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Graphic Design Students Contenders in International Competition

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Graphic Design Students Contenders in International Competition

Feb. 7, 2014

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— A team of students at Illinois Wesleyan have been named semifinalists in the Records for Life contest, sponsored by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The international competition called for the creation of a proposal and prototype to redesign child health records in third-world countries.

Seniors Rebecca Erickson, Robert Frank III, William Frank, Audrey Ito and Tara Simpson submitted their prototype for a course taught by Sherilyn McElroy, professor of art and graphic design. Though the winners have yet to be announced, the students' proposal is a main contender, as it recently placed within the top 40 among over 300 submissions.

"Every year the senior design class completes a different project based on issues that can potentially change attitudes, behaviors, or systems," said McElroy. "These projects are pedagogical innovation recognized by Design for Good as featured by the American Institute of Graphic Arts." The Records for Life contest was chosen as this year's project.

According to The Gates Foundation website, health-care cards hold great value in third-world countries, but they often lack adequate space to express the information, are easily damaged and are designed in an unclear way for parents. To improve these vital information systems, the designs will be judged on clarity, adaptability, perceived value and durability.

Keeping this year's focus in mind, the steps of the design process included research, empathy, ideation, design, feedback and re-design. "They researched over one hundred existing immunization records from all over the globe, and then analyzed and assessed the features," said McElroy.

"Our prototype was designed with clearly laid out squares, or 'pods,' to fill out for each dose of each vaccine, organized by color," said Erickson. "Since the pods could be easily adapted to digital and variable screen sizes, like mobile phones, we designed a mobile app to accompany our design."

To assist in the process, the students enlisted the help of community experts, including philanthropic planner Drake Zimmerman, who holds degrees as a juris doctor, chartered financial analyst, certified financial planner and chartered advisor in philanthropy, nursing major and Illinois Wesleyan Class of 2002 Munib S. Abdulrehman, certified nurse practitioner (Ph.D.), and registered nurse Trish Cleary, who serves as supervisor at the McLean County Health Department.

"By inviting global health representatives to the class the students benefited from not only their knowledge, but also their personal experiences in global health," said McElroy. "Through the storytelling of specific scenarios, the experts convinced the

FEVER: SYMPTOMS

IF YOU HAVE SEVERAL OF THESE SYMPTOMS
SEEK PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ATTENTION
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

COUGH FEVER DIZZINESS CHILLS

FATIGUE HEADACHE SWEATS SKIN FLUSHING

DO NOT GIVE ASPIRIN TO CHILDREN
DO NOT OVERHEAT CHILD

UNTIL YOU RECEIVE MEDICAL TREATMENT:

DRINK SANITARY WATER ACETAMINOPHEN OR IBUPROFEN (IF 6 MO)

COOL, NOT COLD! SPONGE BATH EAT HEALTHY FOODS

RESPIRATORY DISEASE: SYMPTOMS

IF YOU HAVE SEVERAL OF THESE SYMPTOMS
SEEK PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ATTENTION
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

VOMITING CHEST PAIN FATIGUE

FEVER CHILLS HEADACHE

UNTIL YOU RECEIVE MEDICAL TREATMENT

DRINK SANITARY WATER EAT HEALTHY FOODS WASH HANDS FREQUENTLY SLEEP

IMPORTANT HEALTH DOCUMENT

IMMUNIZATION RECORD

PATIENT'S FIRST NAME

PATIENT'S LAST NAME

KEEP IN SAFE PLACE
UNTIL CHILD IS FULLY GROWN

DIARRHEAL DISEASE: SYMPTOMS

IF YOU HAVE SEVERAL OF THESE SYMPTOMS
SEEK PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ATTENTION
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

DIARRHEA FEVER DIZZINESS ABDOMINAL PAIN

UNTIL YOU RECEIVE MEDICAL TREATMENT

DRINK SANITARY WATER EAT HEALTHY FOODS WASH HANDS FREQUENTLY

students that their task was important and they could help *save lives* with well-designed records.”

“Design really can, and does, make a difference, and this is one of many projects that attests to that,” said Erickson.

For more information about the contest, contact Sherry Wallace, director for news and media relations, at (309) 556-3181.

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