

## **University Teams with Walt Disney Imagineering**

While most of the students at Cal Poly Pomona were on spring break this year, more than three dozen students and faculty members participated in a unique collaboration with Walt Disney Imagineering (WDI), the division of The Walt Disney Company in charge of design and development of Disney parks and resorts worldwide.

The Inaugural Bobby Brooks Memorial Charette for Entertainment Design ran March 23 through April 2, with sessions at the university, at the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim, Calif., and at the WDI headquarters in Glendale, Calif.

The charette – generally, an intense period of design activity – was a unique multidisciplinary event involving Cal Poly Pomona upper-division and graduate students in the fields of architecture, art, landscape architecture and urban and regional planning. Divided into four groups of eight, the 32 students were charged with generating theoretical design concepts for the large esplanade between the two Disney theme parks in Anaheim, Disneyland and Disney’s California Adventure.

Prior to the start of the charette, Craig Russell, chief design and delivery executive at Walt Disney Imagineering, offered his thoughts on the event.

“By interacting with these Cal Poly Pomona students, we gain insight into the next generation of potential Imagineers while providing them with real-world experience,” Russell said.

The teams labored daily throughout the week, aided by five faculty advisers. Walt Disney Imagineers also worked closely with the students, providing the framework and basic parameters for their designs, and explaining the context of the project.

The official team ideas were presented April 2 at the WDI headquarters. The winning team split a cash prize of \$1,000. All participants in the charette will receive consideration for an internship at WDI.

The event was created to honor the memory and commitment to design education of Cal Poly Pomona alumnus Bobby Brooks, who was killed in a motorcycle accident in 2008. Brooks worked at WDI, beginning there in 1990 as a facility design manager. He was involved in projects such as The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror at Disney's Hollywood Studios, the Club Disney venues, and prototypes for several entertainment concepts, including ESPN Zone, Disney Store and Downtown Disney.

- Carla Sanders