

## **Learning and teaching creatively: Engaging with community partners to facilitate creativity**

This project initiated a partnership between the University of Wollongong's Shoalhaven Campus and Arthur Boyd's Bundanon. Located in Shoalhaven, Bundanon is a community resource dedicated to promoting the practice, enjoyment, education and research of creative arts. Although a highly valued, internationally renowned 'living arts centre', Bundanon has a relatively low profile within the Shoalhaven.

2006 Graduate Diploma of Education (Primary) students at Shoalhaven Campus were given the opportunity to experience the creative process in campus-based master classes led by local artists and in studio-based master classes provided by artists-in-residence at the Boyd Education Centre. By 'living it as a learner', students not only came to understand the transformative potential of creativity, but also experienced the 'spirit' that pervades Bundanon.

During school-based practicums, students became conduits between Bundanon and the Shoalhaven community, applying their practical understanding of the creative process and sharing their knowledge and experiences with school students and teachers.

A significant outcome of this project was the UOW Dean of Education's endorsement of a similar project in the program for the 2007 GDE students at Shoalhaven, furthering enhancing the partnership between Bundanon and the Shoalhaven Campus. In the long term, this partnership will be mutually beneficial. The University's reputation for providing excellent learning opportunities and educational experiences will be enhanced, thereby increasing student enrolments. Bundanon's presence and profile in the local community will also be raised as it expands its programs to connect with a broader range of stakeholders. The project will also have positive outcomes for the community at large. As most GDE graduates will work in the Shoalhaven, quality of teaching in the creative and performing arts will be enhanced. Such outcomes are significant given creativity is considered vital in the shift to innovation and knowledge-based economies.