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Students Design Exhibition For Georgia Southern Museum

August 30, 2014

The Georgia Southern Museum’s popular hands-on science laboratory returned this summer, bigger than ever. With its return, the exhibition also provided a professional learning experience for graphic design students from the University’s Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art.

During Spring 2014, Graphic Design Professor Santanu Majumdar, students of his professional practices course, and Museum Director Brent Tharp, Ph.D., collaborated to design the Mad Scientist’s Laboratory exhibition.

The graphic design students were formed teams in white they collaborated on ideas to pitch to the Museum. Not only did the students have to take lighting, access to electricity, floor-space, wall-area, and obstructions into consideration, but they also had to consider traffic-flow, budget, content to be displayed, age appropriateness, promotional materials, and ergonomics. Each team constructed a 3D model, and, in the end, one team’s design was chosen for the exhibition.

A project between students and a professional helps students understand real-world scenarios, how to work and communicate with a client, and provides experience with challenges that are not normally experienced in a classroom setting.

“A collaborative effort allows students to practice professionalism while experiencing the pressures of competition and working with clients and their timelines. It also builds students’ confidence and presentation skills. Above all, collaborative projects help students and faculty to reach out to other disciplines, work on larger-scaled projects, and educate each other about their subject matter,” said Majumdar.

The four teams included Sandra Hendow, Julia Tillery, Brandon Bearden, Connor Wathen, Ryan Caronongan, and Ahmad Kromah; Christine Byrd, Joey Lanier, Haley Tam, Rachael Dotson, and Bridget Hanney; and Chelsea Brown, Jose Gil, Cydnee Jones, Blake Lane, and Tenny Shen. The final team, comprising Paola Robelo, Jessie Adams, Tom Chambliss, Aaron Ward, Matt Veal, and Michael Whalen, created the chosen design.

Though the students did not install the exhibition, they supplied the Museum with instructions, measurements and grid-work to complete the exhibition.

“The Museum has been very pleased with the creativity and professionalism these students have exhibited as part of this project,” said Tharp. “Their design work is exceptional and helps the Museum a great deal in its mission of presenting great changing exhibits to the community. We hope that the students have benefited as much with an opportunity to work with an actual client and our everyday budget, staff, and space limitations; challenges that they will encounter soon enough in their careers. The very best exhibits we produce are those where our students are more than just the audience, they are also the curators and designers.”

The Mad Scientist’s Laboratory opened June 16 and is on-display until January 25, 2015 at the Georgia Southern Museum, located at 2142 Southern Drive. To learn more about the exhibition, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/museum, and to view images of the exhibition, visit http://goo.gl/KTgjKo.