



ASSIGNMENT:

LANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, International Student Program

CARLA ANDERSEN, Associate Director International Recruitment

Carla needed a recruitment tool to help attract students from around the world to this tiny campus in beautiful Eugene.

Previous efforts to create an enticing atmosphere in her marketing materials had failed. There were cultural and gender hurdles to overcome, and little was done to address them.

I was called in to change that. Prior to the 4-day shoot, I made three scouting visits to find the ideal settings and scheduled two days of interviews with professors and administration officials to arrive at the precise messaging.





You can sense a comfort level among these students of very diverse backgrounds. That doesn't just happen.

To get that *natural* look, I needed them to walk in an *unnatural* formation, positioning them much *closer* than they would be in real life. (Just one of the secrets I've learned over the decades of this kind of work.)

The students' relaxed, happy mood is another big part of this image's success. That process, too, begins well before the lens cap comes off.





This seemingly simple shot accomplished a pair of goals important to the client. First, it displays the beauty and modernity of both the dorm room and the downtown of Eugene as almost an afterthought. Second, it conveys an easy and charming warmth among the four students of culturally different backgrounds. That sense of breezy spontaneity was accomplished, ironically enough, by a meticulous (and almost counterintuitive) staging process.





Laughter is one of my secret weapons. Capturing a moment of genuine, spontaneous joy is irresistibly convincing. That's probably why this is the client's favorite image from the more than 3,500 shot for the project.





I love this shot. It combines the right composition in the right setting of the right model with the right wardrobe and and the right props.





If we had only one picture to communicate all the client's objectives, this would probably be the one.

We get to show off the beautiful modern facilities against the backdrop of the Calapooya Mountains while a group of diverse international students take it all in.





This completely unplanned shot was wonderfully serendipitous. While wheeling our equipment through the campus coffee shop, we came upon these students who happened to be studying and enjoying themselves.

Carla and I looked at each other and nodded, "this is our next shot."

Sometimes you just get lucky.





Another crucial selling point of the International Student Program is the personal attention they receive from the faculty in the ELS classrooms.

Here is another example of a carefully staged image that comes off as anything *but* staged.





We were going to have to abandon this particular composition because the student in the upper left of this image had a skirt that showed her legs. That would have made the image unusable for recruitment in the culture where the two other women were from.

Then I recalled a scarf I had in a camera bag. We laid it on her lap, and that as that. Problem solved!





Here's a behind-the-scenes look at that previous shot. I always like to set up a monitor for clients so they have real-time control over what gets shot. Because input beats feedback every time.





A simple ladder can be a photographer's best friend. Here's a prime example. If, like most shooters, I would have taken this shot from the eye level, I'd still have captured the action and the architecture. But you know what I *wouldn't* have gotten? Those beautiful trees! And when many of the students you're recruiting come from arid, treeless regions, those green beauties are a huge selling point.





Another of the client's favorites. Mine, too.

You don't always have time for a complicated setup and multiple takes. Sometimes you have to move ξ groove and get your shot accomplished quickly and quietly. That was the case with this shot in the school's busy, bustling lab.





Count the number of people. See how each one of them are doing what they're supposed to do? That takes a surprising amount of staging, blocking and directing, but you'd never know it by seeing the casual end result.

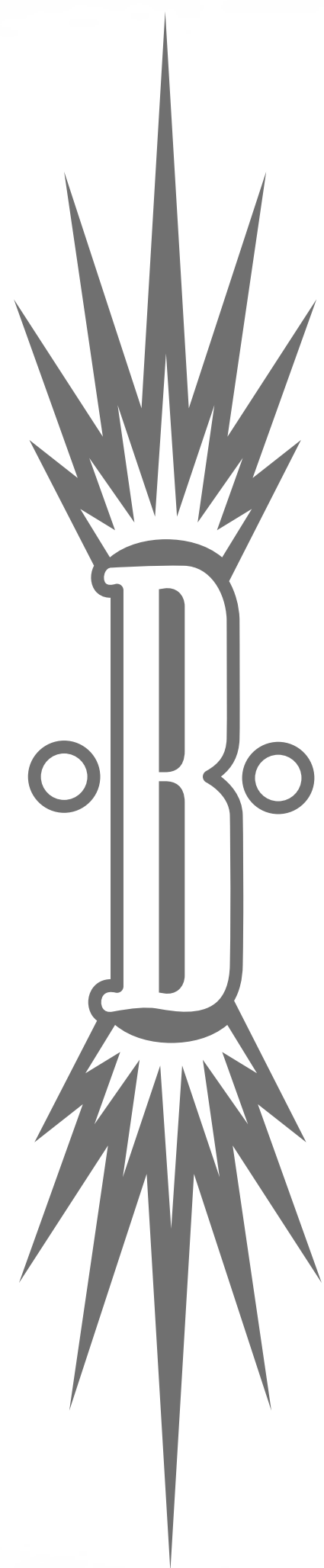
Even for seasoned pros, nonchalance is an illusive quality to capture.





I'll let you in on a little secret. When you engage your talent (or in this case, just regular ol' college students) and include them in the process, you get great results every time. That's one happy client there in the upper right.





DAVID BASSETT

BASSETT STUDIOS

Commercial Photography

BassettStudios.com

david@bassettstudios.com

541-609-0503

