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RE: Over 60 students from three Universities participating in the *Groovystuff by Design Challenge* for Fall 2014 Semester.

DALLAS – Over 60 students from Florida State University, The University of Minnesota, and Auburn University will be participating in “*The Groovystuff by Design: Connecting Education with Industry Challenge*,” for the Fall 2014 academic semester. Students participating in the eco-friendly furniture challenge will debut their final design projects at the Fall High Point Market in “*The University Hall of Innovation & Job Creation*”, October 17-23, 2014.

Groovystuff, a Dallas-based company that creates reclaimed teak wood furniture, is sponsoring the “*Groovystuff by Design: Connecting Education with Industry Challenge*,” a sustainable program that has been endorsed and repeated at Auburn University, The University of Minnesota, Appalachian State University, and The University of Idaho. The educational platform established in 2010 by Chris Bruning of Groovystuff has also been endorsed by Southern Illinois University – Carbondale, Columbia College – Chicago, The University of North Carolina – Greensboro, North Carolina State University, Purdue University, The Art Institute of Las Vegas, The University of Georgia, KMITL in Bangkok, Thailand, and Appalachian State University. In the design challenge, students are required to design an accessory, accent or occasional home furnishings product that utilizes or reconfigures the reclaimed material that exemplifies the Groovystuff product line and is competitive enough via written orders at market to be included in the company’s catalog. The three universities will debut the results of the design challenge at the fall High Point Market next to the “Made in America” Pavilion in “*The University Hall of Innovation & Job Creation*,” at the Suites at Market Square.

Auburn University has conducted the Groovystuff by Design Challenge for four consecutive years since the program was established in 2010. This fall, Professor Tin-Man Lau has included 12 students from Auburn Universities sister school in Taiwan, Shu-Te University. Twelve senior level design students and one graduate student from the Product Design Department will join twenty two other students in the Industrial & Graphics Design department at Auburn to participate in the challenge. Students from Taiwan will have an extra bonus to their education with the added exposure of understanding how to successfully launch a home furnishings product here in the United States.

When asked what it meant for The University of Minnesota to adopt “*The Groovystuff by Design Challenge*” for the second time, Professor Abi Asojo had this to share, “Groovystuff provides a great academic and industry collaboration. Their program offers students the opportunity to collaborate with the industry allowing them to understand the conceptualizing, designing and building of a light fixture using sustainable materials from the company’s line. I am excited about the opportunity available for my students to collaborate with practice and actually create a prototype.”

The University Hall of Innovation & Job Creation is an industry co-operative founded by Chris Bruning that bridges the gap between education and the residential home furnishings industry. The University Hall of Innovation & Job Creation provides an invaluable opportunity for students and professors to network with retailers, designers, manufacturers, suppliers, journalists, and industry professionals at the High Point Market. Students from each school will submit 20” x 30” product board, ¼” scale model

and 42" tall pedestal for their models for a chance to compete in the "Popular Vote at Market" for the High Point Market. The winning design from each school will receive a \$250 cash prize.

#### ### About the company ###

Founded in 1998 by Chris Bruning, Groovystuff designs, produces, and distributes unique, eco-friendly, reclaimed teakwood home furnishings at upper-medium and high-end price points. Based in Dallas, it has permanent showrooms in High Point, NC (The Suites at Market Square, G-1025), Las Vegas (World Market Center, B-146), and once a year at the International Causal Furniture Market in Chicago, IL (The Merchandise Mart, No. 8-9036A). Groovystuff is also a major sponsor of "*The University Hall of Innovation & Job Creation*," a non-profit founded in 2012 by Chris Bruning that improves the competitiveness of consumer products here in the US by supplying the residential home furnishings industry with the most current education, research, market statistics, technology, product design and innovation, as well as a revolving human resource of graduates from the educational programs and universities that service our industry. For more information, please visit [www.groovystuff.com](http://www.groovystuff.com) or [www.facebook.com/groovystuff](http://www.facebook.com/groovystuff)