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Honoring a Legacy: Alumna Gives Back in Memory of Professor Grant Hargate

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April 10, 2024

Taylor Kudalis is especially thankful for her time at Lindenwood University, which helped shape her lifelong dream of a career in art education.

She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in studio art and minored in education in 2017, and she is currently in her sixth year of teaching at Pelham High School in Pelham, New Hampshire. Over the last five years, she has helped Pelham High School earn more scholastic art awards than any other school in New Hampshire.

Kudalis is certainly proud of that accomplishment. But she also remembers how her career began. It's rooted in the classrooms across Lindenwood's campus.

"I knew I wanted to pursue my dream in art education," Kudalis remembered thinking while attending Lindenwood.

She received quite the opportunity shortly after graduation – a three-week study abroad trip to Florence, Venice, and Rome – with current Lindenwood Art History Professor Dr. James Hutson and the late Jon Grant Hargate, a former Lindenwood art professor, who passed away in November 2023.

While abroad, Kudalis studied Renaissance art history, drawing, and painting – all of which benefited her career.

"It was such an eye-opening experience," Kudalis said. "I learned so much, improved my painting skills, and gained so much knowledge about the sites around me."

When Hargate passed away, Kudalis knew she wanted to honor his legacy. After all, he played an important role in shaping her as an educator through innovative instruction and hands-on experiences in different educational settings. She incorporates the lessons she learned from Hargate into her own classroom, giving her students the same real experience she received at Lindenwood.

"Grant taught me so much more than art and I am forever grateful for his lessons," she said.

So, Kudalis began designing coffee mugs. Each mug is inspired by Hargate's artwork. She sold them on social media, raising money for the [Grant Hargate](#)

[Memorial Arts Fund](#) to help future Lindenwood students participate in study abroad programs.

Having learned invaluable lessons from Hargate, Kudalis is happy to contribute to his memory.

“Grant always pushed us to be the best artists we can be,” she said. “We didn't always get along, but I always wanted to make him proud. When I found out about his scholarship fund, I thought that would be a perfect way to honor him using my love of ceramics and his painting style to give people a piece of art to remember him by.”