



the interior design student
make a difference
project
October 26 - 27, 2007

Can interior design students use creativity to make daily existence better for human beings, other living things or the earth?

Student projects from
eastern kentucky university

Instructor sponsor
Marianne Ramsey

The Interior Design Educator's Council Social Justice Network presents the 2007 results of the Interior Design Student Make a Difference Project.

This project involved design students in identifying a real-life problem that could be made better through a design of some kind. They then created and installed a small, meaningful design solution, either temporary or permanent, and finally observed what happened when people encountered and used their environmental idea.

In the spirit that all efforts have worth, all student projects are provided here without priority or editing.



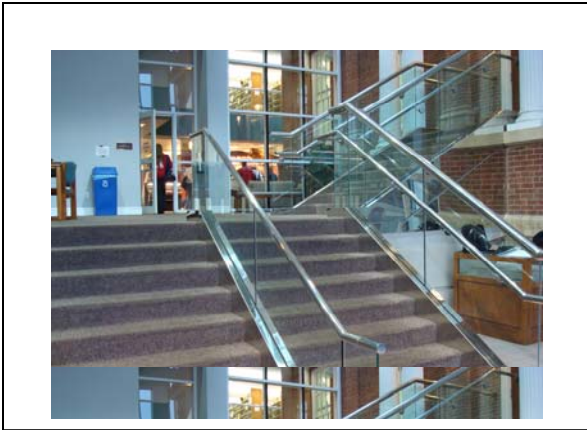
The IDEC Social Justice Network
www.idec.org/

The Interior Design Educators Council, Inc. (IDEC)
is dedicated to:

- The advancement of Interior Design Education
- The advancement of Interior Design Research
- Fostering the exchange of information within the Interior Design Profession and related design disciplines.
- The improvement of educational standards, and
- The development of the Body of Knowledge relative to the quality of life and human performance in the interior environment.



Making It Accessible



The problem area hinders the accessibility for all persons to get from the Library to the University Building.



The proposed removal of the stairs with the proposed addition of the wheelchair lift.



Rendering of the proposed wheelchair lift and what the area will look like with it installed.

Designers
Christy Bundenthal, Caitlin Neal and Tamerra Justice

Institution
Eastern Kentucky University

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The problem

There is no clear direct accessible route for people with mobility issues to go from the library to the university building on ECU's campus because of one set of stairs. The only options for a physically impaired person to travel is to go outside, around the building, and in another door where they will have to squeeze through a narrow 32 inch passageway to access the university building elevator. The only other option is to take the elevator to the third floor, use the wheelchair lift to get to the fourth floor of the university building, and finally take the elevator to whichever floor that is needed in the university building. The only catch is you need a key/employee to access the elevator. Both paths are time consuming, confusing, and difficult to navigate rendering the university building practically inaccessible to persons with mobility impairments.

The solution

For the university to become more accessible and user friendly a wheelchair lift should be installed and the stairs minimized. This would create a clear direct route for physically impaired persons to go from the library to the university building without having to go outside possibly in the dark, rain, or cold weather. By installing a wheelchair lift and removing some excess stairs the once narrow 32 inch passage way can be increased by several feet creating a more accessible and user friendly route to the university building elevator. Incorporating universal design and providing ADA spaces will make both the library and the university more accessible and easier to navigate for all people.

The solution's impact on its users

We installed masking tape in the area where the proposed removal of the stairs and the wheelchair lift would be carried out on Saturday, October 27. On Monday, October 29, we presented our installation to fellow classmates and the local newspaper, The Eastern Progress.

After completing the installation, comments were received regarding the proposed wheelchair lift. Several people stopped and noticed the tape and looked at our proposal poster and commented they had never had a problem (however they were not physically impaired). Many people thought it was a good idea; however, the initial costs would be difficult to obtain.

Even though the costs prohibit our proposal now, we've opened the door to better design. In the future, we hope problems like this are addressed by keeping accessibility in mind when renovating buildings on campus.

Boulder Speed Management



Designers:

Megan Hammersmith, Lindsey McPhetridge, and Carie Wertz

Institution:

Eastern Kentucky University

Sponsored by:

Marianne Ramsey

The Problem:

The installation of speed bumps into the family neighborhood of Argyll seemed to resolve the problem of speeding drivers. However another problem arose; drivers created a dangerous method to maneuver around the bump. Vehicles are now traveling into the yard of nearby residents and endangering pedestrians on the adjacent sidewalk.

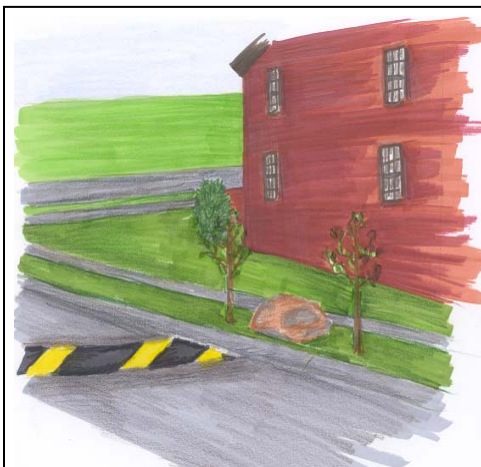


The Solution:

Eliminating the passage way around the speed bump. However, in order for all of the community to truly benefit from the solution, it not only had to stop cars from going around the bump but also be aesthetically pleasing. A large boulder and two medium sized trees would be placed between the curb and the sidewalk; therefore eliminating the path, as well as looking nice in the community.

The solution's impact on its users:

The installation of a paper-mâché boulder to represent the size and shape of the boulder that would be permanently placed, as well as green stakes representing the trees that would be planted on each side was received very positively. While we observed, from a distance, no one went around the speed bump.



Now everyone in the community will benefit in one way or another. Drivers will now always have to use the speed bump, forcing them to slow down. Also the people walking around the neighborhood will be safer on the sidewalk.

The Hidden Hazard Warning System



The sidewalk on University Drive masks several safety hazards.

Designers
Ida Wrocklage, Cari Allen, and Lauren Eberle

Institution
Eastern Kentucky University

Sponsored by
Marianne Ramsey

The problem

Since several main buildings on Eastern Kentucky University's campus are accessed by the sidewalk on University Drive, it is a high-traffic area for students and faculty. Due to a variety of degrading conditions, large cracks and holes have formed at the seams of the concrete, causing a major safety hazard.

The solution

We created a warning system to draw a person's attention down to the sidewalk and the cracks. We designed a bright yellow diamond-shaped sticker to place at five of the major hazards and outlined each area with bright red duct tape so that users would know to step around the hazard and avoid it altogether.

The solution's impact on its users

We installed the warning system at noon while class was in session, so that users would notice the difference before and after their class. This also allowed us to install it while traffic was light, so that we did not become a safety hazard ourselves.

During installation at the final hazard, a young man walked by us, seemingly absorbed in his own thoughts. We watched him walk about 10 feet away and look down at the warning system in front of him. He stepped over it and kept on walking, also stepping over the remaining hazard warnings.

We sat at a close café table in front of the campus's coffee shop and watched people's reactions as they left class. Some paused to read the yellow sign and laugh at the animation and then avoid the areas. Some merely stepped over the warnings without reading them. The point was getting across without the user having to stop in the middle of heavy walking traffic. We noticed a young woman who had not stopped to read the sign also stepping over another smaller crack that we had not identified. The warning system had been powerful enough to cause users to avoid other hazards as well.



A yellow caution sign and red tape highlight the danger posed to students and faculty.



The hidden hazard warning system alerts users to avoid the areas.