

Algonquin College design grads planning on a bright future

NEVIL HUNT

KOURIER-STANDARD

Interior design students from Algonquin College took over the Karma Lounge on May 16, using the occasion to display their hard work while they celebrated the end of the school year.

For anyone who might mistake interior design for interior decorating, these students are quick to point out that they are trained to go beyond deciding what colour of paint or what artwork will go on the walls — they first decide where the walls will go.

“It blurs the lines between architecture and engineering,” professor Doug Murray said of the design program.

He said the Algonquin program will have about 25 graduates this year, and many will likely end up working with the federal government.

“There are also residential firms, hospitality, and the hotel area,” he said, adding that after a designer has acquired years of experience, they may choose to



Mary-Anne Lowe, left, and Adele Villeneuve will graduate from Algonquin College's interior design program this year. They were two of the students to take part in a May 16 graduation party and networking event to highlight their portfolios.

branch out by starting their own firm.

At the Karma Lounge, students chatted with friends and family, as well as members of the city's design community. The soon-to-be grads displayed their portfolios on rows of

tables, hoping to catch the eye of someone seeking new talent.

Murray said many of the students will graduate from the three-year interior design diploma program, which has recently undergone a major change,

switching to a four-year degree program. The 2004-2005 school year was the first for the degree program.

“It's a matter of acceptance and accreditation,” Murray said. “There's a little more power behind a

degree.”

Mary-Anne Lowe, a third-year student, will soon graduate from the diploma program.

“People think this is like interior decorating, but we touch on architecture,” she said.

Lowe said her final year at Algonquin included a work placement, which saw her working with the National Capital Commission.

“It really does get you ready for the work world,” she said of the program.

Another aspiring grad, Adele Villeneuve, said her work placement with a private design firm was a great success, and the company ended up offering her a summer contract.

While many students presented their portfolios on display boards or in sketch books, Octavian Danes was one of a handful that used a laptop to attract notice.

“It's retail, a high-end fashion boutique for

Armani,” he said of his twisting and turning animation of a storefront; a three-dimensional walk-

Switch to
degree
program
means greater
acceptance in
the industry

through of a virtual store full of virtual clothes. Danes said he did his research before putting this part of his portfolio on his laptop.

“Statistics say 80 per cent of people don't understand a plan from a two-dimensional drawing,” he said. “Older grads are not very into the computer stuff, but we're supposed to be on the edge with CAD (computer assisted design) drawing and 3-D.”

Downsizing Your Home?

It's MORE than just moving to a smaller home!

For a FREE STRATEGIC REPORT that shows you how to:

Thinking of Bathrooms