Sleep Out for the Homeless Pledge Drive
MIAD students hold first Sleep Out for the Homeless to benefit Salvation Army Emergency Lodge

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MILWAUKEE… As temperatures dropped into the night last month on October 5, students from the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design pitched tents and set up a blazing fire in the midst of Catalano Square, just across from the college’s Third Ward location.

The group of 21 students from Wisconsin’s only four-year college of art and design were committed to sleeping in the park to create a visible reminder to Milwaukee of the 2,000 community members who are homeless each night. Their efforts supported the Salvation Army Emergency Lodge, a large transitional living shelter at 1730 N. 7th Street.

In the weeks preceding the event and with the support of MIAD students, faculty and staff, the participants collected monetary donations, clothing and household items for the Emergency Lodge. Community donors Roseann Skoniecke and Terance Lee agreed to match each dollar that was raised while in-kind donations, given by local contributors Sax Art Supply, Bella Caffe and Rush-Mor Records, helped keep the students motivated throughout the night. A highlight for the students was the presence of Emergency Lodge staff members, who spoke about the homeless in Milwaukee and the many ways in which students can make a difference.

This first Sleep Out for the Homeless event hosted by MIAD was inspired by the memory of Julie Zarembka, a community leader and crusader for the homeless in DuPage County, IL. The success of the Sleep Out has in turn inspired future projects between MIAD students and the Salvation Army Emergency Lodge.

The MIAD Sleep Out for the Homeless was organized by Brooke Phelps and Jena Lee, AmeriCorps *VISTA Members in MIAD’s Outreach and Campus Life Departments. Phelps’ and Lee’s placement at MIAD is made possible by Wisconsin Campus Compact (WiCC), an association of college and university presidents of which MIAD is a member.

MIAD is Wisconsin’s only college devoted exclusively to the education of professional artists and designers. Founded in 1974, it is accredited to award the bachelor of fine arts degree in 11 majors. With 80 percent of its 1,800 graduates living and working in Wisconsin, the college contributes a vital “brain gain” to the state that shapes its creative and economic future.