

Design@ND

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NEWS AND NOTES

Defining patient-centered Design was the goal of **Charlotte Lux's '11 MFA thesis**. Her project was focused on using the power of design to create a more comfortable and comforting experience for patients receiving stereotactic breast biopsies. This exemplary project was selected to be in the book "Designing Here/Now," a publication of Core77, the renowned



Part of Lux's final designs enhancing the biopsy experience.

industrial design website. This book is a compilation of model design projects and design thinking that intends to compel designers to pursue and achieve excellence. Lux was complimented in the publication not only for her observation of the issue and research, but also for her determination to design for the user and put them at ease. Her research process was also praised for her consideration of all entities and persons. This winning project is truly an important accomplishment of Lux and the Design Program and its publication is a verification of that success.

Steve Cozzolino '93, Founder and Principal of Cozzolino Sudios, celebrated an enormous victory, winning the 2014 GOOD DESIGN award, an honor of one of the oldest and most-recognized design competitions. The award was presented for the studio's design of the Westcott iPoint Orbit Pencil Sharpener. This unique electric pencil sharpener has features including Titanium Bonded blades, auto sensor shut off and a shavings reservoir. The design was chosen by a jury of design professionals and industry specialists, judged on the criterion of innovative design, new technologies, form, materials, construction, concept, function, utility



The iPoint Orbit Pencil Sharpener

and energy efficiency. Cozzolino's product represents a standard beyond ordinary consumer products and celebrates product excellence and endurance.

ID grad, **Alisa Rantanen '09** and her team at Insight won the prestigious Red Dot "Best of the Best" Design Concept distinction.

Insight topped 4,800 entries from 63 countries to win arguably the most prominent award in design. The concept, Near&Dear, preserves the independence and autonomy of caregivers and patients through the use of wearable



The Near&Dear wearable and app.

technology. It provides emotional relief and peace of mind in the face of illness by indicating patient status in a readily understood format and offering a simple means of direct communication.

Alums at Radio Flyer Tom Schlegel '90 and Mary Kate (Farhenbach) Venturini '09 were recognized among

ten others as Chicago Innovation Award winners for the design of the Radio Flyer Ziggle. The Ziggle was designed for kids ages 3-8 as a unique way to get them to play outside. The toy is not quite a bike or a trike—kids wiggle to move and spin, providing hours of smiles and exercise. Kids move the handle bars back and forth and use their arms and core to twist and wiggle as they glide and giggle. The kid-powered ride, equipped with four high-performance caster wheels for 360-degree turns and a smooth ride, allows younger riders to build confidence moving forward, while the more advanced aim for speed to execute drifts and spins. In addition to the Chicago Innovation Award, The Toy Industry Association nominated Radio Flyer Ziggle for the Toy of the Year awards in February 2014. Named as a "Toy of the Year" in the Nov. 2013 issue of *Parents Magazine*, Ziggle also received a Gold Star Toy Award in the Dec. 2013 issue of *Scholastic Parent and Child*.



Kids love to laugh and play on the Radio Flyer Ziggle.

A SPECTACULAR CAREER

Despite his constant presence around campus very few know “The Paul Down Story”— his background, how he came to find a home at Notre Dame, and his personal work. Paul has had a remarkable career that far exceeds that of just any professor. Despite bragging about the success of his former students, Paul is modest when speaking of his own accomplishments and past. From high school teacher to student to mentor, Paul has done it all, and his large bank of experiences have helped shape the wisdom he has shared with us all.



Paul Down has been a constant presence in the design program for the last 35 years. Having transitioned across many roles throughout the years, from

student to professor, Paul has been influential in the Notre Dame program since the 1980s.

Paul began his graduate education in 1980, earning an MFA in 1982. After just starting in the MFA program, Paul’s distinct interest in the development of the program led to his doubling as a both student and teaching fellow in the department. As a fellow, the cost of his education was offset for his return services to the university. His experience as a fellow led Paul to what he termed a “midlife transition,” and what has become a lasting relationship with the University of Notre Dame, the design program, and its many students.

For Paul, teaching was not something new to him. After his college graduation in 1969, Paul



Paul next to his ProDesign boat.

taught high school fine arts. His specialization in drafting and mechanical drafting made him a unique asset to the high school program. In fact, the facilities offered were ideal to the coursework of Paul’s classes as a newly-built classroom was designed for his specific needs.

However, in 1978, Paul felt he could do more with his own individual talents, so he put together a portfolio and began exploring other options. Despite being turned down by large companies like Ford and Clark Equipment, Paul was determined to make it in the professional design world. He wanted to prove that he could do it and was determined to give it his best effort. Advised by the interviewing companies to pursue a graduate degree, Paul began looking at industrial design programs. Only 20 minutes down the road from his teaching position, Notre Dame was a natural and convenient choice. And three months into the program Paul knew,

“Notre Dame is where I should have always been,” a sentiment that would remain true for well over a quarter of a century.

A year after receiving his graduate degree from Notre Dame, Paul was asked to return as an adjunct—a professional specialist with a teaching position yet without committee

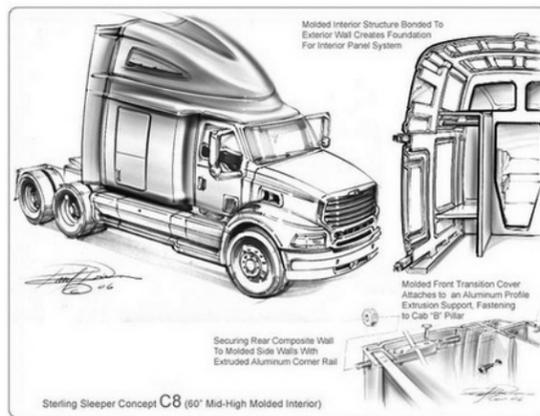
responsibilities. In the summer of 1984, Paul got hands-on ID experience at a company making aftermarket automotive body cladding, followed by a stint in automotive design.

By this time, Paul had officially left the high school scene to pursue a variety of options in the professional world, while continuing to teach at Notre Dame. In 1994, after a re-configuration of the program’s approach to design, Paul received a full-time teaching position on the tenure track and received tenure in 1997.

In addition to his role at Notre Dame, Paul has stayed busy with work outside of the university. In 1985, while teaching two classes per week, Paul started his own company—ProDesign. The small company became known for its exceptional human-powered, jet-drive boat designs. The company’s designs were even featured on the 1986 spring cover of *Hammacher Schlemmer*. Because the season to sell boats is short,

ProDesign became more of a turnkey operation—designing and manufacturing for other companies. As commitments grew at Notre Dame, Paul sold the company in 1993. Paul, however, remained an employee and continued other design consultancies on the side.

Additionally, outside of the classroom, Paul has had a notable relationship with the Industrial Designers Society of America (IDSA). Having previously been an education representative for the district, he was selected in 2002 to be on the IDSA Board of Directors as Vice President of the educational council. His influence redefined the merit award system, creating the more competitive process that industrial designers are familiar with today.



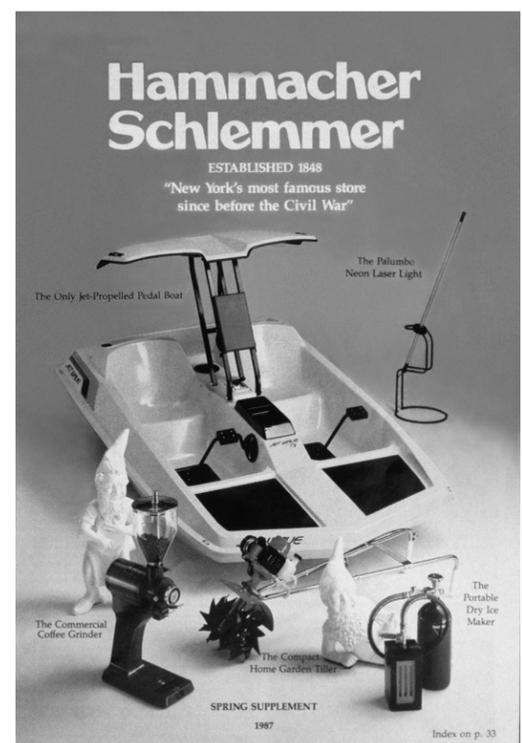
One of Paul’s sketches for the Sterling Sleepers trucks.

Throughout his time at Notre Dame, Paul has seen the evolution of a program and the creation of many great designers. Before Paul’s time, the design program was strictly industrial, with an automotive focus. Projects were sponsored by Chrysler and Ford. Even then, Notre Dame’s broad liberal arts experience was helping young

designers rapidly move up in company ranks. In the 1970s, the design program became more broad-based and through the 1980s and 1990s, industry practice aligned the program to the professional world. In the 1990s the program transitioned to a more collaborative aspect and

began taking diverse units of the University into one room. Paul has been there through the many changes, always guiding students to produce their best work.

As this chapter of Paul’s life is drawing to a close, he is ambivalent about the future. He is eager to have time to explore new things, but notes that he will always be curious about the happenings at Notre Dame. Paul is always proud of the work his students produce both in the classroom and beyond. He is excited to see the progress that each and every student will make



Paul’s boat featured on the cover of *Hammacher Schlemmer* in 1986

and has said that he feels he lives vicariously through each of their successes. Although Paul will no longer be present at the University, his teachings, memorable anecdotes, and friendship will not be forgotten by the many students, faculty, and professionals with whom he worked.

THANK YOU, PAUL!

The gratitude of the students from the past thirty years can barely be expressed in words. Numerous alumni were excited at the prospect of being able to offer their thanks to Paul for his impact on their time at Notre Dame and the trajectory of their careers. Many of the stories shared about Paul reflect personal memories in addition to the over-arching theme emphasized Paul's willingness to sacrifice his time, in order to help students in need.

About seven years after I graduated I was employed as a Senior Designer at Parker Brothers, the makers of Monopoly. I needed a summer intern, and my first thought was to call Paul and see if he recommended any promising students. As usual, Paul was helpful, recommending his son Chris. I ended up hiring Chris, who, like his father is talented and dedicated. Chris stayed in the toy industry, and is now an influential leader at Mattel, so thanks to Paul my first hire was a good one!

Jim Keifer '85

I was a student in Professor Down's Industrial Design classes in the late '80s. There, I quickly discovered that my design aptitude was limited to just two dimensions. Professor Down was always so patient with me and would wheel up a chair next to my drafting table to help me sort things out in 3D. Sometimes he just had to take the pencil! With great patience and care not to discourage, he would help me re-draw the lines on my perspective drawings so that I could visually communicate what my product design should look like. During critiques, he would compliment me on my hand-writing or neatness of my work if there was nothing else more positive or inspiring. He always dug (deep) to find the "good."

Professor Down, thanks for your encouragement and for the inspiration from a truly talented designer and professor. I wish you a very happy and healthy retirement-well-earned!

Michelle (Dill) Rencher '89

I remember how excited Paul would get about an idea that you had and, no matter how stupid your idea was, he would always find a way to make it better. Paul had an uncanny ability to tap into the talents and interests of each individual student to bring out our best. Paul took time to go around to each student to review our projects, understand our challenges and suggest a couple of ideas to solve them. I remember struggling with a design and Paul sketched a solution in 5 minutes that was better than anything I had worked on all night. His sketching ability was something every design student strived to emulate, but it was his passion and ability to connect to each student that made him a great teacher.

I want to say thank you, Paul, for instilling in me a passion for design that has kept growing inside of me throughout my design career.

Tom Schlegel '90

As my design life incorporates more and more illustration, I am ever grateful for my time in Professor Down's Visual Dialogue classes—

learning how to render glass, where to put the gleamies. Fond memories of those days back in Riley. Cheers Professor Down!

Eric Kreidler '93

It is no small task to attempt to explain the profound influence Professor Paul Down had on my Notre Dame experience, but I shall attempt to synthesize those years into words.

My impression of Professor Down is, fittingly, a visual one. I don't necessarily hear his words when I reflect, or think of any specific interaction that was especially impactful, although there are examples of both. Instead, I see his face and his mannerisms, the constant look of wonder in his eyes and his incessant enthusiasm for the smallest details of his work. He was instantly relatable to me! Here was a guy who got the same thrill I did of seeing two beautifully drawn lines intersect perfectly, of measuring twice and cutting once, of letting your instincts take over and being excited about the results. This was a man completely comfortable with who he was.

I think it comes down to integrity; a quality not often found in the average 18-21 year old, if only because integrity can only be acquired with age and experience. Professor Down never tried to impress with his musical tastes, his worldly philosophy, his politics, his clothes or his haircut (which would have been especially challenging). He didn't try to be "cool." We didn't call him Paul. We didn't invite him to parties. In a building where I generally felt like I didn't fit in, I found someone in Professor Down who made me realize how unimportant all of that nonsense was. Your work ethic, God-given talent, creative mind, and the ability to translate all of this into something tangible was all that mattered. His presence in that building provided me a father figure when I really didn't think I needed one. Without Professor Down, I might have left Notre Dame the way I entered it: believing I already knew everything.

I didn't end up pursuing Industrial Design as a career, choosing illustration and graphic design instead, despite excelling and flourishing in the department. Of my success, I owe all of the credit to Professor Down's encouragement, enthusiasm, and unwavering belief in me and the rest of my ID class. His love of his work was infectious. To Professor Down, no creative idea is a bad one—just an early and unrefined one, and maybe in need of further research. No line drawn is wrong if you draw it lightly enough, but when your mind and hand get in sync, commit to it and get out the Sharpie. And when the ink dries, matte it, put it where everyone can see it, and take pride in it. You'll know when you

did the work necessary, because you'll see Professor Down smiling.

Dave Bregande '95

No one influenced my academic experience at Notre Dame more than Paul Down. In fact, much of what I've accomplished professionally I owe to Paul. He is humble, hilarious and uniquely talented.

I had the good fortune of taking several classes with Paul. I was so impressed by his Visual Dialogue class sophomore year that I majored in Industrial Design and arranged my schedule around his classes. Paul didn't just describe techniques but was, in fact, a master of the skills he was demonstrating—because of this, I felt less like a student and more like an apprentice. Watching him work was so inspiring. While this may sound melodramatic, to a fresh-eyed student at Notre Dame taking an industrial design class from Paul seemed like taking a painting class from Salvador Dali.

And yet, this was only one of many reasons why classes with Professor Down were sought after—he wasn't just technically impressive but embodied the personality and life perspective of that rare person whose qualities you'd like to incorporate more into who you are. Through my years at Notre Dame, I found that the realm of questions I had and advice I sought effortlessly expanded beyond the boundaries of industrial design to those of life, career planning, and family relations. Paul is a solid, outstanding person whose perspective and guidance at the time were invaluable.

One of Paul's greatest qualities is the belief he instilled in us that we, too, could accomplish great things. Instead of just saying this, he demonstrated this belief time and time again by going the extra mile and investing in us much more than what typical academia seemed to justify. Many a weekend or late night, Paul would be there, offering additional instruction. When he wasn't available, he would make his resources available to us. He created an environment in which there were as few limitations as possible—where we were taught not only to dream big, but to map a solid path for achieving those dreams.

Of all the instructors I've had in life, no one's lessons continue to stay relevant to new and unforeseen challenges as the lessons from Professor Down. From designing with purpose to time management to attention to detail, I continue to benefit regularly from having the privilege of knowing Paul.

Jesse Michael Newman '96

Paul “Boogie” Down introduced me to Industrial Design, nurtured me throughout my studies, and still provides insight that I incorporate both professionally and personally. I arrived at ND with the intent of majoring in Mechanical Engineering. I didn’t know ID existed as a profession until attending an introduction meeting Paul held on a mid-spring weekday evening, one of the countless after-hours events he’d lead or contribute to during my time in Riley Hall. Well, he provided the spark I needed. He sensed my enthusiasm and I sensed his genuine interest in developing good designers and people. His encouragement helped me develop the skills and confidence that allowed me to leave ND ready to contribute to the profession and navigate my career.

Roberto Ansourian ’98

In the summer of 1998, immediately prior to a senior year, I took an internship at a small design studio in Holland, Michigan. I loved it right away. The studio was on retainer to Herman Miller, but had some very unusual side projects including sculpture, sustainable architecture and sacred space design. Long story short, by the end of the summer I was pretty hooked, and I got in touch with Paul to let him know that I was going to miss the place when it was time to come back to school. Paul, being nothing if not available to his students, told me he’d be there the next day to see for himself. He roared in the next morning on his enormous motorcycle (in my memory he had on a black leather jacket, possibly with tassels, but those details may be invented), introduced himself to the partners, and spent a few hours in the studio seeing what I’d been up to. He had a long lunch with us and listened to everything that was going on.

At the end of all that, he told me that I seemed more engaged here than I’d been at school, that if this was a good thing for me he’d figure out a way to stack my spring semester so that I could graduate on time. That was an excellent decision for me and one that only happened because Paul—who had not originally been my primary design professor—was eternally invested in the personal interests and opportunities of his students. I have enormous respect for someone who’s so free of ego that he can recommend, unreservedly, that you spend less time with him! The time I did spend with Paul was enormously valuable—his illustration instruction has materially accelerated my career and personal projects and I don’t think I would have engaged the same way with most other teachers. And of course he was always kind and entertaining. But I’ve never thought more highly of him than when he told me I didn’t need another semester with him—the insight of a very attentive, and very wise teacher.

Tony Ruth ’99

Walking up the steps to Riley Hall many years ago, I had no idea I would find a teacher who

would believe I could become something special and who would push me to never give up.

Professor Down was a father figure to everyone who decided to make the design studio a second home. As we pulled all-nighters and often felt like giving up, Professor Down was right there beside us as our biggest supporter. He never accepted mediocre work, always pushing us to go much further than we thought was possible. He inspired us with his talent, his gentle guidance and his perseverance for perfection.

Professor Down was the mentor for my BFA thesis. I remember spending weeks working on a wheel design for my project. I got so frustrated, finally not caring what the wheels looked like. Professor Down would not let me settle for average wheels that had no design aesthetic. To him, just because they were wheels, didn’t mean they couldn’t be beautiful. The wheels were simply a small part of the larger picture. I still look at everyday objects that way and I always search for ways to make them better. Sixteen years later, I carry the lessons I learned from Professor Down with me everyday. I continue to strive to create the most beautiful “wheels” in all the projects I work on, and I will always be thankful to have learned from the best.

Gemma (Molinaro) Parenti ’99

Paul Down was one of my first professors once I entered the Graphic Design program. I’ll admit, he intimidated me, yet I knew there was so much to learn from him. I had Professor Down for Visual Dialogue, and can say that the semester of drawing, perspective and functional design thinking were so rewarding. I could actually draw!!!...and it was thanks to Professor Down’s patience and instruction. When I think of that semester, one term that is forever etched in my brain is “farkle”—the mark you make to create a highlight, or light shining brightly off of an edge. He liked farkles, forever encouraging their use. Early on I recognized his passion for teaching and helping students and I’m honored to have had him as a professor. Professor Down—thank you for your dedication and best wishes for good times and adventure on your retirement.

Dominique Etcheverry ’00

Paul was very instrumental in helping me complete my MFA thesis project back in 2001. I wanted to fabricate plastic plinths for my installation and wasn’t sure how to make all the forms or afford all the materials. Paul help me create the wooden mold and let me use the facilities in Elkhart with the oversized vacuum tables. He also let me have some of the grey-good materials available at the shop at a very reasonable cost. He was there during the whole fabrication and helped me finalize it in preparation for painting, etc. All of this was done due to his good graces. I wasn’t an ID student, hadn’t taken any classes with him, nor had him on my thesis committee. I can’t thank

him enough for helping me with that. I don’t think it would have been done without his help.

Brian Sailer, MFA ’01

During my second year of grad school I was very concerned about finding my path and figuring out a thread that connected my work. Paul came to my desk one day and without even thinking it said: “Don’t sweat it.... the thread is YOU!” That simple message lifted tons of weight off my shoulders and to this day I still think of it whenever I need direction in my life.

Paul has been without a doubt the person who has had the most influence on my career. I wouldn’t be who I am today without his guidance and example. The more I advance in my career the more I admire his talent, dedication and unselfish love for design and for education.

Alex Lobos ’05

Paul has been the heart and soul of the ID program at ND. And an excellent one at that. I have found that you can always spot a Paul-Down-educated IDer from his or her thoughtfulness, attention to emotional and functional details, work ethic and, of course, killer sketches. He has certainly created a legacy.

I remember so many things that Paul would say to us and so many times that he was helpful—spending long hours in the studio with the students, helping with models, sketches, concepts and just mentoring us. Even as a student, I often thought, “What would we do without him?!”

Kaitlyn Benoit ’09

Let me just start by saying that I went to Notre Dame because of Paul. I mean, I had been there before somewhat by chance. In 2004 I applied to an exchange program that my undergraduate university in Brazil was offering and I was placed in a group of four who would go to Notre Dame for one semester. My first contact with Paul was as his student in the advanced product design studio. His engagement, cheerful attitude, impressive knowledge and teaching methods inspired me from the very beginning. Paul demonstrated himself as a reachable and generous person, both in and outside the classroom. By the end of the semester, he said my skills and understanding of the design field would make for a strong application to a graduate education, so he encouraged me to apply for the MFA program as soon as I was finished with my undergraduate studies back in Rio de Janeiro. And then I did. The program had only one spot per year, so Paul called me long-distance to let me know I was the chosen one that year. I now know that he didn’t have to call me—he could have the admissions office or the graduate school contact me instead. But, he’s just that type of person.

Throughout my time as his graduate advisee I can only say that Paul was an example to follow in every aspect possible. He is an excellent

designer, fully skilled in all trades of the field; he is a caring, patient and rigorous teacher who gives a lot to his students, and demands high achievements, offering help and companionship alongside the learning process; Paul is an incredible individual with impeccable work ethic; he has a grand and welcoming heart and the wisdom of an experienced man who has seized life in many ways.

I remember, towards the end of my MFA thesis project, when I was pulling 10-hour shifts at the model shop, Paul would come in every once in a while to check on my progress. He would appear silently, very respectful of my process, to offer some pointers that, sometimes, saved me valuable hours of work. He was aware of my quest and knew I had to walk it alone, but his suggestions were very helpful and I learned so much from hearing his particular strategy on approaching a certain technical difficulty. He also helped find a local manufacturer that would make the plastic part for me to test back in Brazil. When we took the pattern to the industry over in Elkhart, after one pull, the machine almost destroyed the entire pattern as it had some draft-angle issues I didn't foresee. I had very little time to fix things, but I remembered one of Paul's calming mantras: "You can fix anything. Fixing is much easier than building." So instead of losing it, I just went back to the model shop and did what I had to do.

Paul is the type of professor who has so much knowledge he could be a snob. But instead, he is very generous and helps you get to an empowering place that contributes to your professional and spiritual independence as a designer. Nowadays, as a teacher and designer, I often think of Paul when I find myself into a crossroads and consider what I guess he would do. To me, that is the final proof of the impact he had on me and of his unique value as an incredible human being.

Fernando Carvalho, MFA '09

Paul could make you cry, he could make you laugh. He could also help you discover what you love about design and how to accomplish it. Personally, I've seen him do all three in one class. One student would walk out the door crying while another had just decided he will be a designer for the rest of his life. Paul is that rare teacher you find in your four years of college who instead of always teaching off the curriculum, adds his own personal flare that can ignite your core reasons for wanting to be a designer. When I needed to be told my projects were lacking in sound research he would tell me. If the ellipses on my housewares project were out of perspective, he would tell me. And when everyone else seemed to think I was failing, he saw the good efforts I put forth.

One memory in particular brings me back to the BFA senior thesis show where I had designed a modular track spike. I didn't do particularly well on my review for two reasons: I had chosen to

develop a niche product the panel was unfamiliar with and my project wasn't serving an obvious social need. I presented my case on the problem this modular spike would resolve and waited for feedback from each department. It seemed as though there was nothing positive to say about my project. The modular spike was not solving a clear need, would be too expensive, seems vapid. To some degree, all of these we're probably true and it hurt to hear this feedback until it was Paul's turn. Now, Paul can be brutal and one of the toughest critics in the department, but on this particular occasion, when it seemed there was nothing positive to say, he stood up for me and praised my process and execution. It was at that moment that Paul single-handedly held the masses from delivering their final blow and pushing me out of design for good and into a marketing degree.

After graduation, I landed a job at New Balance designing sprinting spikes and running shoes. Sometime during my first week of work, I received an award from Paul Down and the ID professors. Although it wasn't officially given to me during the BFA thesis show, it was an act of kindness that shows Paul's love and care for his students extends past the studio, past the walls of Notre Dame, and on to your life as a designer.

Paul, thanks for pushing me farther than I thought I would go and caring for us all beyond the classroom. Here's to all you've done for ND design and your students.

Justin Schneider '11

Paul was enormously influential in my decision to pursue Industrial Design at Notre Dame. He would probably downplay that statement in his typical humble way but it's true. When I had my first design class with Paul (Product 1), I knew basically nothing about the profession and I had only signed up because I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life. I was happy because I could finally draw for homework, and Paul was the most supportive mentor I had, up to that point; he offered exactly the type of encouragement I needed to settle into a major I finally felt was right for me.

Throughout the years at Notre Dame, we eventually found more support and mentorship among ourselves as the studio culture became very close knit, and we mostly relied on each other for development in preparation for the modern workforce. At this point, Paul fell into more of a patriarch figure for me as he continued to nurture the younger students while overseeing the program and acting as a confessional for my angst over finding work and becoming a success. Paul was always there for me when I wanted to have a conversation about anything, and some of my fondest memories at the university are informally chatting with Paul in the basement of Riley Hall, an established legend sharing his sage advice and parables with a kid who was finally starting to understand his purpose.

Continued on page 7.

“DOWNISMS”

The quirky idioms and sayings of Paul Down are the small details that students and faculty of the program can't seem to forget. Paul has kept all of us entertained and motivated with these funny sayings over the years. They will certainly be missed but never forgotten.

If I were king...

May the Force Be with You.

You'll have to have deliverables...

A designer has to move forward and fast.

A mistake like that is like a soup stain on a tuxedo.

Make nice.

Utility will last long after style has faded.

Why did the marker squeak? Because it was felt.

Fake it 'til you make it.

He's got one foot on destiny and the other on a banana peel.

If it doesn't turn out, we'll always wish it did.

Contrast is King.

You can fix anything.

You could get burned...

Who tied the pup.

You're on the porch barking and you need to be running with the big dogs.

MEINERDING MARVELS STUDENTS

Hollywood graphic hero, Ryan Meinderding, was able to return to the program that cultivated his great success—sharing his story, his wisdom and techniques. Ryan is a character designer for the Marvel movies and has created key frames that movie fanatics are familiar with, awing everyone with his incredible attention to detail and precision.

In early December, West Lake Hall was packed with students from a diversity of majors to see '99 graduate Ryan Meinderding. Ryan is currently part of the Marvel movie production team, using his hyper-realistic Photoshop drawings to begin the process of character development. At the forefront of character visualization, he creates the first head-to-toe identity of Marvel characters—generating the inspiration for a character's features and costume design.

Ryan's design interests sparked before his time at ND, when he explored airbrush artwork. This art form has really aided Ryan's Photoshop work, having a natural intuition on layering and brushstrokes. After receiving his formal education in industrial design at Notre Dame, and propelled by his early interest in visual comics, he went into gaming design with Atari and Hasbro. Ryan's career then progressed into the web design at the time of the web boom, working on gaming sites like PlayStation.

At this point in his life, Ryan felt the need for more development in his education and attended California Art Center to pursue concept and entertainment art. After a multitude of temporary positions, Ryan was able to land his first major role as an artist for Marvel comicbooks.



A larger-than-life segment of a ComicCon poster by Ryan.

Ryan was gracious enough to present at two events during his visit. First was a Photoshop tutorial demonstrating his digital sketching techniques. Using methods similar to figure drawing, Ryan showed how to use gradient brushes to contour and shape the faces of a character. In the demo, Ryan talked more about his methodology—highlighting the differences in brushes or showing the different process for black and white versus color renderings. He also gave the inside scoop on

working in the entertainment industry and the hard-core nature of such a multi-faceted and competitive business.

After having his work presented in the ISIS Gallery in earlier weeks, Ryan's second presentation also drew students from a diversity of majors, filling every seat and crowding into every last inch of standing room. Ryan proceeded to show samples from his large body of work. Ryan wowed the audience with character designs for familiar Marvel titles, costume development, dramatic key frames, and ComicCon posters.

Ryan showed work from his vast repertoire including, *Transformers 2*, *Iron Man*, *Iron Man 2*, *Thor*, *Captain America*, and *The Avengers*. He was proud to show where his key frame illustrations had resulted in inspiring actual scenes from the films.

In addition to showing his work during this presentation, Ryan focused on charting the flow of his career in the entertainment business and the inner-workings of the industry as whole. Ryan shed light on the entire process of films he is involved in, giving a broader explanation than just his niche job. He gave the eager students a myriad of information—from good to bad, and from mundane to rewarding.

The presentations were a great opportunity for students to learn from the best and to celebrate Ryan's success.



An iconic key frame from the *Iron Man* films

ALEX LOBOS VISITS

MFA alum Alex Lobos returned to speak about his career path and the trajectory of all those pursuing industrial design. Currently a professor at the Rochester Institute of Technology, Alex was able to share both his work, and that of his students.



Alex Lobos '05, a Notre Dame MFA graduate in industrial design, is currently an Assistant Professor in Industrial Design and a Miller Professor for

International Education in the College of Imaging Arts & Sciences at the Rochester Institute of Technology, New York. His research focuses on user-centered design, sustainability, and emotional attachment. For his MFA thesis at Notre Dame, Alex designed a series of natural dishwashers that focused on the user's experience of water. Additionally, they aimed to reduce water consumption and integrate the dishwasher more deeply into the home experience.

His love of appliances stems from the fact that appliances touch our lives more than almost any other objects in the home. This constant presence brings about the opportunity to design appliances

to be more than just backdrops in the kitchen and laundry room.

His talk, titled *Career Trajectories of an Industrial Designer*, focused on a combination of his personal work and his students' work. Rather than speaking about his career as a timeline, he chose to speak instead about his career through specific projects and connect these projects through common themes. He bounced back and forth between his work and his students', giving the audience the unique perspective of a professor. He was able to show how his own work and journey has influenced his career as a professor and the knowledge he passes on to his students.

Using the common theme of natural elements, Alex connected his MFA thesis project on natural dishwashers with projects his students at RIT completed for a course on safety and the four natural elements. The projects he showed, including a home fire evacuation system for

children and a better-ventilated motorcycle helmet for rain, utilized a user-centered approach to create meaningful design solutions.

In addition to teaching, Alex also lectures, publishes, and directs design workshops all over



Students' work from a GE sponsored course.

the globe. His work has been sponsored by an impressive array of companies, including Autodesk, General Electric, and Unilever.

Overall, having Alex back to speak was an exciting treat for the program. The insights and examples of work he showed were both captivating and inspiring.

My enrollment at Notre Dame culminated with the IDSA merit award, and I was incredibly proud to have Paul at my side as I closed my collegiate chapter and prepared to move on. Of course it's sad to see Paul move on in retirement as well, but Paul's dedication and contribution to the Industrial Design program at Notre Dame has already far exceeded the standard expectation. I have been blessed with a career that makes me happy every day, and when I reflect back on how I made it this far against the odds, I would like Paul to know that I'm thinking of him.

Josh Traub '11

There are some professors who know how to teach very, very well. There are some professors who know how to push their students very very well. There are some professors who are incredibly kindhearted and there are some professors who are like best friends to the students. Paul filled all these roles.

Paul Down was *the* professor who gave me the confirmation that I needed, that I was in the right major—the right career path. He inspired me in such a way that *I knew* industrial design was for me. His enthusiasm not only for industrial design but also *my* career path and dreams was what

made it for me. Paul showed me off like I was his own son, even putting in a good word for my first internship. Ever since the day I walked into my first design class ever with him (Visual Dialogue), Paul Down has always been my absolute biggest supporter.

There are some professors who change the lives of their students by inspiring them with their enthusiasm and interest in their students. Paul Down, you are that professor to me and I am so thankful for your incredible legacy to the Notre Dame Design program.

Sunoh Choe '13

I first met Paul during a visit to Notre Dame as a junior in high school, on my way to interview at the University of Michigan (I know). I wasn't at all considering Notre Dame at that point, but felt it would be a good "practice interview" before I got to Michigan.

While I was on campus, Paul and Robert Sedlack spent an entire afternoon showing me around Riley and sharing details about the design program. I was struck by how dedicated Paul was to his students and the industrial design program as a whole. Countless college tours and interviews later, no one measured up.

My impressions of the design department were proven true as I started classes at Notre Dame. Paul has always been incredibly passionate about his students and their work. He is honest to a fault and will always say exactly what he thinks, good or bad, because he believes in his students. For me, that was the best motivation, and I have Paul to thank for any of my accomplishments. Not to mention, I'm glad I didn't go to Michigan!

Alisa Rantanen '13

Paul, It is hard to compile all the individual stories and memories that have been shared over the last thirty-five years. Many past students were willing to reach out and share their personal experiences. Yet, the thank you comes from all of us. Thanks for thirty-five years of dedication, service, mentorship and friendship. Notre Dame will always be a home to you in the same way you made it home to so many others. While the program continues to develop and change, its creation and evolution would not have been possible without your ingenuity, motivation and commitment. Your impact is not limited to the students you met personally, but to all students who are aspiring designers at Notre Dame.

Thanks!

2000s

Steve Schwall (BA, BSME '06) joined IDEO, a global design and innovation consultancy, as an intern in 2005 and has yet to escape. Over this time he has worked with multi-disciplinary teams on a huge range of design challenges, from developing consumer products and medical devices, to designing mobile apps, retail spaces, and service experiences. Currently a Portfolio Director in IDEO's Chicago office, Steve leverages his background in design and engineering to lead a diverse portfolio of work in the automotive industry. Outside of client work, he enjoys mentoring local startups and preaching the power of design to students.

Will McLeod (2008/9) returned to Notre Dame for his Masters in the ESTEEM program (2010) where he pursued his research on a new kind of glass that can tint on command. That research became Smartershade, a product that will soon be available in glass in Europe. Recently, he has moved back to NYC to co-found a design-driven, home automation products company, Keen Home. Their first product, the Smart Vent was recently featured on ABC's Shark Tank. The team took a deal with Robert Herjavec at one of the highest valuations in show history.

2010s

Justin Schneider (BFA '11), began his career designing running shoes with New Balance and then Reebok as a product designer before leaving for a research opportunity in Madagascar. He joined Mahery and National Geographic on the island to design and illustrate a field guide identifying the medicinal benefits of Madagascar's rich bio-diversity. After his time abroad, Justin came home in order to launch Wolf & Shepherd, a performance dress shoe company looking to integrate the best of classic style and athletic comfort.

Waylon Chen (BA, BSME '12) attended Stanford University upon graduating from Notre Dame with dual-degrees in Industrial Design and Mechanical Engineering. While getting his Master's in Mechanical Engineering at Stanford, Waylon interned at Apple Inc. as a Product Design Engineer on the Input Devices team. After Stanford, he joined Apple full-time. At Apple, Waylon worked with top-notch industrial designers and engineers to bring revolutionary products to the world. His responsibilities spanned from iterating designs of future products to oversight of assembly lines in factories in China. In December 2014, Waylon left Apple to join a startup in Silicon

Valley. Waylon sees tremendous potential for growth with the new company where he now works as a product designer.

Ryan Geraghty (BFA '12) moved to the Bay Area after graduation and began designing for Deap Design, working almost exclusively on products for Kohler, while freelancing on the side for startups in Silicon Valley for two years. He is now with the wearable tech company Misfit where he helps lead the development of new products as well as the design of booths and exhibit layouts.

Future Alumni

Connor Brandt ('15) is a senior Industrial Design major with an Art History minor. During his time at Notre Dame, and three years in the ID program, he has had the chance to do work for a number of local businesses including Evergreen RV and The Whirlpool Corporation. Aside from local businesses, he was able to land an Internship at Metaphase Design Group in St. Louis, where he contributed design for a wide range of projects including packaging, ergonomic medical equipment, website design, salon accessories, and beverage tumblers. After graduation, Connor intends to pursue jobs in industrial design in Chicago.

Alumni Contributions

Did you know that when you make a contribution to Notre Dame, you can designate your funds to go directly to the design program? Your gift to the University can help support design initiatives like this newsletter and the annual Alumni Design Conference. All you have to do is note on your correspondence that you want the contribution to go to the "Graphic and Industrial Design Alumni Fund." It's that easy. Also note that any gift given to the University is credited toward eligibility for the football ticket lottery. The requirement for each class in order to be eligible for next year's ticket lottery application (2015) is as follows:

- Class of 2015 to 2006 – \$100
- Class of 2005 to 1966 – \$200
- Classes before 1966 – \$100

The gift must be made between January 1 and December 31 of the current year (2015) in order to make an alumnus/alumna eligible for the following (2016) year's lottery.

Alumni, remember that your generous contributions help make this newsletter happen!

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