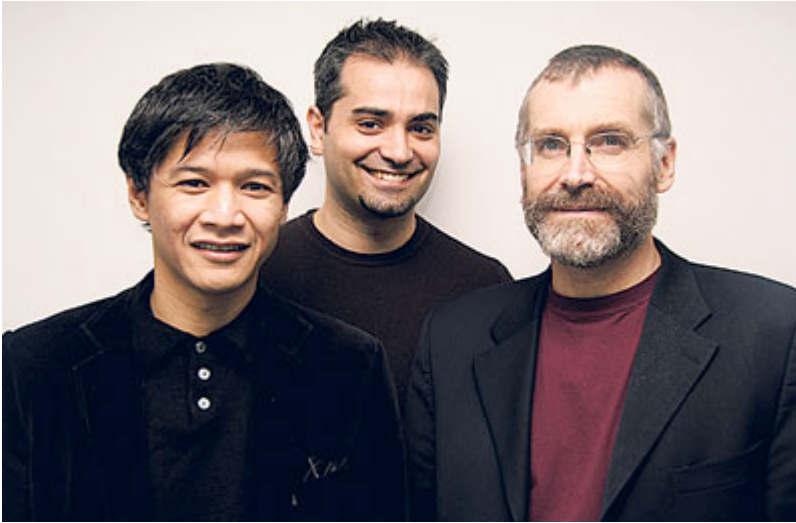




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Learning



SIAT Professors Ron Wakkary (left) and Rob Woodbury (right) with interactive arts graduate student Davis Marques (centre) will lead SFU's efforts to co-design a solar-powered house.

Solar house goes to Washington

February 7, 2008

Students and faculty at SFU's Surrey campus School of Interactive Arts and Technology (SIAT) are co-designing a high-tech, solar-powered house that will be displayed in Washington, DC, as part of the U.S. Department of Energy's 2009 Solar Decathlon.

A co-operative project of SFU, the University of Waterloo and Ryerson University, the North House will compete against sun-powered designs by 19 other North American universities.

SFU's contribution to the project will be an "adaptive living interface" that allows North House occupants to adjust energy settings through touch controls built into the walls or remotely via cell phone or computer. Reflecting its design strengths, SIAT will also create publicity materials, including a website, interpretive signage and a graphic identity for the project.

SIAT will integrate the project into a fourth-year interdisciplinary course and is proposing new undergraduate and graduate courses in sustainable design.

More than 300,000 visitors are expected to view the model houses to be displayed in a "solar village". The creators of North House hope it will also be displayed at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver.

Leading SIAT's efforts are professors Ron Wakkary and Rob Woodbury. Wakkary is renowned for his work on user interfaces. Woodbury, the scientific director for the Canadian Design Research Network, heads the team's advisory committee.

"This project extends beyond disciplinary and institutional boundaries and exemplifies the type of collaborative research that is

a defining feature of SFU,” says VP-research Mario Pinto.

“We are excited to lend our individual and collective strengths to the emerging area of environmental research, which is one of our university’s major strategic research directions.”

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