

IDE students at IIDA Student Day in Houston

On February 7-9, 44 senior and junior interior design students, accompanied by **Michelle Clark**, a lecturer in CoA, attended the **Texas Oklahoma Chapter** of the **International Interior Design Associations Student Day** conference in Houston, TX. The following account is written by **Adam Nash**, IIDA campus center's communications chair.



"I attended last year's event as a junior and it was educational; but attending the event as a senior was destined to be far more beneficial.

We arrived at the Magnolia Hotel at 1:15 p.m. and from the start it was obvious that this year's event was well planned. The organization of the tours and the firm visits were more structured than last year. After checking in and getting our much-appreciated bag of "goodies," we made our way to the large tour buses and to our first destination.



Our first stop was the Ziegler-Cooper project, Wachovia Williams Tower. The site was beautiful and it was amazing to have such an informative design team take us through the project. I was especially excited about the firm's approach to light and space. The staggered ceiling heights and abundance of glass were refreshing. After an

extended visit, we were running a little behind our schedule and hurriedly made our way to the next destination – the Knoll Showroom. I was enormously excited about seeing the Knoll furniture that I have always read about and was not disappointed. The showroom was remarkable and the quick discussions were clever and informative (and the cupcake at the end was heavenly).

After being lost in an underground tunnel for 15 minutes, we finally made it to our last stop on the tour, the Ziegler-Cooper office. I adored this firm. The quick presentations given by the practicing interior designers were enlightening and only added to my infatuation with the practice of design.



*Afterward, we walked back to the Magnolia Hotel for the final events of the evening and Gary Wheeler's lecture. As one of my new favorite people, **Gary Wheeler** discussed "Design for a Global Workplace." I was immediately drawn in by his statistics regarding salary and definition of space. Mr. Wheeler reinforced a lot of my own ideas regarding design and seemed to invigorate the room with his candid discussion of his own personal views and experiences. He was immensely inspirational and I immediately decided that I wanted to work for him. Gary Wheeler was the perfect end to the day.*

Gary Wheeler (right)



Friday was the day that had been greatly anticipated and feared by most of the seniors, beginning at 8 a.m. with check-in and a breakfast at the Art Institute of Houston. (My day actually started with a minor-traffic accident at 7:45 a.m. a few blocks from the Art Institute of Houston. Apparently, that was par for driving in Houston as the police informed us over the phone that they do not appear at minor accidents unless someone is injured. Thankfully, no one was injured and we were at the Art Institute shortly after that.)



Registration and portfolio review were well organized, and I was pleased to learn that the portfolio review would be one-on-one. After attending two helpful "101 Topics" lectures, I was able to review my portfolio with an interior designer who gave some amazing feedback and completely understood my intentions. In the end I felt rewarded by the experience.



In total, the trip to Houston was a success. I was delighted with the changes and the improved level of organization with this year's event. I felt that, as a senior, it was an extremely beneficial and informative experience. Now I feel better prepared to graduate and start working as a professional. I may even decide to look for a job in Houston."