



A MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR



I know this space is usually devoted to the wise words of our director, Damien, but with his permission, I hope you'll permit me this opportunity to share a rather personal note of warmth and gratitude before we depart campus for the semester. Some of you I know very well, some of you I still have yet to meet—but I'm writing to all of you, now.

I'm typing this as I sit cuddled up next to a furry, purring cat—my beloved waffle (lowercase 'w'; singular, not plural; named after the verb, not the food). It's just past 3am, and he's keeping me company during a bout of insomnia. As those of you who have seen me in classes, in the halls, or at events now know, my husband and I are anticipating the arrival of our first child in just a few short months, so I've been getting less sleep than usual. During these long nights, with our baby kicking away at my insides, I am visited by a lot of different emotions: incredulity, comfort, anxiety, excitement, worry, trepidation, gratitude... and, hope.

I want all of you to know that my hope, in many ways, stems from all of you.

I didn't always want or plan to become a mother someday. A lot had to happen and align for me to end up here... I had to make a lot of mistakes, learn deeply about myself, and grapple with a lot of fears and well-intentioned but ultimately poor lessons I had been taught along the way. I had to witness close friends become parents, do it well, and not lose themselves; I was lucky enough to meet and build a strong relationship with an extraordinary partner. And, I think, I had to end up in DCC, encountering and working and learning alongside all of you.

If it weren't for this community of young people—inspired, bright, tenacious, bold, energetic, and creative—I might not have the courage or desire to bring forth new life into this scary, often daunting world. Hope requires faith in the possibility of that which is still unseen; and, when I look at each and every one of you, I have no choice but to believe that new worlds are coming—and that our young people are ready and able to make them real.

"Hope requires faith in the possibility of that which is still unseen..."

Many of you might be preoccupied with finals season right now; but I also know that, for some of you, the ever-looming future—with all of its uncertainty—is always nagging at the back of your mind. In those moments when you might doubt yourself and what you're capable of, please remember that you've given someone hope. **Someone believes in you.** No matter your faults, no matter your missteps... you do the impossible everyday by simply being you.

You may have noticed that, for the first time since 2019, my name is missing from DCC's list of faculty next spring. When we return to campus in January, I'll be mercifully working from home. And, by the start of March, I will have begun my leave from work in order to give birth and tend to our newborn. So, I won't be able to see you for awhile, but I hope you know I'll miss you all greatly. **To the Nu class**, it breaks my heart not to be able to help shepherd you toward your DCC finish line and see the great work you'll do with your Capstone projects. I know you're going to blow everyone away. **To the Xi class**, I haven't even gotten to know you yet, and I'm so afraid you won't give me a chance to do so when I return at the start of your sophomore year. Please save some space for me. I'll be eager to hear all that you've been up to, and all that you're dreaming of.

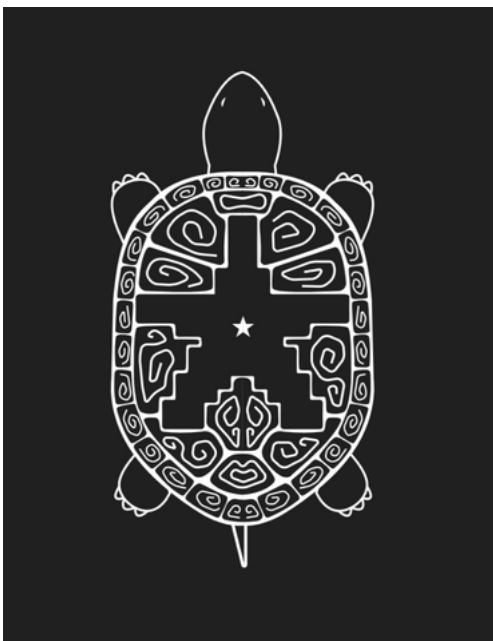
—Dr. Lu

ANNOUNCING THE 2024 DCC DESIGN TOURNEY

It's back! Our fifth annual design tournament invites submissions from all current DCC students and offers one of the biggest prizes of the entire academic year—a **\$250 award, 500 Family Points, and the chance to have your own work featured on DCC apparel** as part of StuCo's annual spring merchandise fundraiser. When we return for the spring semester, we'll begin accepting competitive submissions for a multi-round, single-elimination tournament bracket. While the exact duration of the tournament will depend on the number of submissions, we are anticipating another 2-week event. In the meantime, get those creative engines firing! We want another full bracket of imaginative, exciting, vibrant, and creative designs to capture the spirit and dynamism of our DCC community. All entrants will receive 100 Family points for their submission.

if you're working on a submission during the winter break, please keep in mind:

- Submissions will be due Friday, February 9, 2024.
- Designs must be limited to a maximum of three unique colors.
- The aim of the contest is to choose by popular vote the most compelling, most creative/inventive, most interesting, most well-designed logo for DCC merchandise. Submit your best work—the kind of work that you would show a potential employer or include in a public portfolio. All submissions, but especially the winning one, should demonstrate effective design principles, exemplifying DCC's role as a prominent design program on campus.
- Submissions should be prepared as vector graphics and submitted as an Adobe Illustrator .ai file (strongly preferred; with all type, if any, converted to outlines), a high-resolution .jpeg, or a Photoshop .psd file.
- Designers can work individually or in pairs to submit a design. Whether you are working individually or not, you can only be a part of one contest submission, and if you are working in a pair, the monetary prize must be split among both designers.



**2022 Winner,
Madison Mohan (Lambda)**



**2023 Winner,
Caroline Dinh (Mu)**

NOTABLES

READY TO GET (MORE) INVOLVED NEXT SEMESTER?

For many of us, the Fall semester is an experiment. When we return for a new academic year, we can't be sure of our energy, our priorities, or our daily rhythms. You might have tried these past few months to take on new activities, explore different social circles, work intentionally on your overall health or wellbeing, or keep up with your classes. We hope you learned a lot about what you need to feel nourished and supported in the university environment!

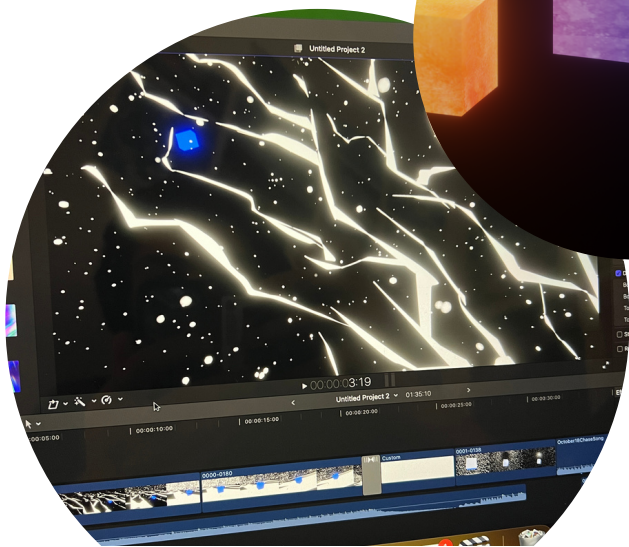
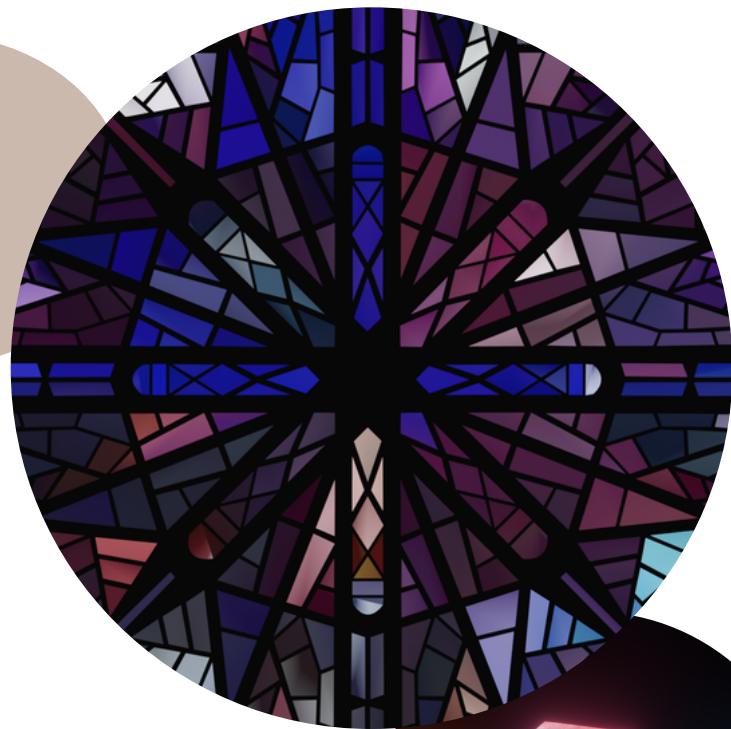
If you are hoping for a change in the upcoming Spring semester, especially with regards to your leadership or involvement in your DCC community, please know that a few opportunities are coming your way: you will soon receive an opportunity to express interest in **leading a TeachMe Thursday workshop or Design Camp**; you can **apply for a 2024-2025 Student Manager position**; you can still get involved with **Project Flatland**; and, you can help **recruit next year's new DCC cohort** by participating in Admissions activities! Please keep a watchful eye on your email inbox during January and throughout the Spring semester for forthcoming details.

updates from PROJECT FLATLAND

"We're approaching the end of our first semester working on Project Flatland! We're almost at our goal of having all of the assets (world files, character models, etc) ready for the film so that, next semester, we can hit the ground running to animate these pieces and create our finished film.

We will meet once more this semester (on Wednesday, December 6, 7-10pm) in the Makerspace and may continue to work on the project virtually over winter break. If you're interested in working on an animated film in your time off, feel free to reach out at emasrou@gmail.com!"

— Elyas



THANK YOU!

All DCC spaces, including both the Makerspace and Sound Studio, will officially close for the semester on Monday, December 11, at 11:59pm.

We want to take this opportunity to offer a hearty thank-you to all of you who have made our makerspaces such vibrant zones of creativity and camaraderie! This semester, we hosted **524 visits to the Makerspace and 19 visits to the Sound Studio**. For each of those visits, we are indebted to our student managers—**Julie, Ehesane, and Lily**—for their tireless dedication to opening these spaces and making sure they are safe and well-stocked every week.

Please keep our makerspaces in mind when you return for the Spring semester; keep those healthy creative habits alive! We are looking forward to opening them again **during the week of January 29** and hopefully announcing a Spring schedule of workshops and design camps!

READING DAY SNACK SESSION. We know that the finals season can bring a big wave of stress and anxiety during an otherwise slow season of the year. We wish we could relieve you of all that worries you at this time... but we know we can't. But, we can feed you! We will do our best to help you snack your way through your troubles by setting up shop **in the Makerspace on Reading Day, December 12, from 1-3pm** with an array of goodies! Come by and say hello, break up your study sessions, and grab a free sweet or salty snack!

WINTER BREAK. Please be advised that DCC staff are excited about the upcoming winter break and our chance to decompress, unwind, and breathe—just like you. Once the finals exam period begins, our staff's rhythm changes drastically. We will not be as reliably present on-campus as usual, and our attention turns to administrative and research tasks that don't normally get as much energy during the normal semester weeks that are packed full of teaching and advising. Starting December 13, we respectfully ask you to anticipate somewhat delayed response times to emails and DCC-related matters. In addition, please note that all DCC staff observe a "leave" period away from our offices—and email inboxes—from December 20 through January 3.

WITH LOVE, FROM STUCO

MAKE-YOUR-OWN-STOCKING EVENT MONDAY, DEC. 4, 6PM, 2nd Floor Lounge

A *warm* crackling fire, delicious hot chocolate 🍵, a cozy movie night & DCC STOCKINGS all on the second floor?! YES, that's right!

Run, don't walk, to our last event of the semester on **Monday, December 4, at 6pm** to decorate your own stocking & hang it above the DCC fireplace in the 2nd Floor Lounge! StuCo will fill each stocking with fun surprises (Playdoh?! Candy canes?! Squishies?!), so you don't want to miss out. Relax before finals, hang out with friends before break, and earn 25 Family points! WE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU THERE 😊❤️🔥

IS YOUR FAMILY ON THE BOTTOM OF THE PYRAMID? ARE YOU WAITING FOR A COMEBACK OPPORTUNITY? LOOK NO FURTHER! AMONG THE CURRENT, TWO LOWEST-SCORING FAMILIES IN THE DCC FAMILIES COMPETITION, THE ONE WITH THE MOST ATTENDEES AT THE DECEMBER EVENT WILL BE ALLOWED TO STEAL 100 POINTS FROM ANY FAMILY!



THANK YOU FOR JOINING YOUR DCC COMMUNITY FOR OUR NOVEMBER POTLUCK!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

LET YOUR COMMUNITY
CELEBRATE YOU! HAVE
SOMETHING EXCITING TO
SHARE? SUBMIT TO
DCC-HONORS@UMD.EDU
BY THE 25TH OF EACH MONTH.

DECEMBER

02 — Romi R., Xi
07 — Ash B., Xi
10 — Habib C., Xi
13 — Frederick Z., Xi
14 — Finna H., Xi
19 — Sofia M-D., Nu
21 — Anishka B., Nu
23 — Emma W., Xi
31 — Ashley M., Nu

JANUARY

06 — Kaitlyn R., Xi
09 — Roshida H., Nu
16 — Anthony U., Xi
20 — Kousalya G., Nu
17 — Nandini R., Nu
21 — Ann Marie C., Nu
23 — Arden L., Xi
28 — Noelia G., Xi

DCC FAMILIES CONTEST UPDATE

AS OF
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29

LOTUS
4510 POINTS

Top earners:
Julie L.,
Florice B.

**Active
members:**
20 (77%)

MAPLE
4065 POINTS

Top earners:
Gabrielle H.,
Trung N.

**Active
members:**
23 (92%)

IVY
6655 POINTS

Top earners:
Sophie A.,
Tracy T.

**Active
members:**
20 (77%)

CACTUS
4360 POINTS

Top earners:
Mia S.,
Mateo R.

**Active
members:**
19 (73%)

WILLOW
4020 POINTS

Top earners:
Dasi F.,
Adam Z.

**Active
members:**
23 (96%)