Brothers take top prize with art drop app at SIUE's eHacks Event

by Megan Weiser
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EDWARDSVILLE - Southern Illinois University Edwardsville hosted its third annual eHacks event March 2-4 at the T-REX Innovation Center in St. Louis. A pair of brothers from Maryville proved victorious in the invention competition, earning the Most Innovative award for their creation of Art Drop, a mobile graffiti app.

"Art Drop is an easy way to leave a drawing or a message anywhere in the world," explained co-creator Quentin Reiser. "It's graffiti, without the destruction of property."

"Quentin picked up coding as a hobby and has published several apps," added Owen Reiser, a freshman at SIUE. "I've taken a keen interest in 3D CAD designing and modeling."

The annual hackathon was hosted by the SIUE School of Engineering's (SOE) Department of Computer Science and sponsored by area technology companies. The event challenged approximately 90 collegiate participants, comprising 24 teams, to build something new with software and computer hardware.

Participating students from SIUE, the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Washington University, Principia and other bi-state colleges worked for 36 hours during the event to produce their projects.

"It is wonderful to see participants work and learn together," said Dennis Bouvier, PhD, associate professor of computer science in the SIUE SOE. "The teams created great projects. T-REX is a place where technology companies get started, so it was the perfect location for our eHacks event."

Along with the top prize, six other awards were presented, including most ambitious, best user experience, best use of data, best educational application, best mobile application and best game. Engineers and recruiters from St. Louis's leading tech companies served as judges.

Eight SIUE computer science students, along with Bouvier, invested weeks in event planning and preparation. The students included Meghan Heisler, Taylor Dowdy, Jared Schooley, Justin Bruce, Eli Ball, Zane Norris, Jacob Novosad and Zach Anderson.

For more information on the event, and its sponsors, visit ehacks.cs.siue.edu.

The SIUE School of Engineering offers one of the most comprehensive and affordable engineering programs in the St. Louis region with eight undergraduate degrees, five master's degrees and two cooperative doctoral programs, all housed in a state-of-the-art facility. Students learn from expert faculty, perform cutting-edge research, and participate in intercollegiate design competitions. Companies in the metropolitan St. Louis area provide students challenging internships and co-op opportunities, which often turn into permanent employment. All undergraduate programs are accredited by their respective accreditation agencies.