Fall 2017 Campus Sustainability Fund Proposal

*Guitar Building and Pearl Inlay Apprenticeship Materials*

Project Leader:

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Co-Participants:

David Simmons, Thomas Huber, David Nichols

Amount Requested: $500

Project Goal:

The project goal is to complete the building of a guitar using wood materials sourced within the Adirondack Park. The guitar will depict scenes of the Adirondacks such as mountain ranges, White Pines, and The Blue Line.

Project Objectives:

* Promote student artisanship by turning raw natural resources into instruments used for community engagement and gathering.
* Support local businesses by purchasing raw materials sourced within the Park.
* Serve as an example for students interested in a different side of natural resources utilization.
* Promote the visual and auditory arts to students, faculty, and local community members.
* Showcase Adirondack artisanal works through display of guitar.

Project Justification:

Paul Smith’s College is an institution noted for its unique hands-on approach to experiential learning. The natural resource based programs take pride in the lab components in which students are in the field applying skills learned in the classroom. The importance of these programs are shown by student enrollment and post graduate employment, but I believe that the connection between natural resource classes and humanities/arts courses is lacking. Through funding by the Campus Sustainability Fund, materials would be purchased for student use in bridging the gap between the applied science and the arts that goes on here at Paul Smith’s College and would provide an example of student artisanship. This project would set a precedent for students interested in both natural resources and the arts to pursue a project outside of courses offered and personal comfort.

Methods:

1. Purchase locally harvested wood from David Nichols\*(see budget table).
2. Utilize materials in apprenticeship working with David Nichols in crafting a top of the line guitar.

Project Budget:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Materials** | **Location** | **Quantity** | **Price** |
| Adirondack Spruce (red) tone wood (top) | David Nichols\* | 2x(8.5”x21.5”x0.25”) | $200 |
| Southern Adirondack Black Walnut (back and sides) | David Nichols\* | 2x(8.5”x21.5”x0.25”)  2x(6.2”x36.5”x0.25”) | $175 |
| Top and back bracing (red spruce) | David Nichols\* | A set of top bracing includes 13 pieces. A set of back bracing includes 5 pieces. Images attached. | $30 |
| Gas | Paul Smiths to Malone | 180 miles per week | $95 |

\*David Nichols acquires all of his local lumber from Ralph S. Charles Forestry Consultant from Lake Clear, NY. Ralph sources his lumber from within the Adirondack Park and each piece is labeled with the site from which it was harvested. The Red Spruce being used in this project was harvested from Franklin Falls in 2008 and the Black walnut was harvested from the southern Adirondacks.

**Budget Justification:**

Adirondack Spruce is one of the most desired woods to be used in the construction of guitars. A piece of tone wood requires extremely tight grains and no knots. It is not unlikely to cut up to 100 logs of spruce before good tonewood is uncovered.

Black Walnut is a local alternative to Brazilian Rosewood, the most desired wood for back and sides of a guitar. It has recently been classified as threatened due to its commercial value for strength and beautiful grains.

**Project Timeline:**

The project will be completed over the course of the Fall 2017 semester and will meet completion by December 2017. This funding will be used for INT 399/Practicum- ST: Apprentice Training. I will be earning 3 credits hours through working in the Paul Smith’s College woodshop and the Custom Pearl Inlay workshop in Malone under the supervision of Dave Simmons and David Nichols.

Upon Completion, I will deliver a talk on the program and building process. The final product will be demonstrated, possibly with David Nichols. The final product could also be displayed either at the end of the fall semester or beginning of spring.

**Supporting Documentation:**

About David Nichols:

David Nichols has been building guitars and going pearl inlay for over 50 years. Starting in 1959, Nichols completed his first guitar and moved on to work for martin guitars and has since built guitars for names such as Johnny Cash, BB King, Aerosmith, ZZ-Top and many more country music stars. He is known nationally as a builder and one of the best pearl inlay artists. Nichols has been taking on apprentices from Clarkson University, SUNY Potsdam, SUNY Canton and SUNY Oswego.

To Whom It May Concern;

I strongly endorse Tyler Dezago's sustainability project.  In terms of the project itself, I think it is a brilliant idea that will demonstrate creative ways in which to connect local musical culture with the Adirondack ecosystem and economy.  As for Tyler, I can't think of a more qualified person to take on that challenge.  He is not only an accomplished musician but also an experienced instrument-maker.  Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss this recommendation further.

Sincerely yours,

Curt Stager

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**Guitar Materials (From Custom Pearl Inlay)**

\*these are *baseline* materials with the exception of Adirondack Spruce. Any additions to a build will result in higher prices.

Item Material Price

Back and Sides Walnut $175.00

Top Adirondack Spruce $200.00

Top and Back Bracing Adirondack Spruce $30.00

Kirf Lining Spanish Cedar $18.00

Neck Mahogany $75.00

Finger Board Ebony $30.00

Head Veneer Ebony $10.00

Tuners Steel $75.00

Fret wire Steel $15.00

Strings Steel-wound Nickel $7.00

End pin set Plastic $3.50

Binding Plastic $7.00

Perfiling Plastic/Pearl $15.00

Nut and Saddle Bone $6.00

Neck Block and End Block Mahogany $20.00

Finishing materials $50.00

Sand paper

Lacquer

Epoxy filler

Total $736.50