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**UI Architecture Students Take Honors in “Best Use of Idaho Wood” Design Contest**

**MOSCOW, Idaho — Jan. 6, 2017** — Three University of Idaho architecture students were awarded top honors in a “Best Use of Idaho Wood” competition to design a marketplace along the Snake River in Lewiston. The projects were judged on how the designs demonstrated a creative solution and knowledgeable application of integrated design and an innovative use of wood.

Ruina Du of Xi’an, China, won the competition and received a first place plaque and $500. Shudan He of Hayden and Jinjie Li also of Xi’an, China, received second and third place, respectively, and each received plaques and $250.

Du’s winning design used a variety of wood species grown in Idaho to create a useful year-round public building.

"The form of my design for the City Market was inspired by the mountains surrounding Lewiston,” Du said. “Using local Idaho wood as the main material brings the design closer to nature and makes the building mimic an abstract mountain. Visitors will enter the market and move upward until the mountain and river are revealed from the roof. The roof is not just a structure, but also a beautiful useable garden space formed by transition.”

The Best Use of Idaho Wood competition is sponsored annually by the Idaho Forest Products Commission (IFPC) and the American Institute of Architecture (AIA) Idaho Chapter with a goal of encouraging, recognizing and supporting the creative and innovative use of Idaho wood in architectural design. Twenty-five students prepared designs for the competition as part of their third-year architect studios of UI architecture professors Diane Armpriest and Carolina Manrique Hoyos.

“The real competition wasn't with my classmates, it was with myself,” Du said. “Every project is an opportunity to better myself as a good designer."

“The IFPC competition was an exciting opportunity for students to explore the possibilities of wood as an expressive material for structural and non-structural elements in architectural design,” Hoyos said. “Students proposed creative and diverse solutions for a city market building in Lewiston.”

The Idaho Forest Products Commission sponsors professional and student design competitions to create a dialogue between the people providing Idaho wood products and those using wood products.

“The students’ ideas are inspirational,” said Betty Munis, IFPC director. “One can’t help but be impressed with what they create and how carefully they select their materials. They clearly see the beauty of building with wood and understand the sustainable aspects of using a locally grown renewable resource.”

This is the fifth year the Idaho Forest Products Commission has sponsored a “Best Use of Idaho Wood” competition to urge professional and student architects to encourage, recognize and support the creative and innovative use of Idaho wood in architectural design.

“The world is changing quickly with how wood is being used architectural design,” Munis said. “From skyscrapers and innovative new building products to carbon storage and renewability, wood has become the go-to resource for architects.”

In addition to the competition, students explored inspirational wood structures and construction designs throughout the world. Students also visited the University of Idaho’s Experimental Forest to learn about forest ecosystems, native tree species, sustainable forestry and aspects of forest certification.

Second-place winner He integrated Chinese mortise and Tenon techniques to avoid the use of nails in his design, which prevents cracks caused by moisture and temperature.

"This project means a lot to me,” He said. “The competition is also an encouragement for me. I will keep exploring the beauty of wood in my future projects. I have a goal that my design with the use of Idaho wood can be built in the future and spread the beauty of Idaho wood to the world. "

For more information about the competition, visit IFPC’s website at www.idahoforests.org.

• Media note: Artist renderings of the student’s designs are available for download at <http://uidahophoto.photoshelter.com/gallery/NewsRelease-ONGOING/G0000Wiy8lGFr8UU>. Password: UIdahoMedia213512.

**About UI**

The University of Idaho, home of the Vandals, is one of only 72 land-grant research universities in the United States. From its residential campus in Moscow, UI serves the state of Idaho through educational centers in Coeur d’Alene, Boise, Idaho Falls and Twin Falls, and Extension offices in 42 counties. Home to more than 11,000 students statewide, UI is a leader in student-centered learning and excels at interdisciplinary research, service to businesses and communities, and in advancing diversity, citizenship and global outreach. UI competes in the Big Sky Conference and Sun Belt Conference. Learn more: [*www.uidaho.edu*](http://www.uidaho.edu/).

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