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Student gives Center for Detectors welcoming look

Graphic design major Allison Conte helps brand research center



A. Sue Weisler

Undergraduate Allison Conte designed signage for the Center for Detectors in Engineering Hall.

Allison Conte's portfolio just got a little heavier.

The third-year graphic design major in RIT's College of Imaging Arts and Sciences recently designed glass and metal signage for the [Center for Detectors](#), located on the third floor of Engineering Hall.

Conte, an administrative assistant at the research center, is an important member of the student team who keeps operations running during the director's frequent travels. Conte was surprised when Don Figer, director of the Center for Detectors, asked her to design the signs welcoming visitors to the center.

"Don wanted me to direct the project," says Conte, from Manhasset, N.Y. "I think he wanted to see how far I could take it by myself."

Figer envisioned a series of professional signs conveying the center's role in advancing photon detectors and related technologies for astrophysics, biomedical imaging, Earth system science and inter-planetary travel.

"I asked Allison to think like a professional designer to see how she would respond," Figer says. "Sometimes I am surprised when I see how people deliver when they have room to run, and Allison exceeded my expectations."

Conte collaborated with Figer on the content and worked directly with Signs Now Rochester Inc. to produce the final product. She arranged for freshly painted walls and track lighting to showcase the glass welcome sign measuring 32 inches high by 44 inches wide—the largest design Conte has ever executed.

Further down the hall, three metal panels, each measuring 44 inches high by 24 inches wide, describe the center's contributions to detector applications and performance. The images affixed to the metal panels can be removed and refreshed.

"It was definitely a challenge designing for this scale and with this amount of detail," Conte says. "I've never done that before—nothing that large. I had to figure out how the content was going to look when it was four times as large."

Designs and pictures of the four signs are now part of Conte's portfolio. She credits her design experience at the center for helping her land a summer internship with Procter & Gamble.

“I’ve had a lot of responsibility with this project,” Conte says. “It shows that I’m able to handle the process all the way from the beginning to the end, and that I can produce professional designs.”