



## **College Students Reimagine the Future of Themed Experiences for the 29th Annual Walt Disney Imagineering Imaginations Design Competition**

**Six finalist teams to present their designs for interactive experiences involving an iconic installation at the contestants' own campus or city**

Jan. 6, 2020 | Glendale, CA – Walt Disney Imagineering—which dreams up and designs all Disney theme parks, resorts, cruise ships and other family entertainment experiences—selected six teams of finalists to compete in the 2020 Imaginations Design Competition, to be held Jan. 13-17, 2020. This year's teams represent Laguna College of Art and Design, Savannah College of Art and Design, Texas A&M University, United States Naval Academy, and University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

For nearly three decades, Imaginations has served as a prestigious design competition with the purpose of discovering and nurturing the next generation of Disney Imagineers from a diverse array of disciplines and skillsets. Founded in 1991 by former Imagineering executive and Disney Legend Marty Sklar, the program has also grown to include separate local versions sponsored by Hong Kong Disneyland Resort and Shanghai Disney Resort.

For this year's competition, teams were challenged to create an iconic installation at the contestants' own campus or city that serves as an inspiration, honors the past, and is a vision of the future. It could be architectural, ornamental, static or active — whatever the team feels is the best way to represent their unique chosen location.

The competition also embraces both the intimate and grandiose of ideation — the guidelines are that the designs be appropriate for the location selected. In telling the very unique story of the chosen spot, it should respect and integrate local traditions and geography. This project should be a place to gather and celebrate, as well as reflect and educate the community — a concept that will go down in history as symbolic of the team's campus or city.

Of the numerous submissions, from across the country, who rose to the challenge, the six college teams named as finalists for this year's competition have created concepts as diverse as they are brilliantly creative:

- *Bound*, a project that focuses on the pivotal story of the Happy Hill community and its strides forward into the future.
- *Here*, a living memorial dedicated to the rich history of Texas A&M.
- *Laguna Beach Artist Homestead*, a whimsical reimagining of the historic Laguna Artist colony which would eventually become the city of Laguna Beach.
- *Savannah Chora*, an experience hosted by the Girl Scouts in the city where they were founded.

- *Starboard Port*, an installation raised off the coast of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., the “Sailing Capital of the World.”
- *Urban Jewel*, which restores and modernizes a lost public square in Savannah, Ga.

The contest proved challenging with a focus on places that are already a part of existing communities. The designers had to consider how guests could have a communal and family friendly experience as a group as well as how traditional methodologies and advanced technology solutions would allow the experiences to be shared. They also had to be mindful to honor the environment, history, codes and local ordinances.

Teams consist of two to four college students and recent graduates who come from a myriad of majors comparable to the more than 100 disciplines at Walt Disney Imagineering, and were encouraged to tap into the expertise of everyone on their crossdisciplinary team in supporting this idea

Provided with a project challenge, teams work to deliver a concept similar to how Imagineers develop their Blue Sky projects. In a matter of weeks, teams have to leverage their various artistic, technical and communication skills to prepare a submission that will appeal to judges whose backgrounds include a wide array of creative and technical disciplines.

The projects are judged on mastery of skills and talents, guest experience, diversity and market perspective, uniqueness, and adherence to project challenge. The judges are looking for the ability to recognize the cultural nuances of the selected location, expanding the boundaries of what currently exists, and an evaluation of its business implications and impact on the community.

Judges also examine the teams’ ability to tell a compelling and engaging story, with broad appeal to a wide audience, and a knowledge and passion for Walt Disney Imagineering—where Imagineers blend storytelling with the latest technologies to create immersive experiences that delight families all around the world.

Students from the six finalist teams will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Walt Disney Imagineering in Southern California, where they will present their projects to Imagineering executives and compete for awards. All finalists can meet and network with Imagineers, go behind-the-scenes to see how Disney magic is created.

Throughout the years, hundreds of students from universities all across the United States have participated in this competition and had the opportunity to present their projects to Imagineering executives. Many of them have become interns and fulfilled their dream of working alongside Imagineers, and some have even become Imagineers themselves and returned to serve as mentors for future Imaginations competitions.

### **About the 2020 Imaginations Finalist Teams**

#### ***Bound***

**University of North Carolina School of the Arts  
Bailey Heppler, Jacob Frizzelle, Shannon Kelly**

*Bound* focuses on the pivotal story of the Happy Hill community and its strides forward into the future. Simultaneously, it shines a light on the city of Winston-Salem and promotes a more diverse future through arts and innovation. Guests of all ages and backgrounds will be immersed in this unique outdoor experience that blends cutting edge technology with impactful and relevant community-focused history. From lifelike and tactile interactions with reflected image illusions to a transformed evening landscape via projection mapping technology, *Bound* shares stories and history in a way that will live far into the future.

### ***Here***

#### **Texas A&M University**

##### **Abby Henning, Abby Zuber, Cecilia Gonzalez, Kennedy Behling**

Out of the rich history of Texas A&M rises a living memorial like no other. *Here* is a place where current, former and future students alike can gather to relax, reflect and remember the Aggies who came before them. On a sunny day, students can be found lounging on the grass steps in the outer rings of the installation, utilizing the space for studying, socializing and leisure. As guests enter the central bronze structure, they find themselves in a space of reflection, where a magical moment awaits. Once the sun sets, the installation is transformed into a glowing symbol of the strength and warmth of the Aggie spirit.

### ***Laguna Beach Artist Homestead***

#### **Laguna College of Art and Design**

##### **Matthew Mooney, Valoia Laolagi**

*The Laguna Beach Homestead* is committed to sharing the creative culture of Laguna Beach with the broader community through continued education and unique guest experience, emphasizing the beautiful coast and the many artists it had attracted for over 100 years.

It gives Laguna Beach's nearly 8 million annual guests the ability to embrace and participate in the creative culture of an artistic community through shared experiences of creativity, observation development and conservation. From painting to baking to walking down the boardwalk, everything done at the homestead invokes creativity. All of this is expressed architecturally with a whimsical reimagining of the historic Laguna Artist colony which would eventually become the city of Laguna Beach.

### ***Savannah Chora***

#### **Savannah College of Art and Design**

##### **Haosong Chen, Kristen Nicolais, Maria Primera Darwich**

Founded in Savannah, Ga, in 1912, the Girl Scouts was established with the ideal that troops would work together to learn new skills and use those skills to give back to the community — ideals that are integral to the makeup of Savannah itself.

*Savannah Chora* is hosted by the Girl Scouts and provides an opportunity for residents to try new things and connected with their neighborhood. The focal point is the Tree for the Future, where people can participate in campfire performances by local artists as well as accept challenges that encourage community involvement.

### ***Starboard Port***

#### **United States Naval Academy**

##### **Allison Annick, Elijah Vernon, Franchette Allarey Kathryn Fung**

*Starboard Port* is an installation raised off the coast of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., the "Sailing Capital of the World." It is a place of

reflection, discovery and adventure. A wooden dock interspersed with fiber optic light that imitates the twinkling of the stars leads guests to a constellation of marble pavilions that stand in the Severn River. Overhead floats a string of meditative monuments, while beneath, slivers of life dedicated to the communities “above, upon and below” the sea await for all to experience.

### ***Urban Jewel***

#### **Savannah College of Art and Design**

**Chris Feliciano, John Manos, Nayelin Delgadillo, Oki Honda**

Savannah, Ga., is defined by its public squares, known as “the living rooms of Savannah.” Established in 1733, the squares represented unity and gathering. But in 1935, three squares were removed to build a highway. *Urban Jewel* restores one of these lost squares as a modern gathering space for today’s community to learn, celebrate and interact with Savannah’s past, present and future. As a square for all, *Urban Jewel* offers a way for people of all ages and backgrounds to participate through gathering space, entertainment, interactive play and more.

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### **About Walt Disney Imagineering**

Walt Disney Imagineering (WDI) is the creative force that dreams up and designs all Disney theme parks, resorts, attractions, cruise ships and other family entertainment experiences worldwide, along with overseeing the creative aspects of Disney’s games, merchandise and publishing businesses. Imagineering’s unique strength comes from its diverse team of creative and technical professionals, who build on the Disney legacy of storytelling to pioneer new forms of entertainment. For more information, visit the [Walt Disney Imagineering](http://Walt Disney Imagineering) website.

For more information on the Imaginations Design Competition, visit [disneyimagination.com](http://disneyimagination.com)

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