CM Cares Wraps Two Projects in its Fifth Year

The CM Cares program, the CM program’s community service learning initiative, is celebrating the successful completion of 18 projects throughout northern Colorado over the course of five years with the support of more than 100 donors. On May 12, the student leaders working with two families in need during the spring 2015 semester presented their projects and celebrated another successful semester of community work.

The Rincon family was present for the event with their son, Maximino, who is the beneficiary of a new bathroom space for his daily care. The eight-year-old boy has cyclin-dependent kinase-like 5, or CDKL5, disorder, a rare X-linked genetic disorder that has confined him to a wheelchair with daily seizures and neurodevelopment impairment. The wider bathroom with a wheel-in shower will allow his petite mother an easier time of taking care of his needs, and she expressed her sincere thanks to the project team for all they had done for her family.

Anthony Sodic was so grateful for the work done on an accessible bathroom for his own needs that he wrote a speech for the Anthony Project team in thanks for their work. Sodic suffers from Duchene Muscular Dystrophy and also relies on his mother for help with his daily care, so the wheel-in shower and wider bathroom access are necessary improvements.

“I not only got a big walk-in bathroom, but I also feel like I made friends with college guys,” quipped Sodic. “I am pretty lucky. I am telling everyone about my experience with CM Cares. That is a good name, too, because they do care.”

A new video about CM Cares and its work is now available on the CM YouTube channel. Check back for a recap of CM Cares’ first five years in the CM annual newsletter available this fall.

Endowment Update

The new CM Cares Endowment has reached $200,000 of its $1 million goal thanks to commitments from four Pillar Sponsors: Swinerton Builders ($100,000), AGC Future Leaders Forum ($50,000), The Beavers ($25,000), and US Engineering ($25,000). For more information on the Endowment, visit www.cm.colostate.edu/cm-cares/endowment.aspx.
Eric Freed Hosted as Part of Speaker Series

On April 8, the US Green Building Council student chapter teamed up with the Associated General Contractors students to present Eric Freed as part of the William Duff Architects Speaker Series in the CM program. Freed’s discussion on designing for the post-carbon economy, titled “It’s Zero or Nothing,” conveyed to the audience the importance of examining the emotional, psychological, and financial reasons for designing sustainable buildings and conveying this to clients considering making current structures more green.

“Even if every new building were to obtain LEED Platinum certification, it wouldn’t reduce our current carbon emissions,” said Freed. “In truth we need to focus on making all buildings net zero energy, net zero water, and net zero carbon, including existing ones. In order to prepare for our inevitable post-carbon economy, our buildings must offset their energy use, water use, and carbon emissions.”

Freed is a licensed architect with more than 20 years of experience in helping architects, builders, and homeowners use sustainability to improve the design and operational savings for thousands of buildings around the country. He is the vice president of the International Living Future Institute, a global hub for visionary programs, including the Living Building Challenge and Living Product Challenge. Freed has helped thousands of companies monetize sustainability by showing them how to cut their real estate operations in half.

Proposal for Green Energy Challenge Submitted

As they prepared for the end of another busy semester, the students of the National Electrical Contractors Association were also hard at work completing the initial proposal for the Green Energy Challenge due on April 20. James Dumanovsky, Patrick and Paul Kemmesat, Ellen McCurdy, Anthony Olguin, and Patrick Suzuki also took time to visit with Matt Dunscomb ('04) at Sturgeon Electric for an informational session about the company and a little guidance on the schedule for the GEC proposal. The team managed to submit its work by the deadline and is now awaiting the results of the judging. The top three teams will be invited to present their work to judges at the NECA Annual Convention in San Francisco October 3-6.

Valdes-Vasquez at Engineering Sustainability Conference

Faculty member Rodolfo Valdes-Vasquez attended the 2015 Engineering Sustainability conference in Pittsburgh April 19-21 to present on the results of a research project conducted by former CM graduate student Anderson Lewis. The presentation, “Perceived Value of Using BIM for Energy Simulation,” involved a topic that closely matched the conference’s goal of providing attendees with access to the latest research and practice directed at the development of environmentally sustainable buildings and infrastructure.

Valdes-Vasquez was also a member of the planning committee for the fourth Michael Horman Symposium held as part of the conference. Activities included a tour of the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, specifically the Center for Sustainable Landscapes, which has fulfilled the Living Building Challenge certification. Named for Michael Horman, a well-known faculty in the area of sustainability, the event’s goal is to engage graduate and undergraduate students in discussion of research ideas, introduce them to innovative qualitative and quantitative research methods, and help develop a network of mentors for sustainability research topics. CM graduate student Swaetha Jebaekumar was in attendance and presented a poster while there.
Quality faculty and staff are the backbone of a good degree program, and CM takes such pride in the excellence of its team that each year sees at least one member of CM earn an award for their efforts exemplifying a superior program.

Natalya Bowen, CM front office and special projects coordinator, earned the Outstanding Achievement Award which recognizes meritorious or outstanding achievement in job skills and/or service to the University by State Classified employees. Bowen was one of five recipients for 2015. “Natalya possesses the ability to combine technical skills and reasoning with creativity to solve departmental needs and issues relating to marketability, recruitment, and the department vision,” said nominator Kristin Haller, assistant to the department head. “This dynamic ability, combined with her extensive knowledge of the department and CSU, make her an invaluable asset to our program.”

Jon Elliott, assistant professor, earned the Associated Schools of Construction’s Regional Teaching Award for excellence and creativity in teaching. “He inspires the students to learn and challenges them to find their passion and interest to make a difference in their community and each other,” said department head Mostafa Khattab. “Jon is an exceptional educator, faculty member, and a natural leader who is driven by his passion to advance construction education.”

Khristy Preston, CM Cares and graduate recruiting coordinator, received the College of Health and Human Sciences’ Outstanding Engagement Award for exemplifying the land-grant mission of developing and promoting partnerships and collaborations between campus and external partners for the benefit of the community. Preston’s work with CM Cares and the partnerships she has formed with industry over the course of her career in CM led to her nomination for the award. “Khristy deserves this award for her passion for making a positive and sustainable impact on the lives of others through her work with the families and non-profits who are the recipients of our need-based construction projects in CM Cares,” said internship and student recruitment coordinator Anna Fontana. “She approaches each day with smiles and laughter and new ideas.”

Faculty members Scott Shuler and Mary Nobe co-authored a paper that earned the Honorable Mention award for Best Paper at the ASC Annual International Conference in April. The paper, titled “A Combined Economic and Performance Analysis of Ground Tire Rubber Modified Asphalt Pavements,” covered their study to determine the utility of using waste tires as crumb rubber in the construction of asphalt pavements.

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Studying the Trend of Off-Site Construction

CM faculty member Jon Elliott co-authored a paper and article on the current trend of off-site construction utilization in projects. The paper, titled “Off-Site Construction, Modularization, and Sheet Metal Prefabrication: Trends, Current Practice, and Recommendations,” focuses on the use of prefabricated materials and components and the installation of these preassembled components within ‘traditional’ site-built project delivery methods and systems. It validates the savings previously identified in earlier reports and adds dimension to the advantages associated with working these components, particularly in the HVAC, MEP, and sheet metal industries.

The article, “Off-Site Construction: Reaching the Tipping Point,” appeared in the April issue of the Journal of the National Institute of Building Sciences and focused on the industry stakeholder survey conducted on the use of off-site building components. Elliott was also quoted in an article in Engineering News Record that focused on the current culture of utilizing prefabricated systems, the lack of consensus on what qualifies as prefabrication, and the barriers to further implementation.

The original paper and study were conducted for the New Horizons Foundation, a group of HVAC and sheet metal contractors, industry partners, and researchers with a mission to fund research that benefits contractors’ knowledge and growth in the construction industry. Elliott’s co-authors were Kevin Grosskopf, a professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Durham School of Architectural Engineering and Construction, and Ryan Smith, chair of the NIBS Off-Site Construction Council and director of the Integrated Technology in Architecture Center and dean of research at the University of Utah, College of Architectural Planning.
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