ART SERVING A LARGER PURPOSE

Iowa Association of Energy Efficiency Scholarship Winner and UNI Interior Design Student Kimberly Wilderdyke, has plans to take her love of HGTV and art to serve a larger purpose. Originally from Adel, Iowa, she has always really liked art. She has been watching HGTV since she was about 7, because it interested her. Watching HGTV started as a guilty pleasure, but has transformed into what she would like to do with her life — using her artistic talents to create impactful spaces for people to live, work, and be educated. Interior Design is a form of art. Kimberly, will bring Interior Design into various environments to create feelings of comfort, productivity, and inspiration.

Making the decision to come to UNI was an easy one for Kimberly. She said that the campus was the perfect size for her, had many opportunities, and that it “felt like home right away.” As a sophomore, Kim feels that UNI’s Interior Design department is preparing the students for their futures. Even as freshmen, students connect with vendors and design firms. For example, a group of fellow students went to Minneapolis last spring to visit residential and commercial firms. It is this type of field trip that really helps the students think about the work of interior designers before getting too far into the program.

There are two sides to interior design. The technical side and the creative side. Kimberly finds that working with these two sides and bringing them together is interesting and challenging. Drafting has been one of the technical courses that Kimberly found to be extremely challenging, enjoyable, and rewarding. To complete this course, Kimberly spent quite a bit of time in the library hand drafting and creating blueprints. “Most people do not realize how much architecture goes into interior design,” she said. The reward came at the end of the course when Kimberly was able to take a step back, look and be proud of her well done project. One of her classes that focuses on the creative aspect of interior design is Design Foundations. In this class, Kimberly developed her technical knowledge and started to experiment with textures and colors.

One fun mock project that Kimberly has been able to do is to complete space planning for the Burj Khalifa. The class was given access to the blueprints for the Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world located in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The building is unique, not only because of its height, but also because it is shaped like a flower and becomes narrower as you move upward. Students created floorplans of the apartments. The changing shape of the building, with no two floors are alike, makes the project like a fun jigsaw puzzle.

Kimberly came to UNI with a number of credits and was originally planning to graduate in three years. However, she has since decided to stretch her education to four years so that she can focus on residential design in her junior year and commercial design in her senior year. The additional time on campus will allow for her to obtain a minor and a Sustainability Certificate. Kimberly wants to be an interior designer emphasizing in sustainability. Sustainability Certificates are available for all students. Requirements in-
clude taking 15 credits from a specific list of courses that span across many areas of study but all have a foundation in sustainability.

Excited about next year’s residential design focus, Kimberly is looking forward to the next couple of years on campus, in and out of the classroom. She wants to continue to dig deeper into her design coursework and make more connections with professionals in the field. She would like to have a head start on looking for a position so that one can be lined up prior to graduation. Her internship, required by her major, will help meet these goals.

Kimberly was awarded one of two scholarships from the Iowa Association for Energy Efficiency (IAEE). The IAEE is a professional organization promoting the art and science of the efficient use of energy. With rapidly changing technology, IAEE’s focus is to keep its members on the cutting edge. To learn more go to https://www.iowenergy.org/.

Kimberly’s desire to make an impact in the world is evident when she discussed her job on campus and involvement in student organizations. She wants to get involved as much as she can. Currently, she works at Hagemann Hall as a Desk Assistant. She truly enjoys this position as it allows her to talk to people, and possibly help someone who may need comfort or support saying, “You never know what is going on in others’ lives, so it is always good to chat and hopefully brighten someone’s day.”

Three groups that have made a difference in Kimberly’s semester. First, she attends SALT on Thursday nights on campus. This is a church service for college students. In conjunction with SALT, she participates in a small connect group. One of the things her connect group did was ringing the bells for the Salvation Army in front of HyVee. Her group went a little farther than just ringing the bells. They sang songs, accompanied by her leader’s ukulele. They tried to be as entertaining as possible. The third thing is attending services at Candelo Church in Cedar Falls. These three groups have helped Kimberly adjust and be supported in her education and life on UNI campus.

Kimberly radiates positivity when she talks about her major and her future career. She hopes that her future will involve owning her own Interior Design business. She looks forward to helping people create amazing, energy efficient and comfortable homes. Kim encourages future students in STEM and Interior Design to be passionate about whatever they decide to do. Anyone and everyone can make a positive impact in the world.

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-Kim Wilderdyke on being involved in the UNI community.