

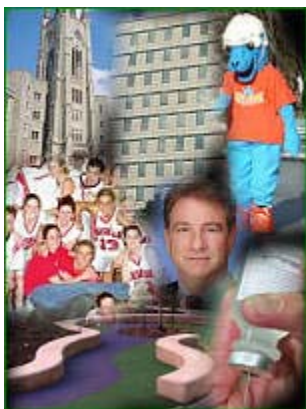
NEWS

Designing a 'greener' London

Western students offer ideas for new building projects

By BEN BENEDICT, The Londoner

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This year's winners of the City of London design competition are Travis Goodhand, Robyn Gaebel, Michael Napper, Tyler Ing, Jonathan Schlemmer and Ashley McManus of Green Concrete Solutions, and Mark Carney, Sandor Nagy, Christopher Ledsham and Scott Young of SMCS Engineering Associated Inc. (right)



The winning design by student engineers, SMCS Engineering Associates Inc., for a new bridge to carry a planned extension of Wonderland Rd. S. over the 401 (below middle).

The winning design by student engineers, Green Concrete Solutions, of a new 'green' North London community recreation centre and library (below bottom).

BEN BENEDICT & WES KINGHORN, PROJECTED IMAGES PHOTOS (below)

The City of London is giving University of Western Ontario engineering students the opportunity to design the future of the Forest City.

For the city's 12th annual design competition, Western students designed projects that, for the first time, may be used in future city developments. The competition featured 10 teams of fourth-year civil and environmental engineering students.

Also for the first time, students were asked to complete their designs to the leadership in energy and environmental design (LEED) green building rating system. The system, developed by the U.S. Green Building Council in 1998, provides a suite of standards for environmentally-sustainable construction.

Mike Bartlett, a professor with Western's department of civil and environmental engineering, has overseen the competition since day one.

"Over 400 students have been involved over 12 years," he says. "This year also a number of past participants returned as mentors and judges. The student designs are judged on their innovation and level of design challenge, aesthetics, value and their presentation." Over its span, the competition has helped develop strong ties between Western's engineering faculty, the city's engineering department as well as local engineering firms.



This year's projects, judged last week, include the designing of a new 'green' North London community recreation centre and library, a new bridge to carry a planned extension of Wonderland Rd. S. over the 401 and an upgrade to the Greenway pollution control plant that is expected to accommodate the growing southwestern quadrant of the city.

Teams competing for \$3,750 in prize money.

"It's not the money that makes this a success," says David Leckie, London's director of roads and transportation. "It's the mentors, judges and people like Ernest Yanful (chairperson of Western's civil and environmental engineering department) who keep up the tradition."

While there's a strong emphasis on professionalism, new urbanism and real world practice, this year also focuses heavily on 'green' initiatives.

Clayton Inculet is a fourth year engineering student whose team, ACC Environmental, developed process upgrades to the Greenway Pollution Control Plant. He's planning to return next year to take some pre-medicine courses.

The environmental components were a key factor that struck home for Mr. Inculet. "I spent my summers at the YMCA's Queen

Elizabeth Camp and I trained kids on the importance of living in the environment. It touched home to be able to tackle an environmentally sustainable project.”

Robyn Gaebel is a fourth year civil and environmental engineering student on one of the first place winning teams, Green Concrete Solutions, which completed a design for the North London Community Centre and Library. They also had one of the ‘hippest’ presentations which included a video parody of Michael Jackson’s Beat It with the words “Green it” used instead.



“Our design is fully green,” Ms. Gaebel says. “A part of the competition is to sell the design and I believe green innovations are important. I’m the only environmental engineer in my group. We have research happening at Western so the faculty are very in tune with the industry. In our report (at three inches thick with 90 pages of LEED information alone) we talk about what else is in the area. LEED says how the area fits into the plan.”

Jonathan Schlemmer, a structural and civil engineering student also with Green Concrete Solutions, has had a chance to see that faculty initiative first hand.

“I started getting into green buildings in my second year with the green engineering building that’s currently under construction when I did a research project with one of my professors,” Mr. Schlemmer says. “We had to balance other things as well. The design requirements we had to meet indicated the environmental levels we had to meet for a LEED Gold certification. That tells you what you can afford to do within budget.”

Christopher Ledsham, a structural and civil engineering student with SMCS Engineering Associated Inc., the team which also won first place for their design of the proposed Wonderland Rd. overpass across Highway 410, says preparing their entry was a time-consuming process.

“I did three years of college and have a certified engineering technologist degree so I’ve done structural work before,” Mr. Ledsham says. “In the beginning we had an environmental assessment presented to us. We’re making a bridge, which is the least green so we needed to account for the social factors. We worked 19 hours a day for the past two weeks and the program is fairly intensive to begin with. It’s fatiguing, but for the degree it’s well worth it.”

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