Stone Cutter Teaches Radford Students

From March 3-6, Harry E. Troutt graced Radford students with his presence as he educated in the art of gem cutting.
Over the past few semesters, the Radford University Jewelry Guild and the Club Programming Committee have hosted Troutt to teach RU students how to cut and polish gems. Troutt is a professional lapidary artist who has over 35 years of experience with gems, and loves sharing is knowledge with the students.
“Students here are very respectful and love learning. "They are open vessels,” says Trout. RU students came in over the four day period to watch lectures and get one on one time with Troutt. “It was really fun, I felt like I was cutting a diamond,” says jewelry student Brooke Salmon.
“Mr. Troutt is magical,” says Alison Pack, Jewelry and Metalsmithing professor. Pack is a longtime friend of Troutt who gave up a week of classes and her classroom space so that Troutt may come teach about the techniques.
”I donate time and stones and students here can turn them to art and jewelry,” Troutt says. Over the last few semesters, Troutt has donated between 500 and 800 stones to students at RU and have turned them into art.
Troutt owned his own business for years and is able to address the business side of things. Master of Fine Arts students have gone on to complete gemologist work since Troutt’s contribution to Radford University.
The technology of the lapidary arts is extremely popular. RU purchased a faceting machine in 2008 which gives students a chance to custom design their own art. Mr. Troutt uses this machine in his demonstrations and teaches students how to use it.
Students who worked with Troutt were absolutely fascinated by the technique of creating their own work. “He is just an awesome person,” says RU student Sarah Harvell, ”he is fun and makes it fun for anyone who isn’t artistic.”
Faculty, staff and the Radford community also attended the four day event, as well as hundreds of students from all majors. “Two words, it’s mesmerizing,” says Cameron Staley.
Like Staley and Harvell, Troutt’s demonstrations interested them into the cutting, polishing and faceting their own stones to create something that they can call their own.
“Students have a warm place in my heart,” says Troutt, who is expected to come back to Radford next semester and teach students the wonder of jewelry and metalsmithing