



"Being a mentor isn't a difficult thing. Students just want to see and experience what you are doing on a minute-by-minute, day-to-day basis. They want to understand what a firm accomplishes in a day or a week or a month, and any insight we can give them into that process is very welcome and appreciated."

- Deborah Lloyd Forrest, FASID



"Watching how the designers interacted with each other really helps me understand what it will be like when I enter into the profession. The design center was also a great experience—it gives an edge in the classroom because you can make contacts put actual material samples on your storyboards."

-Vanessa Weidner, Student Member ASID

# 2 | REALWORLD DESIGNWEEK

The ASID Student Career Project



**LAST NOVEMBER, HUNDREDS** of students and design industry professionals across the country came together for the second annual RealWorld DesignWeek (RWDW)—the national ASID job shadowing program. Designed to encourage relationships between students and their role models in the profession, the program prepares future designers for the real world practice of interior design.

The magnitude of a Society program like RWDW required volunteerism by practitioner and Industry Partner members from all 48 chapters. In return, more than 500 student members were given

the opportunity to participate in day-long job shadow experiences, providing them with a firsthand perspective on the working world and allowing seasoned designers and industry professionals to learn more about those who will soon join the profession.

Extending their design knowledge outside the classroom, students experienced day-to-day design practice operations on site, including client, project team and vendor meetings; visits to design centers, construction sites and completed projects; bookkeeping; review of client binders and contracts and more. Many professionals also took time



"We were impressed by Drew's inquisitiveness, maturity and sense of humor; and how his interests seem to be part of one, organic trajectory."  
 - Susan Szenasy, editor of *Metropolis*

"I could not have been paired with a more intuitive or interesting lead. Susan was vibrant and gracious. She was a good measure for how an incredible career can take shape by simply putting one foot in front of the other while using your instincts as a guide."  
 - Drew McGukin, Student Member ASID

"My teachers tell me all the time about the specifications, but until today I didn't realize how massive it can all be. Today I saw four huge binders for just one project, compared to the one binder I have for a project at school."  
 -Alisen Williams, Student Member ASID

During his day at *Metropolis*, Drew attended a production meeting and met with the magazine and web editors, and art/production departments to get an insiders' view of how the magazine is made. "While residential interiors are my first love and the focus of my studies, having an opportunity to understand how a magazine like *Metropolis* pulls amazing design through a different lens was informative, eye-catching, challenging and thoughtful for me," says Drew.

to demo software programs such as Revit and review student resumes and portfolios.  
 The success of RWDW is marked by the diversity of shadow days offered. From experiences with large commercial design firms or solo practitioners, to showroom management and design education, the program represents the diversity of design practice areas and showed students not to leave any door unopened when they enter the profession.

Following the event, student and professional participants inspired by the event sent numerous testimonials to the ASID headquarters office, describing the value of mentorship and expressing respect for the next generation of interior design industry leaders.  
 Pictured here are photos from two RWDW shadow day experiences: Drew McGukin, Student Member ASID, at the New York School of Interior

Design, spent a day at *Metropolis* magazine with editor Susan Szenasy. 2009 RWDW spokesperson Deborah Lloyd Forrest, FASID, hosted Vanessa Weidner, Student Member ASID, at the University of North Texas at her Dallas hospitality design firm, ForrestPerkins. Forrest's colleague Aaron Duke, Allied Member ASID, hosted Alisen Williams, Student Member ASID, at Stephen F. Austin State University. **i**