)
February 8, Job interview for a Volunteer Coordinator in Williamsville, New York. (2 hours)

February 9, I did a write-up on my interview experience and evaluated myself with the convergent tool, PPCo. (2 hours)

February 10-28, I facilitated myself through possible job opportunities and ways to expand my search for those desired careers. (10 hours)

February 15, I attended a workshop at Buffalo State College on Crafting Your Cover Letter. (1 hour)

February 16, I sent my resume out to 5 different companies (2 hours)

February 21, I went to allied sources (temp agency) for information and a way to make my resume available to organizations. (2 hours)

February 22, I worked on Part one, two, and three of the project write-up. (3 hours)

February 23, I sent my resume out to 6 different employers (2 hours)

February 25, I worked on editing part one, two, and three of the project (2 hours)

February 28, I met with Dr. Murdock to discuss the progress of my project. (30 minutes)

Also throughout the month of February, I will journal about my experiences and ways to overcome obstacles that I will be faced with during certain situations. (7 hours)

**MARCH 2007**

March 1-31, I submitted my resume to potential employers. (5 hours)

March 2, I have a job interview in Delevan, New York (1 hour)

March 3, I sent my resume to four different places of employment (2 hours)

March 4, I worked on my resource guide (6 hours)

March 16, I worked on my resource guide (4 hours)

March 2-31, I developed my resource guide with tools and personal experience stories. (15 hours)
March 6, I attended a workshop at Buffalo State College on “How to Get the Competitive Edge at the Job Fair”. (1 hour and 30 minutes)

March 6, CRS 690 (3 hours)

March 6-20, I got feedback from students in the graduate program on my idea and information presented. (3 hours)

March 8, I attended a job fair at Buffalo State College (2 hours)

March 15, I attended a workshop at Buffalo State College on Great Resumes Made Easy, Crafting Your Great Cover Letter and the Art of Interviewing. - (3 hours)

March 20, I attended a workshop at Buffalo State College on The Secrets of a Successful Job Search. - 1 hour and 30 minutes

APRIL 2007

April 2-24, I added depth and knowledge to my resource guide and write-up. (15 hours and 30 minutes)

Total Hours: 114
SECTION 4: OUTCOMES

The major outcome of this project was the development of a resource guide. The guide is a step by step approach to finding one’s dream job. In this guide, I explained the process I engaged in from beginning to end, the tools, websites, books, and workshops. Personal examples were also incorporated into the guide. I am a firm believer of visuals and the effectiveness they have when incorporated with a brief explanation. Several sources are cited and can be found, on my reference page, online and at the Buffalo State Library.
THE RESOURCE GUIDE: A GUIDE TO ASSIST

JOB SEEKERS
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During the course of this project, I applied for a variety of positions. The positions are listed below in bullet format.

- MANAGER TRAINEE
- EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR
- EDUCATION COORDINATOR
- ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT
- VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR
- ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
- EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR YOUTH AGENCY
- COMMUNITY ORGANIZER
- CAREER SERVICES REPRESENTATIVE
- TRAINING COORDINATOR
- PROGRAM MANAGER
- CROSS-CULTURAL TRAINER IN JAPAN
- EDUCATION MANAGER
- EDUCATION SPECIALIST
- COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR
- SALES REPRESENTATIVE FOR AFLAC
- DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR
- COMMUNICATION INSTRUCTOR
- YOUTH DIRECTOR
- YMCA DIRECTOR
- GLOVE HOUSE ASSISTANT
- GLOVE HOUSE COUNSELOR
- CAREER SERVICES INSTRUCTOR
- PUBLIC RELATIONS POSITION AT AFLAC
I want to begin with the Pluses, Potentials, Concerns and overcoming those concerns (PPCo), I developed before beginning this project. The convergent tool, PPCo is also known as the Praise First tool. Authors, Firestien, Miller and Vehar state, “Praise First allows you to express both positive and negative responses to an idea without crushing its potential –or its originator” (2001, p.48). This tool assisted me in developing and implementing my vision. I used it to generate ideas and ways in which I could overcome my concerns. The steps involved include:

- I listed the **pluses** of my project. This is where I listed what I liked about this idea right now.

- I listed my **potentials** for this idea, I began these statements with, It might. I developed a list of opportunities that this idea might generate for me.

- I listed my **concerns**, things that are bothering me and might hinder my development with this idea. These began with how to, how might, and in what ways might.

- After listing my concerns I took each concern and generated ideas to overcome them in order to reach my goal.

This tool allowed me to express myself without placing judgment on my ideas. I followed this PPCo throughout the project; it reminded me of everything that I am capable of accomplishing. I also used it as a way to influence my risk-taking skill that I developed. My personal example is as follows:
Idea-I am going to document my interview and job search experiences. I want to be comfortable and be able to take risks, I believe the search for my ideal job will allow me to grow personally and become more knowledgeable of my strengths and weaknesses. I hope to be able to get feedback from the potential employers because this will add to my experience and future endeavors. My end product will be a documented resource guide for others in the same position as me. I will use tools that I have learned and skills that I have developed to help me in this process.

**Pluses**
- I am passionate about my idea for a project
- I will be incorporating convergent and divergent tools into the project write-up and resource guide
- I will be able to create a tangible product for others to view and get guidance from
- I am excited to start the project write-up

**Potentials**
- It might allow me to take-risks and succeed
- It might allow me to become a better facilitator for myself.
- It might help me find my dream job
- It might enhance my resume and cover letter
- It might develop my interviewing skills
- It might give inspiration to other students that refer to my project
- It might give me guidance in my life
- It might enable me to become a stronger leader
- It might allow me to develop my leadership skills
- It might help me welcome change
- It might lead to networking
- It might lead to personal growth

**Concerns**
- How to get more interviews
- How to get feedback from the employers
How to overcome
How to get more interviews

- Go to a temp agency
- Talk to career services
- Attend career services workshops
- Talk with teachers
- Talk to other students
- Talk to connections I have made through the program
- Go to job fairs
- Distribute resume everywhere
- Expand horizons
- Seek more jobs out of state
- Apply to 10 jobs per week
- Enhance my resume
- Develop my cover letter
- Get more references

How to get feedback from employers

- Ask them after the interview
- Email them
- Write them a letter
- Take them to lunch
- Ask them to do a PPCo
- Tell them the significance of their feedback
- Call them
- Send them a thank you card

After reviewing the results I began to implement the idea. First I randomly searched for jobs in the Sunday paper, online, and in Pennysavers. I eventually realized that I was going to need assistance with this aspect of my project. I spoke with a very helpful individual at the Tompkins Workforce New York One-Stop Career Center. I chose this center because I will be relocating to Cortland, New York. These centers offer assistance with resumes, cover letters, interviewing skills, and job placement. In order to find the center closest to your location, go to www.labor.state.ny.us.

Another beneficial website is www.buffalostate.edu. When you reach this cite, type in ORCA in the search box. This will take you to Online Resource for Career
After reaching this point, you will log in and explore job postings, workshops, career fair dates and employers. This was a convenient tool that assisted me in my job search. I also scheduled appointments to meet with the centers advisors to review my resume, cover letter and interviewing skills.

As I continued to fill out applications, send my resumes and cover letters, I also decided to use another very helpful tool. This tool is called Storyboarding. Storyboarding is a visual tool that allows a person to outline a future goal. The authors of *Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change* (2007), stated, “We use Storyboarding to create a future story in panels that highlight the sequence of significant events from the beginning of the story (i.e., the present) to the desired outcome (i.e., the future) (Puccio, Murdock, & Mance, p.118). They described the steps in Storyboarding as:

- Identify the topic to be explored
- Decide how many panels you want to have in your Storyboard
- Define your current situation
- Project yourself into the future
- Complete the story
- Elaborate on the images in the panels

(p.118).

My Storyboard was unique because I used magazine clippings and photographs to illustrate my panels. Although this approach was effective for me, you might find that drawing in each panel works best for you. As you view my finished Storyboard keep in mind my idea/vision is finding my dream job. I am very proud of my visual and I hope it inspires and educates you like it has me.
There are six slides on the storyboard. They each represented important steps that needed to be taken in order to fulfill my dream.

- The first slide and step in achieving my dream is to graduate with my Master’s in Creativity.
- The second slide represented the research I did in order to apply and interview for jobs.
- The third slide represented the importance of having a professional review and critique of my resume and cover letter.
- The fourth slide dealt with the interviewing process.
- The fifth slide was the idea of choosing a profession and accepting an offer.
- The final slide, number six is my goal, the ability to work in an occupation that embraces and nurtures creativity.
The constant interviewing and applying got to be overwhelming. In order to refuel, I treated myself once every two weeks. I went on an Artist’s Date (Cameron, 1992). This helped me to regain my motivation and focus on the project. I also saw myself taking risks and being more open to new and unusual job postings.

Julia Cameron, author of *The Artist’s Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity* stated, “an artist’s date is a block of time, perhaps two weekly, especially set aside and committed to nurturing your creative consciousness, your inner artists (1992, p.18). Cameron offered many more helpful tools to relieve the stress of everyday life. I read the book before I began my project and occasionally went back to certain sections while working on my project. I would recommend reading this inspirational book.

As my project came to an end I found myself relieved and excited about what the future holds. I accepted a job that I would have never applied for if I had not been working on this project. As I stated in my vision, I wanted to take risks and this is what I did throughout my project. I was astonished by the results and outcomes that have come from my vision. I hope that you have found this guide beneficial and memorable.
REFERENCES


www.labor.state.ny.us.

www.buffalostate.edu
SECTION 5: KEY LEARNINGS

My personal learning goals for this project included how to take risks, how to gain confidence in myself, and how to develop a resource guide to assist others. I learned that everyone has their own version and tools associated with creativity. Having such a diverse amount of tools to look at and work with has given me a new appreciation for creativity.

Content

The center of this project focuses on the resource guide. This guide is a reference for individuals who find themselves lost in the world of job seeking. Any individual whether they are associated with the Creative Studies Department or not can benefit from this guide. It is a detailed and easy to read version of the process I went through. During this project I went to workshops, career centers, and applied for numerous positions. I learned valuable information from all of these sources. Even though they were related each one had something different to peak my interests and aid in my job search. Because I attended workshops and read numerous sources, I learned how to perfect my resume and cover letter. I also learned to become more confident with the job interviewing process. As time progressed, I became more at ease and willing to share my true desires with the employers. The true me shined through when I took risks, established who I am, what I want, and how I was going to get it.

Process

The amount of information gathered proved to be overwhelming at first. As I spoke and interviewed with employers I gained valuable experience that could only be
learned through this particular process. I slowly gained confidence and was able to follow through on all of my interviews, appointments and consultations. The risk-taking skill involved in the process allowed me to develop my skills and open myself to a variety of positions and people. I especially enjoyed this because I found a job that incorporates everything I have leaned in the Creativity Master’s program. Once upon a time, I would have passed this opportunity by because I would have been afraid of failing or afraid of the unknown. Because I have made a conscious effort to take risks my ability to view things differently has also developed and I have become a more confident person.

**Conclusion**

This experience has taught me to follow my dreams and to never settle for less. I also learned that the risk-taking skill is a part of developing my self-confidence. I have become more independent and outspoken since I began this project. I look forward to what the future holds for me and I will continue to strive and educate others on the value of creativity.
REFERENCES


www.labor.state.ny.us.

www.buffalostate.edu
The Creative Job Pursuit: The Ability to Follow Ones Dream Fearlessly.

Name: Jennifer Newman  Date Submitted: February 6, 2007

Project Type (Develop a Skill/Talent or Use a Skill/Talent to Improve the Quality of Life for Others):

Use a Skill/Talent to improve the quality of life for others

What Is This Project About?

I have been seeking a job that will embrace my Creative Problem Solving Skills and because of this I have become determined to take risks and be open to new and different professions. I will use divergent and convergent tools to assist in this process. I am going to document my interview and job search experiences. I want to be comfortable and be able to take risks, I believe the search for my ideal job will allow me to grow personally and become more knowledgeable of my strengths and weaknesses. I hope to be able to get feedback from the potential employers because this will add to my experience and future endeavors. My end product will be a documented resource guide for others in the same position as me. I will use tools that I have learned and skills that I have developed to help me in this process.

Rationale for Choice:

I chose the risk-taking skill because it is a skill that I often fear and try not to encounter. Although this skill has proven itself numerous times to me I continue to push it aside due to fear of change. I want to use this skill as a way to explore new options and paths that I may not have otherwise acknowledged. I have desire and ambition to pursue this project. It is going to be challenging for me because I will have to open myself up to possibilities and other people. I will probably be an emotional roller coaster, but in the end I do believe it will make me a stronger and wiser person.

What Will be the Tangible Product(s) or Outcomes?

The final result of my work will be a resource guide. This guide will help students who are applying and exploring for jobs. It will also show how divergent and convergent tools
can assist in this experience. I will incorporate my own personal job seeking stories for inspiration and strength for others.

**What Criteria Will You Use To Measure The Effectiveness Of Your Achievement?**

I will measure my achievement by the feedback I receive from potential employers, improvement on my ability to take risks, the professional development of my portfolio, and the articulation of my personal experiences. My main goal at the end of this project is to be at a place in my life where I am happy and to comfortable with continuously looking for ways to develop and grow in my professional life.

**Who Will Be Involved or Influenced; What Will Your Role Be?**

This project will focus around my individual needs and desires to seek a profession suited for my passions. My role in this project will be to inspire and facilitate myself and students of the Creative Studies department through interviews and job searches. The final product will show the courage and determination it takes to establish goals and pursue those goals. It will also provide moral support and wisdom to those students in the same position as me.

**When Will This Project Take Place?**

This project will take place from February 1- April 24 and may be ongoing depending on whether or not I find a job that fits my goals.

**Where Will This Project Occur?**

The actual locations as far as job interviews can not be determined at this point.

**Temp agencies**
Williamsville, New York
Arcade, New York
Buffalo, New York

**Interview locations**
Williamsville, New York
East Aurora, New York
Delevan, New York
Career Services at Buffalo State  
Grover Cleveland Hall room 418  
Grover Cleveland Hall room 205  
Bacon Hall room 217  
Bacon Hall room 115

Why Is It Important to Do This?

The purpose of this project is to give inspiration and hope to other students in the same position as myself. Searching for that dream job can be difficult and stressful to anyone. I want readers to look at my resource guide and see my personal struggles and the outcomes that have developed because of them. I want the readers to be able to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Personal Learning Goals:

- To understand that change is healthy and needed for success in life.
- To promote the idea that everyone has the potential to be creative.
- To show my creativity
- To develop my leadership skills
- To find a job that I enjoy and that encourages personal growth and change
- To take risks
- To gain confidence in myself
- To gain experience in different interviewing situations

How Do You Plan to Achieve Your Goals and Outcomes?

I will achieve these goals and outcomes by using divergent and convergent tools. I will embrace the feedback from the interviewers. I will develop and grow from each experience I encounter. I will also attend workshops offered by career services at Buffalo State College. I will also go to a temp agency.

Evaluation:

I will receive feedback from potential employers and my peers in the graduate program. I will also do a PPCo on myself. This will occur after each interview and job search I become a part of in this process. I will also journal, and this will be a part of my write-up
and end product. It will portray my struggles and successes that have occurred along the way.

**Prepare Project Timeline:**

**FEBRUARY 2007**

February 1, I worked on the outline and timeline for my concept paper (4 hours)

February 3, I researched job networks online (1 hour)

February 4, I worked on researching literature for my project (3 hours)

February 5, I sent my resume out to 8 different companies (2 hours)

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February 25, I worked on editing part one, two, and three of the project (2 hours)

February 28, I met with Dr. Murdock to discuss the progress of my project. (30 minutes)

Also throughout the month of February, I will journal about my experiences and ways to overcome obstacles that I will be faced with during certain situations. (7 hours)

**MARCH 2007**

March 1-31, I submitted my resume to potential employers. (5 hours)

March 2, I have a job interview in Delevan, New York (1 hour)

March 3, I sent my resume to four different places of employment (2 hours)

March 2-31, I developed my resource guide with tools and personal experience stories. (15 hours)

March 6, I attended a Workshop at Buffalo State College on How to Get the Competitive Edge at the Job Fair. (1 hour and 30 minutes)

March 6, CRS 690 (3 hours)

March 6-20, I got feedback from students in the graduate program on my idea and information presented. (3 hours)

March 8, I attended a job fair at Buffalo State College (2 hours)

March 15, I attended a workshop at Buffalo State College on Great Resumes Made Easy, Crafting Your Great Cover Letter and the Art of Interviewing. (3 hours)

March 20, I attended a workshop at Buffalo State College on The Secrets of a Successful Job Search. (1 hour and 30 minutes)

**APRIL 2007**

April 2-24, I added depth and knowledge to my resource guide and write-up. (15 hours and 30 minutes)

Total Hours: 104
Identify Pertinent Literature or Resources:

I will be exploring

Internet
- Google.com
- monster.com
- Craig’s list.com
- WNYjobs.com
- Careerbuilders.com
- yahoo.com

Books
- Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change
- Facilitation: A Door to Creative Leadership
- Creativity Unbound: An Introduction to Creative Process
- The Artist’s Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity
- Leading in A Culture Of Change
- The Rise of the Creative Class: And how its Transforming work, Leisure, Community, and Everyday Life
- Innovation, Creativity, and Discovery in Modern organizations
- The Educational Psychology of Creativity

Magazine Article
- Creativity is alive and well…and looking eagerly toward a new year!

Faculty and Students
- I will also talk to the Creative Studies department teachers and students for more information and insight.

Faculty
Dr. Mary Murdock
Dr. John Cabra
Dr. Susan Keller-Mathers

Students
Katie Kelly-Graduate Assistant
Lauren Hoch- Sounding Board Partner

Journals
- The Journal of Creative Behavior


**Newspaper**

• The Buffalo News Job Finder
• Penny Savers
• Heralds
• The Post-Standard, Syracuse, New York