



*Media alert*

## A ‘cool’ Milwaukee tradition helps MPS students with disabilities

PRESS RELEASE

**Event:** MIAD/MPS Collaborative Design Project  
**Date:** Monday, March 26, 9 – 11 a.m.  
**Place:** Riverside University High School, 1615 E. Locust St.  
**For more info:** Vivian M. Rothschild, Communications Director; 414.847.3239, cell, 414.507.7364; vrothsch@miad.edu; Sue Loesl, Adaptive Art Therapist, Riverside; 414.475.8127, loeslsd@milwaukee.k12.wi.us

### **A collaboration that doesn’t leave a dry eye in the (school) house...**

For the 11<sup>th</sup> year, Industrial Design juniors from the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design have developed exciting new products to make life and school a little easier for a group of Riverside University High School students with disabilities and their teachers.

MIAD is Wisconsin’s only independent college of art and design; Riverside is an MPS school.

On Monday, March 26, 9 – 11 a.m., at Riverside, the MIAD college students will present devices and pieces of furniture designed to help individual Riverside students gain access to refrigerator doors; use a dressing stick; reach sink handles, elevator buttons and lights; store personal needs in a wheelchair side saddle; reach a book and turn its pages; organize their toothbrushes and personal items for in-school use; fold clothes; and hold a mixing bowl while stirring its contents.

The project’s long-term success is based on its collaborative nature. MIAD students meet each year with the MPS students in January to learn how they can help them meet daily challenges. The students are then paired into teams, with each MIAD student working on a design solution for an individual Riverside student.

The two-month, team-based collaboration exemplifies MIAD’s commitment to curricular excellence and civic engagement. “It sensitizes MIAD students to consider all members of society as future design clients – the young and the old, the able-bodied and disabled – within an intensive, iterative process of needs assessment, research, concept and model development, and evaluation,” explained Pascal Malassigné, FISDA, Professor of Industrial Design at MIAD.

The project was conceived and is carried out by Sue Loesl, Adaptive Art Therapist, Milwaukee Public Schools, and Malassigné, who was named one of the Most Admired Industrial Design Educators for 2006 by DesignIntelligence magazine. An internationally known lecturer and author, he has been a research industrial designer at the Atlanta and Milwaukee Veterans Affairs Medical Center since 1984 and devotes all his non-teaching activities to designing assistive and mobility products for individuals with disabilities.

MIAD is Wisconsin’s only four-year college devoted exclusively to the education of 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 2,000 graduates living and working in Wisconsin, the college contributes a “brain gain” to the state that shapes its creative and economic future.