



Curating Citizenship: Longwood University's Brock Experience in Boston 8-16 June 2020

The Brock Experiences at Longwood University:

In 2016, Longwood alumna Joan Brock, and her husband Macon Brock (founder of the Dollar Tree chain of stores), made the then largest gift in Longwood University's history to create the Brock Experiences, a growing group of immersive, citizenship-focused courses throughout the United States, in locations such as Yellowstone National Park, the Arctic Circle, border regions between the U.S. and Mexico, the Colorado River, and the Chesapeake Bay. Exploring the important issues of our time, new courses will be announced each fall and, after a development period, will be added to the slate of signature experiences available to students.

Curating Citizenship: Longwood University's Brock Experience in Boston:

The Longwood University Brock Experience in Boston engages students in an exploration of the role the arts play in society and culture in an academic program based in Boston, Massachusetts. In addition to studying the wealth of public art and performance in the city, students in this program will interact with stakeholders in both the public and private sectors, and in both legacy and grassroots organizations, in an effort to understand how the arts cultivate social and civic bonds in communities. Last year, our pilot year, students met with representatives from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Chief of Arts and Culture in the Mayor's Office, the senior editor of WBUR's Arts and Culture team, the Executive Director of the Hyde Square Task Force, and the Director and Assistant Director of Arts and Culture at the Massachusetts Area Planning Council. Our larger goal is to identify and to grapple with the larger questions of how and why the arts and humanities can improve communities, and how they can enhance individuals' understanding of their own roles as active participants in citizenship, and, indeed, in the greater concerns of our shared humanity. At the end of the course, students return to their own communities in Virginia, where they evaluate the status of the arts there based on what they've learned in Boston. This research serves as a basis for developing an advocacy plan for the arts in those communities.

Contact information:

Shawn Smith, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of English, 2018-2020 Brock Fellow
Department of English and Modern Languages
Longwood University
201 High Street
Farmville, Virginia 23909
smithsb@longwood.edu
804.921.5037 (mobile)

<http://www.longwood.edu/academics/brock-experiences>
<http://www.facebook.com/LUBrockBoston>