Rossmann-Manatt Faculty Development Award Nominee Statement

30 April 2014

Dear Drs. Rossmann and Mrs. Manatt:

Thank you for your generous contribution of the Rossmann-Manatt Faculty Development Award. Below is my proposed project that I am excited to embark on. Thank you again. Sara

The Fashionable Side of STEM
Sara B. Marcketti, Ph.D.

Fashion, both historically and contemporarily, has been influenced and contributed to advances in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). From the ground-breaking introduction of new fibers and machines that changed [and continue to change] the ways apparel is created and consumed. To the more mundane: pattern grading [the scaling of a garment to different sizes], fashion is usually at the forefront of new advances.

If designated the recipient of the prestigious Rossmann Manatt Faculty Development Award, I would use the stipend to further the knowledge base regarding “The Fashionable Side of STEM.” I would do so, by:

1. Researching the intersections, both historically and contemporarily, of the ways in which fashion has been influenced and contributed to advances in STEM. To accomplish this research, primary information from trade journals including Vogue Archive and Women’s Wear Daily will be analyzed.

2. Development of an exhibit to be mounted in the 500-square foot Mary Alice Gallery utilizing garments from our Textiles and Clothing Museum of the ways in which fashion is influenced and influences STEM. The development of the exhibit would include material culture analysis of specific garments and textiles the Textiles and Clothing Museum owns. The exhibit will be marketed to the Iowa State University community consisting of students, faculty, and staff, and constituents outside of the University setting.

3. Public dissemination of the research through peer-reviewed publication and/or catalog, as well as programming particularly targeted to those students who may not recognize the ways in which fashion and STEM intersect.

The proposed topic fits in well with my body of work focused on history of the apparel industry, museum-related scholarship, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. It also fits in well with my current work as co-author of two major textbooks in the apparel field: Survey of Historic Costume and Textiles. The proposed research has the potential to expand our thinking regarding “the fashionable side of STEM;” important particularly at Iowa State University of Science and Technology.