

Farricielli captures national award to design help for the aged

BRANFORD - Susan Farricielli, product designer, sculptor and owner of a.k.a prototype in Branford, has received a design arts award for \$25,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts to work on a wheelchair design for the elderly.

Farricielli received her master's degree in industrial design from the Rhode Island School of Design. Her undergraduate degree is in sculpture from Northern Kentucky University. She has been working as an independent design consultant since 1989.

As a graduate student, Farricielli did her internship at Black & Decker in Shelton. She also worked for four years at Lippincott Inc. in North Haven as a welder and technical assistant for artists such as Louise Nevelson and Claes Oldenberg.

Her product design work provides a blend of sculptural and technical innovation for manufacturing. Farricielli has seven patents in her name for packaging designs for dispensing cosmetics and pharmaceuticals through Reseal Limited (for Ciba-Geigy and Estee Lauder.) Other clients include American Standard, Electrix, United Plumbing Technologies and Stride Rite Shoes.

Her sculpture work includes a recent installation of soft-sculptures



Susan Farricielli

for the Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence, R.I.

The idea of a wheelchair for the elderly came from her weekly visits to see her grandmother in a convalescent home. It was there that Farricielli saw a place for a special wheelchair to suit the needs of the aged. She received a Roddy Award for her master's thesis on developing a "kinetic" automobile seat because of the medical benefits related to the concept.

Farricielli is in the process of forming a separate business for her seating designs under the name of K.I.S.S., for Kinetic Innovative Seating Systems.