



SERVICE LEARNING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

ANDIE DAY, SHANNON NORTH | BELMONT UNIVERSITY

DESIGNING BELONGING: ADAPTIVE DANCEWEAR AS A PATH TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ABSTRACT:

Belmont University Fashion Design students collaborated with Move Inclusive Dance, a Tennessee-based non-profit that provides dance classes to children and young adults with disabilities. The project engaged design students in creating adaptive dancewear that removes barriers to participation for dancers with disabilities. Clothing can restrict movement or open pathways to belonging; this project reframes apparel as a tool for inclusion. The session highlights how design-based service-learning transforms barriers into bridges, fostering participation, visibility, and representation.

THEMATIC FOCUS:

Blockage and Clearance: Physical, infrastructural, financial, or organizational barriers or portals to community engagement.

BIO:

Andie Day is a multidisciplinary artist, educator, and entrepreneur with experience in fashion design, sourcing and production, costume design, and business management. Since joining the Belmont University faculty in 2023, she has worked on service-learning projects that involve working with non-profit organizations to create custom apparel for underserved communities in the Nashville area. Andie is focused on incorporating active learning concepts into her classes to encourage students to be creative problem solvers and approach design with a human-centered perspective. As a scholar, she focuses on design-based research in active learning and creative design using sustainable textiles.

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