



Students Create Good Design for Good Cause

JCCC interior design students Randi Knapp, Shannon Honn and Genevieve Hamel donated their talents and about 50 hours of

volunteer time to redesign the reception area and waiting room of the Center for Child Health and Development at the University of Kansas Medical Center.

The project, due for completion in May, will create a soothing atmosphere in a palette of gold, chocolate brown and aqua colors where children (ages newborn to 18) can play and interact with their parents as they await diagnostic tests and follow-up treatment for developmental disabilities such as ADD, autism and speech impediments.

The JCCC Interior Design Students Association board approved the project in fall 2007, and the three women volunteered their services.

“First, we love gaining real-world experience,” Honn said. “And, second, each one of us has been touched by a special needs child.”

The team met with the CCHD faculty to understand the goals of the center. From there, the women wrote concept and purpose statements and presented their design plans to 18 members of the CCHD team in November.

“The students more than exceeded our expectations,” said Diana Ingham, associate professor, interior design, a co-adviser to the project along with Jan Cummings, professor and career program facilitator, interior design. “They had listened very carefully to the goals of the center. The CCHD staff was very enthusiastic about how the design plan fit their needs.”

The JCCC students developed the space with carpet, furniture and paints. The design incorporates traffic flow for wheelchairs; upholstered benches so children and parents can feel

engaged with each other; and reading corner, activity wall and art areas defined by two different carpet styles. Colorful bean bags entice children and add a design element.

“Instead of just making the room look pretty, we had to understand the clients’ needs,” Honn said. “We had to make it practical for special needs children.”

Indeed, interior design students had to work with the state’s carpet options, existing teal chairs, and Americans with Disabilities Act and OSHA regulations.

“I think we have a better understanding of child development disabilities because of this project,” Knapp said. “Being able to create a good environment for children and their parents who spend a lot of time at the center was an awesome opportunity.”

According to Hamel, JCCC IDSA students initiated two other components to the CCHD project – collecting approximately 100 books and 10 wooden car toys, made by Pleasant Ridge Middle School students, to donate to the center.

“We serve families from all over the state of Kansas,” said Phyllis Young, parent educator, CCHD. “These families are here to determine if their child is on the spectrum for autism or is at risk for other developmental issues. This process can be quite stressful. By having our waiting room and reception area take on a new look we hope to convey to these families our hope to make the experience as comfortable and supportive as possible. Family-centered care is a priority of our program, and our new environment certainly supports that mission.” 🌱

Interior Design Students

JCCC students (left to right) Genevieve Hamel, Shannon Honn and Randi Knapp volunteered their design services to remodel a waiting room at KU Medical Center.

