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AWARD WINNING ARMADILLO CHAIR UNVEILED AT ICFF 2009

Student designer is the youngest to ever win annual design competition

New York, N.Y. (May 16, 2009) – Wilsonart today named Aodh O Donnell as the winner of its 2009 “Wilsonart Challenges”... student design competition at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF). O Donnell’s winning entry, the Armadillo Chair, adapts a simple shape into new dimensions.

The competition challenges students to design (and build) a functional chair that incorporates the iconic form of the Wilsonart Laminate chip.

O Donnell took the challenge literally and shingled a curvilinear form in woodgrain laminate chips. This chair celebrates the strength and durability of Wilsonart Laminate by relating them to the armored shell of an armadillo. O Donnell was a mere sophomore in the Industrial Design department at Philadelphia University when the chair was created, and he is the youngest winner to ever achieve this honor in the program. The award-winning entry and five runners-up entries will be displayed during ICFF at the Wilsonart Contract Booth #2248 and on www.wilsonartcontract.com.

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ICFF winner, cont'd, page 1

About Wilsonart Challenges...

Wilsonart sponsors the “Wilsonart Challenges”... student design scholarship program to foster the careers of emerging furniture designers in North America. Each year, this competition challenges students at a designated design school to create a unique chair that incorporates the iconic shape of the Wilsonart Laminate sample chip.

In Winter, 2008, Wilsonart selected the Industrial Design Department at the University of Philadelphia to host the Challenge. The competition is in reality a semester-long course taught by professors Josh Owen, an accomplished industrial designer, and Jason Lempieri, an architect, and Grace Jeffers, design historian and materials specialist. The students were taught about laminate; its history, technical capabilities, current market trends, and sustainability issues as well as the history of chairs as decorative art forms. Throughout the course of the semester, concepts were generated, discussed and refined through a series of exercises and critiques. A jury selected the winner and finalists on the last day of class.

Wilsonart Laminate is manufactured by Wilsonart International, based in Temple, Texas, and is a part of a decorative surfacing portfolio, including, Wilsonart® Solid Surface, Wilsonart® Flooring and Wilsonart® Adhesives. Wilsonart Laminate designs have been recognized for design leadership by Cooper-Hewitt, Interior Design, Architectural Record and Contract Magazine. For more information about Wilsonart Laminate or any Wilsonart product, please call the Customer Service Hotline at 800.433.3222. Consumers can also visit www.countertop.com and professionals can visit www.wilsonartcontract.com.

Philadelphia University Industrial Design is taught in the best possible context – on a campus with a mission to educate professionals. The professions that Industrial Designers typically collaborate with - other design professions, scholars in the liberal arts, business people, engineers, healthcare professionals and scientists - are all represented on this campus in an academic climate where interdisciplinary collaborations thrive. For more information about industrial design at Philadelphia University, please call 215-951-2253 or visit www.philau.edu/ind.

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