

4-28-2021

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 28, 2021

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Students Reimagine Family Vehicle for Business Use

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- Cedarville University industrial and innovative design (IID) students are reimagining the multi-purpose vehicle (MPV) family car for work purposes thanks to a corporate sponsorship between the Columbus-based International Center for Creativity (ICC) and a global automotive industry leader.

Throughout the fall semester, seniors at the ICC were charged with working with a global automotive leader to research, ideate and propose multiple solutions to the design challenge and creative constraints provided by the sponsoring company. This project was called Project Remora, and the brand identity of the automotive leader was withheld due to non-disclosure and confidentiality agreements.

“The overall scope of the project is to take an existing car platform and develop a multi-purpose vehicle that is designed for the fleet market,” said Tom Balliett, co-founder of the ICC.

“Intelligent connectivity is leveraging what already exists as far as transportation assets, addressing some gaps in the first and last mile, and then using available and emerging technology to maximize the utilization of these assets. Our global automotive manufacturing partners had some specific constraints for our team and the students were really challenged.”

In spite of the challenges, Cedarville’s IID students working on Project Remora produced a [high-quality concept](#) that can produce professional deliverables.

As a part of their transportation design and product design classes, the senior IID students, who spend their first two years on Cedarville’s campus and final two years at the ICC campus, were divided into teams that submitted designs in four categories: rideshare, delivery of essential goods such as packages, food delivery and rideshare for wheelchair users. When a winning design was selected in each category, students then collaborated to develop practical structures, devices or materials for each category.

Three students were chosen to continue developing the project through a hands-on internship for the remainder of the semester: Emily Bader, a senior industrial design major from Sussex, Wisconsin; Tim Brewster, a senior industrial design major from Amherst, Ohio; and Vorrapon Jirakasemkul, a senior industrial design major from Bangkok, Thailand. The students worked side by side with ICC instructors and an international team of innovators to synthesize the work of their peers and pass the project on to their corporate sponsor for possible future development.

“We sat in a room and poured over all these ideas, circling things, putting them up on the wall and connecting the ideas from so many people to make one cohesive product,” said Bader.

“My favorite memory of the process was waking up to double digits of messages about developmental updates from our team group chat because the project was being worked on literally 24/7 in different time zones, including the United States, India and Italy,” said Jirakasemnukul.

The ICC has developed a network of corporate partnerships with organizations who frequently sponsor class projects. Working closely with industry professionals not only provides students with projects for their portfolios, but also offers a real-world environment where students can learn and grow.

“Having an opportunity to work on world-class projects is a blessing,” said Balliett. “I think it’s helping students learn not only how to work in the industry, but how to lead in the industry.”

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,550 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is one of the largest private universities in Ohio, recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, including its [Bachelor of Arts in Industrial and Innovative Design](#) program, strong graduation, and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and high student engagement ranking. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.

About the International Center for Creativity

The International Center for Creativity is a recognized global leader in innovation education. A working think tank and 3D design firm that provides creative services to universities, design firms, working professionals, entrepreneurs, and corporations of all sizes the International Center for Creativity is a recognized global leader in innovation education for all learners.

In addition to being an Innovation Firm at large the ICC trains tomorrow’s creative problem solvers through the development and deployment of our own unique, market-relevant, and innovative curriculum that ensures that the impact our students make is also a positive, character-driven one. The ICC offers higher education training in Industrial Design, Design Thinking, Entrepreneurship, Business, and Innovation courses. The ICC’s Industrial and Innovation Design Bachelor’s is offered through an exclusive partnership with Cedarville University and is ranked 5th in the country.

Written by Tessa Landrum