

HHS ALUMNA, A STAR IN THE SEWING WORLD, HELPS THOSE IN HER FOOTSTEPS



Pati Palmer, '68, had her eyes opened when she took her first textiles course at OSU.

"Wow, this is great," she thought, and she quickly changed majors, diving into a variety of home economics classes.

As happens with so many of the university's most successful graduates, once Palmer found her passion and the resources on campus to become proficient at it, she did not look back.

After the American Sewing Guild inducted her into the Sewing Hall of Fame in 2008, she directly credited her alma mater for her success.

"I was so lucky to discover the clothing, textiles and related arts program at OSU and combine it with a minor in business," she told *Synergies*, the magazine of the College of Health and Human Sciences. "I learned the science of textiles, which I use nearly every day in some aspect of my business. I am much smarter about the designs I create because, as they say, 'I can be!'"

(In 2002 the College of Home Economics and the College of Health and Human Performance merged into the College of Health and Human Sciences, more com-

monly known today as HHS.)

Palmer and her staff travel the world teaching people to teach sewing (nearly 700 instructors trained since 1990). She has designed more than 100 patterns for McCall's and Vogue — specializing in quick-to-sew pants and suit jackets — and has established a publishing company with her former partner to produce sewing books and DVDs for educators.

The Palmer-Pletsch International School of Sewing (palmerpletschsewing.com) operates out of Fabric Depot, a 1.5 acres Portland store that says it is the largest fabric store in the nation. The school hosts "sewing vacations" for consumers and offers training for certified sewing instructors. Commercial apparel designers sometimes take the classes to learn how to design clothing to fit real people.

Amanda Grisham's goal is to be one of those designers when she graduates.

"I enjoy taking the creative ideas I have and translating them into a vision for other people," Grisham says.

She and Nicole Ognibene are two OSU apparel design and merchandising management students spending the summer in a new intern program, learning from Palmer

and other teachers at the sewing school.

Ognibene, who would like to teach at the college level, recognizes the practical value of the internship/classes in her education.

"Here we have learned to fit our pattern to our models, rather than fit the garment (after it is created) to them," she says.

Both young women plan to take the knowledge they gain from the workshops and teacher training sessions back to other students in HHS's Department of Design and Human Environment.

Palmer, whose daughter Melissa Watson is one of McCall's newest featured designers, was guest lecturing at OSU's Austin Entrepreneurship Program business luncheon on campus last fall when she had the idea to intern some design students.

"The girls have made some outstanding things that are very creative and well done. They are really amazed at what they are learning about fit," Palmer says.

Her company's latest publishing project is *The Food Nanny Rescues Dinner: Easy Family Meals for Every Day of the Week*, edited by Ann Hesse Gosch, '77, with photos by Pati Palmer.

— By Ann Kinkley

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Amanda Grisham, left, and Nicole Ognibene, third from left, both interns from OSU, fit a pattern under the guidance of alumna and sewing entrepreneur Pati Palmer, far right. Their model is Katherine Crandall, a high school sewing teacher from Springville, Utah.

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