Universal Design Team of
Community/Campus Design Solutions (CDS)
The Milwaukee Idea
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Introduction

The Universal Design Team, based in the R_2D_2 Center and a component of CDS had another busy and productive year. The year was highlighted by the news that the R_2D_2 Center's proposal for the ACCESS-ed Project had been funded and the subsequent launch of this new project. The ACCESS-ed proposal grew out of previous work and proposals as part of CDS.

This year's activities continued with the theme of infusing universal design (UD) into physical, instructional, and informational environments to influence a leading-edge shift from an accommodation to a proactive universal accessibility focus. While there are still challenges with many entities implementing the general concept of universal design in their specific environments, there has been a noticeable increase in the interest in UD and the awareness of why it is a better approach. Examples include calls from the community inquiring about how they can use universal design in building new homes, the enthusiastic response from campuses to the ideas set forth by the ACCESS-ed Project, and the efforts of UWM's CIO to include the team in I&MT new projects.

CDS Website: www.uwm.edu/MilwaukeeIdea/CDS/
R_2D_2 Center's MIH Website: www.r2d2.uwm.edu/ud/mih.html

Activities Overview 2005-2006

Milwaukee Idea Home

With the construction of the Milwaukee Idea Home now complete, the focus shifted to dissemination of information about its design. We helped the CDS team with the history, content, editing, and photos for the CDS publication "The Milwaukee Idea Home: The Story of a Process, Balancing Ideals with Reality." We hosted a tour and informational session for a team from Xavier University interested in similar community projects and construction traveled. They traveled to Milwaukee specifically to learn more about the MIH and its design process. We also pulled together internal information and external links about the MIH and posted them to web pages available at: www.r2d2.uwm.edu/ud/mih.html . Additionally, we have held class and toured the home as part of several occupational therapy based classes.

We have not yet achieved the goal of establishing a more formal relationship with Independence*First* related to the use of the Milwaukee Idea Home (MIH). There is still definite potential for involvement by both occupational and architecture students. We will continue to document the UD and accessibility features throughout the progress of the construction and will be post more photos with descriptions to the website(s).

Overview of Campus-Base Activities

The UD team's was involved in various projects throughout the year to improve our campus (and other campuses like ours) and community environments, where environments are broadly defined to include not only the physical environment, but also instructional and informational environments. Many of the activities impact both a primary and secondary environment type. Each item shows the environments it applies to enclosed in brackets and listed in order of relevance.

- **ACCESS-ED Project Proposal:** This proposal was submitted in the prior fiscal year, but was funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Post-Secondary Programs, in September of 2005. It was broadly supported by the UW-System staff and other UW campuses. The initial implementation of the system of DARCs (Departmental Accessibility Resource Coordinators) and creation/dissemination universal design information began on this campus. In the current and subsequent years, this national demonstration project's initiatives will be replicated at other UW campuses and then nationally. This project was built upon previous CDS universal design activities and attempts to secure FIPSE funding. Campuses throughout the UW-System are particularly eager to receive more information and resources. [instructional, physical, information]
- **UW-System UD White Paper:** Dr. Smith, as a member of the UW-System President's Advisory Committee on Disability, has continued to move the UW-System White Paper on Universal Design forward through additional edits and promotion. [instructional, physical , and information]
- **Architecture cross-over:** Dr. Smith worked with SARUP Ph.D. Emi Kiyota on her thesis topic on related to UD in long-term care facilities. He also conducted guest lectures on universal design for the architecture courses.

- **Design and Disability (OCCTHPY625):** This course was not taught during the 2005-2006 fiscal year. However, it is being taught as an independent study seminar in fall 2006 with three graduate students and an undergraduate. This unique course brings current and future professionals together from different disciplines to help them discover the value and application of universal design. The team has been working on establishing an assistive technology certificate that will increase the frequency with which Design & Disability is offered and thus increase the opportunities for architecture and health sciences students to take disability and universal design focused coursework together. [physical, information, instructional]
- **UWM ADAAC Involvement:** Mr. Schwanke is a colleague member on the Chancellor's ADA Advisory Committee and helped to increase the activity of the committee again. Mr. Schwanke's current and Dr. Smith's past involvement has helped to create a culture and awareness of universal design within the committee. [physical, information, instructional]
- **Content Management System (CMS) Core Team:** Mr. Schwanke served on the CMS Core team to provide accessibility, usability, and UD expertise as the developed specifications for, evaluated, and recommended a commercial product for UWM's web-based content. [information]
- **Restaurant Accessibility Guide for the AHEAD Conference:** The Student Accessibility Center based conference planning committee for the national AHEAD Conference, August 2005(www.ahead.org, an organization that promotes accessibility in higher education) used information we provided to help develop a survey for the physical, sensory, and cognitive accessibility of restaurants. Occupational Therapy and Architecture students helped by performing the evaluations of the restaurants based on the survey. [physical, information]
- **Website Design:** Mr. Schwanke is a leading expert on web accessibility on the UWM campus. He provided technical assistance and information on web accessibility to departments and designers on campus. [information, instructional]
    - Formally participated on the CMS Core team, and promoted the need for the content generation interface to be accessible and usable, in addition to the output of the system, so that students and staff with disabilities could manage websites.
    - Provided input into the PantherFile (Xythos) and email core teams as both of these systems have web interfaces.
    - Provided accessibility feedback to the myUWM portal team as part of the pilot release.
- **Elevator Audit:** The installation of new elevators in Enderis Hall stimulated this project as we were surprised to find the new elevators to be less accessible and usable than the decrepit ones that they replaced. We conducted a comparison of the new elevators to the prior elevators in conjunction with OT students. Dr. Smith held a discussion with campus staff and UW system staff about purchasing procedures, but had difficulty discovering the origins of the specification decisions. This comparison is being used as the basis for an *elevator audit* that will be available as part of ACCESS-ed as a resources for campuses.

- **Web Kiosks:** After initial kiosks for web and email installed in the union and other buildings only provided standing access, we advocated for accessible workstations to also be installed. Subsequently, accessible tables were installed alongside standing workstations when new furniture was purchased. Campus then designed and began installing wall-mounted stations across campus. These created two accessibility issues: the accessible stations did not provide enough leg room for a seated user and many users of the standing workstations were outside of the normal viewing angle of the monitors. We developed a spreadsheet to be used to help select a mounting height and angle for standing workstations and have been involved in developing and trialing solutions for the seated versions. This is a fairly multifaceted issue involving several aspects of accessibility, maintenance/cleaning, safety/egress, and cost.
- **Campus, Instruction, and Services Design:**
    - Provided various consultations on assistive technology and software accessibility to support campus employees with disabilities. This included questions from assistive technology users, I&MT staff, and supervisors. Until universal access is the norm, there will still be a need for such individual accommodation services. [information, physical, instructional]

Overview of Community-Base Activities

Along with CDS's name change from "Campus Design Solutions" to "Community Design Solutions", we have shifted some of our focus and activities to engaging and serving the community.

- **Universal Design & Housing - Information & Referral:** Community members interested in universal design and home modifications hear about us through various channels (on and off campus) and contact us for information about new home construction and remodeling. Some have children with disabilities and others have someone in their family with a (newly) acquired disability. Depending on the needs, we provide them with information about UD and connect them with relevant community and national resources.
- **Community Housing:** The UD team has been in conversation with two different community groups (Layton Blvd and Rebuilding Together) and most recently a campus student group (Freedom by Design) that all have an interest in accessibility and universal design in housing, mostly related to home renovations/remodeling. We see enormous potential for student involvement and infusion of universal design as we collaborate with all three of these projects.

Publications, Presentations, and Media

The ACCESS-ed Project publications and presentations listing for 2006 is attached.

Proposed Activities for 2006-2007

CDS allows us to keep working in a broad way in the area of universal design. A full set of new and continuing campus and community-based activities are anticipated for the current and coming year. A long list of activities is listed below, though it will not be feasible to complete all of the listed activities in the current fiscal year. The UD team will meet with CDS staff and collaborators to prioritize activities for 2006-2007 based on the list that follows and other ideas/needs that are identified. Besides helping to plan and define activities, the purpose of the meeting will also be to encourage collaborative activities among architecture and the health sciences teams.

Continuing and ongoing activities:
- ADAAC – Schwanke [physical, information, instructional]
- CMS Core Implementation Team – Schwanke [information]
- Design & Disability Course – Schwanke, Smith [physical, information, instructional]
- UWS UD White Paper – Smith & Schwanke [instructional, physical , and information]
- Universal design guest lectures – Smith, Schwanke [physical, information, instructional]
- Universal design measurement – Smith, Schwanke [physical, information, instructional] – There are several measurement efforts underway that have been developed in part through CDS and/or are closely related to CDS work.
    - UW System Campus Accessibility Inventory, as a part of the President's Advisory Committee and ACCESS-ed.
    - ACCESS-ed instructor, administrator, and service staff surveys
    - ACCESS-ed Campus audit protocols
    - RERC-AMI R3 MED-AUDIT

New activities:
- **Campus Design:**
    - Establish a list/database of UWM campus accessibility and UD issues on the R_2D_2 Center website that can be used to prompt campus planners when planning/budgeting and supply students with project ideas. If successful, consider expanding the list to include Milwaukee community needs and issues.
    - Propose that the following issues be considered as CDS consultation or student course projects to supply the campus and state with ideas for replacing or retrofitting the following campus features.
        - Maryland Ave bridge accessibility and signage issues
        - Safety and accessibility issues related to the Union parking structure exit.
    - Revitalize the web accessibility short course – Update materials to include considerations for the CMS to be implemented and changes in technologies. Schwanke [information]
- **Community Design:**

- Rebuilding Together, Layton Blvd Neighborhood project, & Freedom by Design – Participate in each of these projects, establish collaborations between them, and involve health sciences & architecture students. This is a great opportunity for the university to provide the community with ideas and assistance that leads to more accessible housing so that residents can remain in their communities. It also provides opportunities for students from the different colleges to work in interdisciplinary settings. We already have three graduate students and an undergraduate student working with these projects as part of their Design & Disability independent study. We have collaborators from Texas Women's University and Dallas-based Rebuilding Together.
  - Develop several web pages with resources intended to address common questions from the Milwaukee community regarding the next generation of universal design and accessibility for new construction & remodeling.
  - Quick Response Teams – Participate in and involve health sciences students in the CDS Quick Response Teams as appropriate. Provide an evaluation or ideas of how universal design might be considered.
  - Explore possibility of integrating UD language into city of Milwaukee planning documents
  - Provide visitability info to the community and investigate/document practical solutions specific to the urban environment where no-step entrances are particularly challenging. Collaborate with RERCs as appropriate.

- **Grant Proposals:**
  - Explore submitting at least one collaborative grant with CDS/SARUP/ R_2D_2. Ideas for a proposal include 1) a technical assistance project that funds staff and students to provide consultation and information sessions for people with disabilities in the UWM community (possibly targeting veterans or families of children with disabilities). The consultation and information sessions would focus on providing universal design resources and customized design ideas for remodeling and new home construction. , 2) National Endowment for the Arts universal design grant, 3) support for collaborative projects with Rebuilding Together, Freedom by Design, and Layton Blvd, 4) a design tool/database that integrates universal design concepts and examples of existing solutions that could be used by campuses as they design and remodel classrooms.
  - We will be submitting a proposal for the funding of the R3 MED-AUDIT for the next five years to produce a full type and perform validity studies.

- **Instruction and training**
  - ACCESS-ed Project – As part of the both the CDS UD team and the ACCESS-ed team, Dr. Smith & Mr. Schwanke will maintain a close link and exchange of information as appropriate.
  - Establish a UWM web developers idea exchange group called WebDUG (Web Development and Usability Group) that includes universal design, accessibility, and usability as a core topic of discussion and training.

- **Milwaukee Idea Home (MIH) Procedures and Agreement:** Establish a formal relationship between UWM's College of Health Science and Independence*First* regarding use of the Milwaukee Idea Home (MIH).
    - Define UWM and Independence*First* roles and interactions.
    - Establish regular learning opportunities to use the MIH for course work, including for *Design and Disability* (OCCTHPY 625) and *Introduction to Occupational Therapy* (OCCTHPY 201).
    - Explore previous ideas about UWM students assisting with staffing of the MIH for open house, demonstration, and educational activities.
- **Website and Software Accessibility Analyses:**
    - CDS Website
        - Provide technical assistance to the CDS staff with improving the accessibility of the website.
        - Assist with consolidating and cleaning up the various MIH websites.
        - Assist in the transition to the new web sever and CMS.
    - Review the Milwaukee Idea website accessibility and propose accessibility improvements as appropriate.
    - Provide technical assistance on accessibility features, such as closed captioning (CC), should the CDS produce another promotional DVD.
- **Universal Design Team website:**
    - Expand the Universal Design Team's website presence**,** either on the CDS or R_2D_2 website to more thoroughly describe the MIH's UD history.
    - Post an accessible version of the CDS publication "The Milwaukee Idea Home: The Story of a Process, Balancing Ideals with Reality."
    - Add a dozen or more instructional photographs with accompanying discussions. Investigate the possibility of a virtual tour. Of UD features.
    - Check and maintain links to other websites with MIH content.
    - Add links to related projects and information, including ACCESS-ed.
- **Publicity:**
    - Reestablish a MIH presence on the CDS website and coordinate content and hyperlinks with Independence*First*.
    - Highlight the UD and accessibility features of the MIH through a Today@UWM article (lead article at top of www.uwm.edu) on the UWM website to raise campus awareness about the home and its features.