

Faculty

Cover: Diana Adams will create the floral designs for the dedication of the Regnier Center.

Brittney Myhre puts an oriental bent on her floral design.



Diana Adams has the same gamine smile as Audrey Hepburn's Eliza Doolittle selling flowers in *My Fair Lady*. But looks and a

love of flowers is where the comparison between Adams and Doolittle stops.

Adams has a bachelor's degree in horticulture and master's degree in education from the University of Missouri-Columbia and the title of adjunct professor in three JCCC program areas. She teaches *Concepts of Floral Design*, a horticulture science class; *Elements of Design* and *Advanced Floral Design*, one-hour interior design classes; and *Introduction to Catering* in hospitality management.

While Adams' floral designs have been featured at weddings, Missouri Gov. Mel Carnahan's 1997 Inauguration and the 2006 holiday edition of *Kansas City Homes and Gardens*, the public and JCCC community will view her creations firsthand on campus during the dedication of the Regnier Center in September.

"I will do a walk-through of the Regnier Center interior before I create the designs, but I know I want to do something unique and bold with fresh flowers, something more artistic than the full English garden stuffed into a vase."

Adams is no stranger to planning major galas. As catering manager at Hyatt Regency Crown Center for five years, Adams created menus, designed floor plans and participated in food preparation, culinary classes, wine tasting, and wine and food pairings. She was also the wedding specialist for the hotel for three years.

Previous to that, she was an event planner for Event Central, coordinating the caterer, decor, rental equipment, entertainment, flowers and linens for events, including major ones for Rosalynn Carter, Maya Angelou, Don Hall of Hallmark, Henry Bloch of H&R Block and other Kansas City community leaders. In addition, Adams has owned Floral Accents, a custom design floral accessory business, since 1986, working with silk and dried designs in residential and commercial properties and creating fresh flowers for weddings and special events.

Adams' experience has led to real-world opportunities for students. JCCC floral design students have done special projects for large parties, weddings and the Greater Kansas City Parade of Homes. Albert Pujols, first baseman



Lisa Shipman arranges fresh materials in the *Concepts of Floral Design* class.



Sande Buller creates a floral design.

for the St. Louis Cardinals, liked one of the furnished models on the parade so much that he bought it all for his Kansas City home – furniture, draperies and JCCC students’ flower arrangements.

Adams says students want real applications for their floral designs. Some students have taken the floral design class two or three times, one student for five years, for extra experience.

“Like any trade, flower arranging takes practice. You practice enough that you become comfortable and then add your own personal style,” she said.

Her horticulture studies enable Adams to teach students about floral and tropical plant materials and their care requirements and availability. Students also learn principles of design and arrange a variety of marketable designs each semester.

“My students learn everything in class but lack the practical application,” she said.

Adams, who taught flower store management at MU-Columbia, would like to do the same at JCCC. Her vision for students in *Concepts of Floral Design* is a campus flower shop utilizing a

florist cooler located at a central retail site.

“Flowers are both a special occasion and an impulse purchase,” she said, explaining why the flower shop needs to be readily accessible.

Adams would also like her students to have the opportunity to create wedding floral arrangements at a reduced rate.

“I really enjoy teaching,” Adams said. “There is a creative energy in the classroom. Students come into the 6 p.m. class exhausted; they leave feeling energized. There is something therapeutic about working with flowers.”

With a full schedule of teaching and owning her own business, Adams has a couple of more plates to juggle – full-time jobs marketing information technology services to businesses for Midwest Consulting Group and mother of four daughters.

As far as the Regnier Center arrangements, Adams anticipates students volunteering to help.

“Students want the experience,” she said. 🌸