



David Lassman / The Post-Standard

**SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY** communication design students (from left) Anita Sukha, Davina Roshansky and Kelly Kurkjian show their ideas about branding the Creekwalk in Syracuse during a class presentation at The Warehouse on West Fayette Street.

# Real-Life Lesson

## SU students help city with Creekwalk project

By Julie McMahon  
Contributing Writer

Onondaga Creek is moving one step closer to revitalization, thanks to designs by Syracuse University students.

"We're helping to create a place where people can walk, spend time and learn a little history of the city," said Taylor Hurewitz, a communications design student who is working as a public relations manager on the Creekwalk revitalization project.

Hurewitz is among the SU juniors in the School of Visual and Performing Arts who are required to take the Design Project Management course taught by professors Rod Martinez and William Padgett.

Each year, the class works as a design agency for a local client. Students develop concepts in branding, marketing, event planning, technology and "way finding," which means using signs to guide and provide information to walkers. On April 18, the class will present the proposals they have worked on over the semester, hoping the city will be able to implement some of the ideas.

The collaboration between the city and SU benefits both sides, say those involved. The city gets high-quality design consultation without having to hire an outside agency, students practice their trade in a realistic setting and the community gets a boost from the Creekwalk revitalization project,

said Andrew Maxwell, the city's director of planning and sustainability.

"It was something that was really great timing and opportune for us," he said.

"They have so much energy, and they've been very professional. To see the Creekwalk through their eyes is very interesting. They're very talented and have so far showed great products."

Without the students' contributions, Maxwell said, he wouldn't have the money or resources to obtain the level and variety of design work available through the collaboration.

The students said they were just as excited about the partnership.

"It's not a student project — it's a real project," said Katja Andersson, another student working on public relations for the project. "We work with people who are professionals, and that means that we're professionals."

One of the organizations the group has worked with is the Onondaga Historical Association. The OHA is helping to come up with information for signage along the creek, an element of the project the city is most likely to implement.

"That's a bit of a challenge — to create an identity for the creek — but that body of water having a negative reputation is going to change," said Dennis Connors, OHA curator of history. "The students bring a young, fresh perspective."



**SU ASSOCIATE**  
professor of  
communica-  
tions design  
William Padgett  
comments on  
the Creekwalk  
presentation.  
Several city offi-  
cials and others  
attended the  
session.