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# MCC design students lauded for project to aid homeless vets

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Submitted by Mesa Community College spokeswoman Sally Mesarosh.

In the midst of finals week, two Mesa Community College students pushed through long hours of studying while working on a project for homeless veterans at the same time.

The result: Interior-design students Jocelyn Abruzzese and Tricia Finchum placed first in the "Design for Hope" competition by designing a kitchen using repurposed and reclaimed materials. The competition was sponsored by Stardust Building Supplies, retail centers that provide reclaimed and gently-used building materials to the community.

The students learned about the project from the American Society of Interior Designers. Stardust Building Supplies opened a new store in Phoenix and the students' competition entry, a 4- by 4-foot vignette of their design, was on display there in May.

"It was a great experience," Abruzzese said. "We worked with Arizona Opportunities Industrialization Center, a charity that helps homeless veterans obtain jobs. For our design, we used as many repurposed materials as possible."

Their design statement shows much thought behind their design process.

"Reused bamboo flooring, made from a grass that grows so fast you can measure growth in hours, provides a foundation for this kitchen, alluding to the notion that you can make great strides in growth, given the right environment," the students wrote.

"A backsplash made from the remnants of shipping pallets, along with glass tiles from once sparkling chandeliers, now bring texture into the kitchen as a reminder that sometimes life is rough, but we can work to make things go more smoothly," they added.

The students won by popular vote that raised money for the project. Their design will be installed into the homes of families in need.

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