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“San Joaquin Delta College Interior Design Students Work On A Very Special Project With Habitat for Humanity of San Joaquin County Inc.”

STOCKTON, CA (April 3, 2010) The advanced design students in the Interior Design Program at San Joaquin Delta College are working on a project for Habitat for Humanity of San Joaquin County Inc., the well-known organization building houses in partnership with people in need of decent, affordable housing.

The project is one of the first of its magnitude in which the college's program has been involved. It became a reality after a conversation between two long-term friends who had an idea. Ron Saito, the instructor of the class is good friends with John Shores, the President of Habitat for Humanity of San Joaquin County Inc.

Saito has been teaching at Delta in the Interior Design Program for the past 12 years but has never had such an opportunity where his students could be involved in a project of this importance and one that could really make a difference in the own community. Saito has known John Shores, for over 12 years and asked him if there was anything his students could be involved in to gain some real experience in the interior design field. Shores had just such a project, working with Habitat for Humanity of San Joaquin County Inc.

Shores knows the construction industry well, and felt that this project would be a great fit for both the students and HFH. Shores' most recent position was as Vice President of Operations for John Laing Homes, a large development company based in Newport Beach, California. John Laing, who has had a history of strong community involvement, selected Habitat as the organization to which his company would lend its support. Shores came to the Habitat as a volunteer/project manager during the construction of the homes in Stockton at the corner of Shasta and Miner streets. The construction process, and primarily the involvement on the Family Selection Committee, was what led to John's

interest in being involved for the long term. It was the organization's efforts to help people in need that led to his need to stay involved and lend his services. He now serves as the president of the San Joaquin County affiliate.

Saito, along with teaching several courses at Delta, is also works in commercial interior design sales with Durst Contract Interiors, established in 1982 in Stockton. For him, this is the first large-scale project in which he has involved his students and he is excited at the growth they have made through the process. He hopes to see some of their ideas come to fruition through the project.

Shores is meeting with the City Council in the next few weeks, in the hopes of getting the city's support for the project and a commitment to doing some good things for the people in this community, helping out people who are desperately in need of clean, safe housing. The Stockton area has been hit particularly hard by the recession and there are many families in dire need of housing. Habitat will be a valuable project to the community.

Habitat for Humanity of San Joaquin, Inc. recently purchased 19 lots in Stockton with an option to purchase 40 additional lots. Plans are to break ground this summer on the first homes within this new community. HFH hopes to offer three floor plans, ranging in size from 996 square feet to 1298 square feet.

Habitat for Humanity, as a national organization, has helped change the lives of more than 30,000 American families since its first U.S. affiliate was founded in San Antonio, Texas in 1978 and the organization has built more than 300,000 houses around the world, providing more than 1.5 million people in more than 3,000 communities with safe, decent, affordable shelter. They hope to continue this mission through the projects in San Joaquin County.

The Interior Design students' involvement has been incremental, designing more than just the interiors. They are responsible for designing the interior, utilizing eco-friendly and sustainable materials, for suggesting ideas for the exterior and the community itself, and for the naming the subdivision project. They also had to begin to plan their own Interior Design Businesses, as well as naming their Interior Design business, considering all aspects of the designer's positioning in the field. They received instruction from several local small business owners, including Fabian Ceballos of Fabina's Auto Body. Fabian has an MBA and presented the steps a small business owner would take to develop a business plan and understand start-up costs and expenses. Saito wanted to

give them a multi-dimensional project that is rooted in many different aspects of the industry and in real scenarios and the real business of design.

In the first session with the students, Shores presented the project to the class, explaining HFH's mission, and the idea for the sub-division of homes. He asked them to specify both the interior and exterior finishes and materials. The second session was a presentation on estimating cost for materials and labor. John started with a power point presentation to the class, showing estimating construction cost by using formulas, cost control measures, and forecast cost for future projects. To keep the project real, the students had to cost all of the specifications of their proposals, as well as unforeseen costs that might arise through the project.

The students then had to create their visions in a professionally presented proposal to Shores. On Wednesday, April 3, 2010, they presented their ideas, answered questions and concerns and received some critique and feedback. The students had ideas for all of the interior finishes, with the costs for the materials and specifications for each plan. Shores then critiqued the ideas and offered suggestions and insights into what might work and what would not, within the reality of the project. His critique is valuable to the "real-world" experience the students are gaining with this project.

Their ideas for the community names ranged from "Creekside Cottages, A Sustainable Community" to "Mosaic Village." Reanai Koch, the student designing the Creekside Cottages, included products that are green, sustainable and eco friendly, researching products such as allergy-free green products for her design. Joan Chapman, another student working on the project chose a design for her Mosaic Village plan, drawing inspiration from the East Coast cottages one might see in areas like Maine or Massachusetts. Joan wants to see a more colonial and traditional village, where the residents who might be suffering from a more desperate economic situation will feel a sense of pride and safety in their community and take pride in where they live. Ryan Mar's concept was full of color, focusing on life and living. "I think Stockton needs that," he said. "Magnolia Port" was the idea of Jennifer Cadieux. Her design concept was inspired by the Magnolia District in Stockton and the Stockton Port to blend the community with the history of the city. Jennifer's sustainable ideas were affordable and accessible, using materials that are easy to care for and will last for a long time. She wanted to give the residents multiple options that had good value and benefits.

Kia Creighton, another student, also works for Home Depot. She presented

materials and finishes that had cost-effective and maintenance benefits with ease of installation and care, as well as many tax-credit-eligible products for homeowners. Other students showed recycled materials or reclaimed materials, blending them with more luxurious materials like granite and quartz. Mar's design used rich colors with eco-friendly materials like bamboo and natural-fiber carpeting.

The students were asked to provide a cost-effective, basic design, as well as an upgraded design, where homeowners could choose a little luxury in their interiors. Mar's options included a myriad of colors in paint, wood tones and window coverings.

Based on the project presentations, the interiors of these homes will definitely be innovative, creative and will provide residents with a very luxurious ambiance. Shores would like to provide residents with a menu of options from which they can choose to create an environment that they can call home.

The students in the class are truly honored to be working on the project. Mar said, "the experience made me think about design in a different way. It wasn't about picking pretty colors or materials; I had to think about green and sustainable products that would last. With the focus on the Habitat project, the materials chosen could influence both homeowners and contractors to think about the importance of green and implement products and materials that are green. And, to be a part of the Habitat project and helping these less fortunate families live in durable, long lasting homes is an honor."

"While this project is not as 'glamorous' as some interiors projects students like to design, the project is very worthwhile for them and they see the definite benefits to the work they are investing," commented Leslie Asfour, coordinator and instructor for the Interior Design Program.

Shores was truly impressed with the ideas presented. Considering that the homes will be built by volunteers, he felt that they could be built in ways where more options can be offered to the homeowner. Some volunteers who build the homes come with skills and some without. So those who want to learn to lay tile will be able to learn the skill of tile laying and the homeowner will have the opportunity to have a tile shower surround, rather than a cookie-cutter vinyl surround.

"Normally a Habitat House takes a while to get done, due to the volunteer nature of the building process," said Shores. But, this project has also attracted the students to become volunteers on the site. He said, "We have some big

hurdles, but that's ok, we will achieve the milestones." He thinks this is just the start of an ongoing program and partnership with Delta's ID Program.

Asfour is very excited about the partnership and the opportunities for more of these kinds of projects for the students in the program. "This is the first time that the Interior Design Program has been involved in such an extensive and significant project in our community that will not only impact the homeowners and their families, but the students, as well. They have an opportunity to use their design skills to make a real difference in their own community," said Asfour. She hopes to see the partnership grow into a real learning experience for all involved. She added, "This is what education is all about and what the vocational programs in a college should be teaching; it's not just about learning a trade to be successful, but also about making the community and the world a better place."

The student projects will be on display at the annual exhibit of student work on Friday, May 7th from 4:00-9:00 pm in Danner Hall on the Delta College Campus. Shores will be on site to offer information about the HFH project and the students will be on hand to explain their ideas.

The May 7th event, titled "A Story of Design," will showcase the work of the students in both the Interior Design and Fashion Programs and will feature live student competitions and exhibit work of other design competitions for which the public will have the opportunity to vote. The exhibit will culminate with a fashion show and awards presentation for the competition winners. The event is free and open to the public. The event web site is:

http://www.deltacollege.edu/org/fashion/A_STORY_OF_DESIGN.htm

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