

Groupe Lacasse Encourages Next Generation of Design Talent with Student Design Contest

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. Pie, Quebec, Canada (December 21, 2007) - The annual Groupe Lacasse Design Contest for industrial design students took place on December 19, 2007 in partnership with the Faculty of Applied Sciences at the University of Montreal in Montreal, Canada. Véronique Dionne was awarded first prize for her work entitled "Project Clip," with Violaine Lemasson receiving second prize for "Project Stand" and José Ferrufino with an honorable mention. They have been awarded for their innovative office workstation designs that offered flexible solutions to this year's contest theme, "The Individual vs. the Collective."

This year's objective for participants was to conceive, design and develop a workstation that facilitates both individual work and teamwork in today's and tomorrow's office environments: a challenge that designers at Groupe Lacasse also face. Students worked with industry professionals including Groupe Lacasse industrial designer Dominic Aubry and renowned Quebec industrial designer Charles Godbout to address the theme throughout the semester-long contest.

"Groupe Lacasse is once again proud to be partnering with the University to encourage the future design talents of Quebec with experience working with industry professionals, including members of our own design team," said François Giroux, president of Groupe Lacasse.

The 15 students participating in the contest presented their final projects to a panel of judges which determined the winning designs based on product functionality, feasibility, commercial potential, aesthetics, and innovation. The judging panel consisted of Mr. Giroux, Ginette Gadoury – President of Interface Design, Luc Courchesne – Director of the Industrial Design School at the University of Montreal, Alain Moureaux – Associate at Moureaux Hauspy Design, Michel Swift – Designer from Michel Swift Design, Koen DeWinter – Designer at Hippo Design, and designer Claude Lamarche.

"When judging, we looked for creations that provide innovative solutions and could have real commercial potential in today's competitive industry," said Mr. Giroux.

Students were given flexibility as to how to address the needs of the contest in the design of their workstation, as long as their product presented an original solution to the theme. Students made detailed decisions about all aspects of designing the product from the idea to the materials the product would use to justifying its value in today's market. They created scaled-down versions of their products to present to the judges.



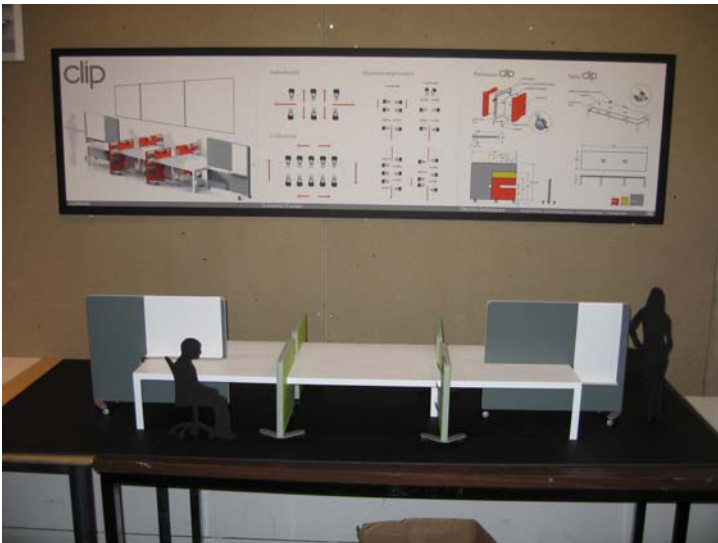
“It’s very important to me to have received this prize from a jury that’s so prestigious!” commented winner Véronique Dionne.

The first and second place winners received a monetary prize and a paid summer internship at Groupe Lacasse. Groupe Lacasse has participated in this contest with the University of Montreal for over 10 years.

About Groupe Lacasse

Groupe Lacasse, based in St. Pie, Quebec, Canada, is a North American leader in the design, manufacture and service of a broad range of high-quality office furniture products under the Lacasse, United Chair and Nvision brands. Founded in 1956, Groupe Lacasse offers advanced design and value products in laminate office furniture, steel storage and filing, workplace systems and seating. The company has manufacturing facilities throughout North America. For more information, visit www.groupelacasse.com.

Groupe Lacasse is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Haworth Inc.



First photo: First prize winner Véronique Dionne (right) with Ginette Gadoury – President of Interface Design
Second photo: Her project entitled “Project Clip.”



First photo: Second prize winner Violaine Lemasson (left) with Ginette Gadoury – President of Interface Design
Second photo: Her project entitled “Project Stand.”



The judging panel (from left to right) François Giroux – President of Groupe Lacasse, Ginette Gadoury – President of Interface Design, Alain Moureaux – Associate at Moureaux Hauspy Design, Michel Swift – Designer from Michel Swift Design, Designer Claude Lamarche, Koen DeWinter – Designer at Hippo Design, Luc Courchesne – Director of the Industrial Design School at the University of Montreal.