

Ceramics, Craft, and Community

SEPTEMBER 2, 2016

Yoko Inoue's class addresses issues of hunger in the town of Bennington through public action, and fosters a new environment in which community between residents and students can develop.

In an interview, Inoue spoke about the community building aspects to her course, Social Kitchen: Ceramics, Food and Community. She referred to "craft as a medium" for dialogue. As the *Bennington Banner* reported recently, one public action aspect to the class is that "several Saturday workshops have been established for the community to come to the college and work on ceramic bowls for the future supper." In that way, the class will afford a chance for community members and students to sit down together and collaborate. As Inoue said, it will allow them "to share space and time together."

The class will also offer students a chance to "learn about "creative community engaged practices" [in Inoue's words] as well as the issue of food insecurity in Bennington County and beyond" the *Banner* reported. It will culminate in a soup and bread dinner, with bowls and meals for sale, that will raise money to benefit the local Kitchen Cupboard.

The article emphasized that "[the class] is a skillshare project," not charity. They quoted Inoue, who drew attention to the universal nature of the project. "This food security issue is really applied to all of us...Where [the students] are coming from might differ in terms of class, race or geographical regions, countries, I thought it was a very important issue to bring out so that they don't dissociate themselves saying, 'Yeah we're doing this thing for the town.' No it is not, we're doing this for us, for everybody."

Community/student ceramic-making events will take place on September 10, 24; October 8, 22, 29; and November 5 from 2:00—5:00 PM.