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Statement of Teaching Philosophy

As a teacher, I believe it is my role to help students find their inner voice and creative source. I believe this can be realized as students develop the necessary skills towards self-expression in their chosen medium.

The first step in learning the process of self-expression is to teach the basis of working with the given medium while giving projects that help develop skills and methods to gain a working knowledge. The exciting, and of course frustrating aspect of this stage, primarily in clay, can be the unpredictability of the clay and the firing process. However, with clay there is a process with a variety of stages, and like life, one needs to learn from all the aspect of success, disappointments, and the unexpected. I try to give an attitude of excitement and humor about the learning process. I draw heavily from the history of Art and Ceramics to inspire creativity in creating an atmosphere of learning and respect for the depths of various traditions.

In helping students through these processes, I attempt to be sensitive in not overwhelming beginning students with too much information, and pace more advanced classes, to remain focused one area at a time. I believe that focusing on a specific interest develops a depth of knowledge not otherwise attained. Individuals need to explore their own pace for acquiring knowledge. Regarding techniques, I specialize on working on an individual basis. Feedback from students and teaching for so many years has allowed me to learn how to most effectively communicate the 'How-to' process of teaching the wheel and handbuilding. I attempt to emphasize body position, posture, and health concerns in ceramics and I have been told by students from all levels that these aspects were helpful learning tools.

The second and life long step is for students to discover and develop the direction they wish to pursue. Many do not choose Art as a profession; however, it is my goal that they gain a level of appreciation for the variety of Art and rich traditions that inspired many masterpieces. My role is to facilitate their exploration through open communication and providing technical information and expertise that comes only through experience.