

Biology professors, Dr. Natalie Hyslop, and Dr. Jennifer Mook, have studied Eastern Box Turtle habitat use at the Tumbling Creek Nature Preserve adjacent to the University of North Georgia's Gainesville Campus. Art instructor, Heather Foster, was drawn to the Box Turtles' highly individualistic patterns. The three professors joined forces invited students to observe and make art about Eastern Box Turtles as they were extracted for their Summer 2018 checkup. After winning UNG's Faculty Undergraduate Summer Engagement Grant, Dr. Hyslop, Dr. Mook, and Prof. Foster hired two UNG students, Kati Hornick, and Aida Alarcon, to create Eastern Box Turtle artwork for UNG's Science, Engineering, and Technology Building.

Aida Alarcon was entranced by the beautiful, bright colors on the Eastern Box turtle's eyes, shells, and skin. Since she raised pet Red Eared Slider turtles as a child, she felt a similar fondness for the native Box Turtle and wanted to help the peaceful, sweet creatures. Alarcon created bold, visually outspoken paintings in hopes of inspiring the same love she felt for the turtles in students, faculty and staff. Her aim was to encourage viewers to become better stewards of the environment and maintain a healthy ecosystem for UNG's Eastern Box Turtle neighbors.

Kati Hornick grew up camping, catching salamanders in the American Midwest and studied Biology extensively. A fervid outdoors-person, Hornick was thrilled to track turtles and bring the quiet, hidden wonders of the forest floor to UNG students, faculty and staff by making a ceramic diorama. Using clay, Hornick sculpted Eastern Box Turtles at various life stages along with dead leaves and rotting logs. She also made tiles that represented the Eastern Box Turtle's relationship with the Tumbling Creek Nature Preserve's many ecosystems.

Below is a link to a video that highlights Alarcon and Hornick's work:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4q2WZni8bCM>