

ELEPHANT IN THE DARK

Some Hindus have an elephant to show.
No one here has ever seen an elephant.
They bring it at night to a dark room.

One by one, we go in the dark and come out
saying how we experience the animal.

One of us happens to touch the trunk.
“A water-pipe kind of creature.”

Another, the ear. “A very strong, always moving
back and forth, fan-animal.”

Another, the leg. “I will find it still,
like a column on a temple.”

Another touches the curved back.
“A leathery throne.”

Another, the cleverest, feels the tusk.
“A rounded sword made of porcelain.”
He’s proud of his description.

Each of us touches one place
and understands the whole in that way.

The palm and the fingers feeling in the dark are
how the senses explore the reality of the elephant.

If each of us held a candle there,
and if we went together,
we could see it.

Selected from *The Essential Rumi*, translations by Coleman Barks.
New York: HarperOne, 2004.



“To teach is to learn.” Japanese Proverb



Eugene L. Wisniewski
Japanese Garden Dedication

Friday, October 29, 2010
5:30 pm Reception 6:30 pm Dedication

Naugatuck Valley Community College
Technology Hall Atrium
750 Chase Parkway, Waterbury, CT

Professor Eugene L. Wisniewski, or Professor W as students endearingly called him, was hired as an adjunct instructor of horticulture in 1986 and then as a full-time associate professor and the program's coordinator in 1999. During his tenure, he helped the program earn accreditation from the Associated Landscape Contractors of America and become the first in the state to be accredited by Professional Landcare Network (PLANET), the nation's largest trade association for landscape professionals.



In addition to bringing accreditation, Professor Wisniewski helped organize a transfer agreement between NVCC and the University of Connecticut, the state's only other horticulture program. He helped the College reap the benefits of a beautification project, in which the Connecticut Nursery and Landscapers Association and Connecticut Greenhouse Growers Association planted more than \$40,000 worth of plant life on the campus. On October 16, 2009, he presided over the ribbon cutting for a new 6,000-square-foot greenhouse. "Gene spearheaded the design and construction of the new greenhouse," said Bonnie Simon, now retired director of the math and science division. "He got to see his dream come true. The building is bigger, better and more modern than either of us ever dreamed of."

Wisniewski earned an associate degree in horticulture from S.U.N.Y., Cobleskill, and a bachelor's degree in horticulture from the University of Rhode Island. He also earned a master's degree in administration and supervision from Central Connecticut State University. Prior to teaching full-time at NVCC, Wisniewski taught for twenty-eight years at Nonnewaug High School in Woodbury.

His life and contributions are celebrated today with the dedication of the Eugene L. Wisniewski Japanese Garden.

5:30 pm Reception

6:30 pm Program

Speakers

Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.
President, Naugatuck Valley Community College

Bonnie Simon, Ed.D.
Division Director, Emeritus, Math and Science
Naugatuck Valley Community College

Patricia McCormick
Adjunct Professor, University of Connecticut

Bob Heffernan
Executive Director
Connecticut Green Industries

Rebecca L. Connell
Naugatuck Valley Community College Alumna, 2009

Regina DelRossi
Landscape Designer
Naugatuck Valley Community College Student

Dedication

Eugene L. Wisniewski Japanese Garden