



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 the  
university of texas at san antonio

**Instructor sponsors**

Tina Rendon Marti  
Susan Lanford

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/](http://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.



# Comfort Cart



Cart designed and built in less than 36 hours.



Cart transformed as table.



“Proud Owner”

Designers  
**Brittany Enderli & Susan Sellers**

Institution  
**University of Texas at San Antonio**

Sponsored by  
**Susan Lanford, IIDA**

## The problem

Every city is faced with some form of **social injustice** because of ignorance and the lack of commitment to social, economic and political issues. As a result, there is large homeless community that resides under a bridge adjacent to the UTSA architecture building. Because of the large volume of pedestrians passing through their habitat daily, they are mistreated and disrespected by most. Some forget that each homeless person has a unique personality, but more importantly, a **unique story**.

## The solution

As students we feel we can not cure social injustice, however we can create a temporary solution to elevate them from their level of discomfort. Our solution was to create the comfort cart, a **transportable cart** that would serve both as a fold out bed and table as well as a sleeping mat and storage satchel. The materials used in this effort included; plywood, 2x4's for the base, lawn mower wheels, PVC pipe for both the table legs and pull handle, tarp for the storage satchel and sleeping mat that was stuffed with recycled grocery sacks for cushioning.

## The solution's impact on its users

Upon donation of the **Comfort Cart**, we were apprehensive to approach the homeless individuals. We did not know how they would respond or react. However after demonstrating to them how it worked, they graciously accepted it. Each person utilized it differently, which is exactly the purpose of this cart. Some laid, some sat, some pushed it and used it for storage, and some even developed a new use for it. We returned to the bridge a week later and the Comfort Cart was surprisingly still in tact and employed as a bed and storage cart. It was very encouraging that our design served its purpose and **empowered** us to further pursue ways we can use our talents to **“Give Back”** and **“Make a Difference** in our own back yard.

## NO FUSS RAINcoats



### DESIGNERS:

Fanney Fatalla, Loretta Lerma

### INSTITUTION:

UTSA School of Architecture in Interior Design

### SPONSORED BY:

Tina Marti

### PROBLEM:

Lately San Antonio has been experiencing some *unpredicted* weather. And whether you're a Student, or Faculty & Staff being unprepared for scattered showers can ruin a design project.

### SOLUTION:

*NO FUSS RAIN* coats. These Reusable raincoats would be used by Interior Design & Architecture students. On those rainy days if you find yourself without an umbrella or a raincoat feel free to **BORROW** the raincoat to get to and from class. Its as simple as

#### 1,2,3.

Step 1: Borrow raincoat

Step 2: Sign in with coat code

Step 3: Return on hook to dry & ready to be RE-USED.

### IMPACT:

At first it was hard to get students and staff to notice it and to take time to read what it was about, and the fact that it wasn't raining made it harder. Some would walk by and skim it. Others didn't even notice it. We noticed that if took one person to read it, then others would be curious and that's when we really got our feedback. Even without the rain the majority of the students & staff agreed that they would utilize our *NO FUSS RAINcoats*.

# RALPHIE THE ROAD SIGN: Make a Difference Project

## Designers

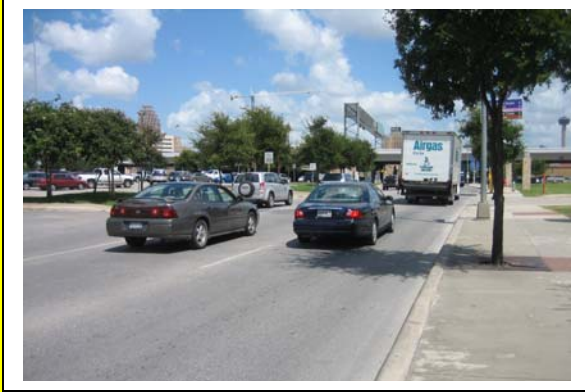
Annette Guardiola/student IIDA & Elizabeth Argubright/student IIDA

## Institution

University of Texas at San Antonio

## Sponsored by

Tina Marti/IIDA



Buena Vista St. Traffic



Ralphie in action sign

## The problem

There is no cross walk or warning sign for neither the cars nor the students notifying them of the situation ahead in a 30 mph zone with this being a downtown traffic street, it poses many dangers.

## The solution

We decided to create something that is not only sure to catch your attention, but it is also sure to give you a good warning for what's to come ahead. We used recycled materials (paper cups), and created a life size cross walk sign in the shape of a human being, as to mimic a crossing guard at school zones. We strongly believe that by doing this we are helping people become more aware of there surroundings, as well as making a safer area for them to encounter on a daily basis.

## The solution's impact on its users

In order to implement our solution, we took Ralphie the Road Sign to the source of the existing problem at Buena Vista Street that separates the Cattleman's Parking lot and the Downtown Buena Vista building. We were able to explain our idea to students who faced the same safety risks crossing the Buena Vista Street as ourselves. And as expected, most of the students were excited about the idea of the implementation of a safety zone and they were willing to participate in our experiment. However, we found that Ralphie's size didn't command enough attention from oncoming traffic. We then took the situation under control and utilized Ralphie as a crossing guard. Nearly 4 out of 5 times oncoming traffic stopped for Ralphie the road sign and the students to cross the street safely. Through our research we realized that in order to make a difference (regardless of how miniscule), design implementation can affect every aspect of our daily lives if we allow it.



Front View of Shelter/Storage



Demonstration of how shelter works.



Storage Unit being used in real life situation

Designers  
**Jamie Loewer and Kari Paris**

Institution  
**University of Texas at San Antonio**

Sponsored by  
**Tina Marti, IIDA**

### **The Problem**

The homeless community near our campus does not have enough shelter or storage space for their belongings.

### **The Solution**

We created a space out of **cardboard** boxes that is **waterproofed** by paper mache and mod podge. We added **wheels** to it so that our users were able to move the shelter with them.

### **The solution's impact of its users**

Immediately after placing the shelter in our homeless community, it was picked up by a woman and she began to collect bottles, newspapers and other **recyclable** materials. We think that it solved a problem because recyclable materials is a valuable source of income, and this gave someone a place to store their inventory. We believe that slight modifications could be made to our shelter so that it could be made more sturdy and watertight. We feel for this to be a real life situation, we would need many more containers. We are planning on proposing to our IIDA campus leaders as a concept to give back to our neighbors.

# WALKING KNOWLEDGE



Student stopped to read the board.



The Walking Knowledge campaign.



Prof. Shanta (the Environmental Science Professor) reading the board.

Designers

**Katherine Montano**

**Ivonne Caballero**

Institution

**University of Texas at San Antonio**

Sponsored by

**Tina Marti, IIDA**

## The problem

There is a strong **disconnection** in our current society. People who don't watch the news, read the newspapers, or pay any attention to the conversations about the environment, are not aware of the issue. The environment is changing as the days go by and everyone should be aware of important issues such as global warming.

## The solution

We designed a campaign called the **Walking Knowledge**. It consists of a set of boards that carry bold and clever environmental facts that will enlighten unknown minds. Several times pedestrians find themselves with blank minds on their way to areas such as a parking lot or the next building in their path. The boards are meant to be placed in high traffic areas, such as sidewalks, plazas or crosswalks for everybody to see.

## The solution's impact on its users

The Walking Knowledge Campaign garnered a positive response. Just one sign can't solve global warming, but it can make a difference. Some already knew about the issue and others didn't, but it reminded them that the problem is out there and they can do something about it. It had an immediate positive reaction before even placing the board outside by the person at the Student Activity Center who said, "I'm really glad people want to be involved". The board was placed at the front of the Monterrey Building where we asked people between ages of 18-60, what it meant to them. One student said that it reminded him of Al Gore and a discussion he had with his professor and peers. Others responses were, "I feel guilty for using the elevator" or "I used to use the stairs for the exercise now I have two reasons". Prof. Shanta said, "People think but, not the right time". After the question and answer session, it was clear that the freshmen and sophomores weren't as aware as the juniors and seniors who were addressing the problem. We did not solve the problem of global warming, nor did those who passed by our campaign, but it made an impact great enough that people ask for more. The Walking Knowledge campaign **did make a difference** in society, and the more boards that exist; the more people will be aware and take action to put an end to global warming.

# Let Your Voice Be Heard

Designers

**Adam Nash and Monica Torres**

Institution

**University of Texas at San Antonio**

Sponsored by

**Susan Lanford, IIDA**

## The problem

We want to make a difference, no matter how minutely, in the well-being of the population. There are so many times that we hear, “they just won’t listen to me” or “if it were me, I would do this.” There is a need for a dialogue about our world, for voices to be heard.

## The solution

We designed a plastic ‘message board’ that utilizes minimal materials and is simple to construct. Upon installation, we hope that students and faculty will write their ideas of how to create peace, change the world, or simply make a difference. These words can cast shadows on the world around them and could change the perception of the landscape. As the words begin to overlap, they create an exchange of ideas and an image of change, thus becoming an art piece.

## The solution’s impact on its users

On our first attempt, we neglected to account for the weather. After adjusting it, we created something that was barely noticeable. On our third try, we were able to create a support structure that elevated it to a level that people were more comfortable viewing. It was also vitally important which location was chosen for the display. It was necessary to place it in a high-traffic area. Most people passed it by, but the piece still made an impact. Those that stopped seemed to really contemplate the question we posed and, most, included thoughtful answers. In the future, we hope to be able to post more of these in various locations around campus. Our project seemed to give people an outlet for their frustrations. Displayed as art, it serves as a reminder that each person’s voice is important and anyone can affect change in our world.



This photo displays the change that the words Create on the visible landscape



As you can see, the project follows the flow of pedestrian traffic and becomes a noticeable outlet for thoughts and ideas.

# Blinding Sun

**Designers:** Karla Perales and Lesley Martinez

**Institution:** The University of Texas at San Antonio

**Sponsored by:** Tina Marti and IIDA



**The Problem:** We noticed that in our studio class we have a problem with glare and the blinds blocking our views. The glare is a problem because it is hard to do computer work. Closing the current blinds locks our views making our working environment bland.

**The Solution:** The initial problem of eliminating the glare on the computer screen was solved. In comparison with regular blinds sunlight still seeps through but with our design the panels overlap to ensure shade. Also by adjusting the panels the user is able to maintain a view of the outside. Another benefit is it provides different lighting levels for the user because it gives the option of leaving some or none of the panels open.

**The Solutions impact on Users:** At first everyone hesitated. The users looked at the shading device with curiosity but once they started to utilize the shades they were truly surprised. We tested the problem on a couple of students and they were pretty amazed. "Wow, it really works", says Jorge. Yes, It solved the problem. We learned that design possibilities can be simple yet can make a big difference.