

Hello Students, Colleagues and Friends,

This newsletter comes in three parts: a thank you, a hurrah, and the educational section. To those of you for which all three do not apply, I beg your indulgence.

### **Part I.**

Thank you to all of you who have sent kind words, thoughts, prayers and cards during the time of our recent loss. Mom was a powerful force; a woman who grubbed out an early life in the Arizona desert and who ended life a world traveler and adventurer. She will be missed and again, I thank you for your kindnesses.

### **Part II.**

HURRAH for a wonderful time with Janine Benyus! For those of you who attended her talks, I thank you for your thunderous welcome (She was amazed!) as well as your thoughtful questions at seminars, meals, reception, and in the hallways! She thoroughly enjoyed herself in Nashville both during the conference and after all was done and the dancing began. (A special thanks to Jaclyn Khoury there!)

On a more "business-y" note, she was very impressed with the array of student projects, past and present, that we described to her. She found alumni and students she talked with thoughtful, creative and downright impressive. She's giving limited talks these days, making exceptions for us, MIT this week and just a few others but she told me she'll definitely visit us again. Meanwhile, biomimicry will continue to grow at Lipscomb and through all of you like the folks at Hickory Hydroponics (Corbin Gibson, Paula Smith, Samuel Leu and Ron Taylor) and within the University itself!

*Let me urge you to write President Lowry if you enjoyed Janine's talk, the conference and/or biomimicry as part of your curriculum. Several of you have contacted me with meaningful ideas or inspiration you gained through coming into Janine's sphere or biomimicry in general. This is such a cutting edge discipline that the program would benefit from letters to Dr. Lowry describing the difference it has made in your thinking and business models. Your eloquence should be heard by not just me, but that that higher power!*

### **Part III.**

Many of you know I help out Biomimicry 3.8 by serving on their Biomimicry Education Advisory Board. I recently received an essay from one of our colleagues there, which addressed not only the bounty of inspiration and technical know-how we can derive from nature; but included research from others detailing the psychological and enhanced problem-solving capacity which can be attained by looking to nature for "how to do" what we need to for thriving businesses and community ecosystems. Heidi hails from Arizona State where she teaches design at their Innovation Space. I'm very pleased to share this essay with you as it will delight and inform. She doesn't follow

any tool with blind devotion and, as a tease, I'll give you a taste of her work. She writes,

" I would like to make another case for bringing the natural world into the arena of the problem-solving arts. In his 2010 book *Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation*, science writer Steven Johnson explores the theory of the "adjacent possible," developed by the systems biologist Stuart Kaufmann. Describing it as the "collection of existing parts" from which good ideas are built, Johnson views the adjacent possible as a kind of grab-bag of ideas and experiences that we collect from simply being in the world — overhearing a conversation about motorcycles in the line at Starbuck's; having a friend drag us to a modern dance concert that we'd never attend on our own; hearing a news report about marine kelp on the radio; stumbling across a novel about Afghanistan while shopping for a cookbook; sitting across the table from a beat cop at a dinner party; studying a sloth in the rainforest canopy. [8] "

This "adjacent possible" again underscores the importance of ecotones - whether at the forest edge or a social one. Heidi definitely views all of us as being a part OF the world instead of apart FROM it. She said for some reason, you'll have to cut and paste it into your browser to get it to work. <http://places.designobserver.com/feature/biomimicry-and-design-education/32848/> Consider her essay the body of this newsletter.

Also, I have information on two opportunities: a free Student Autocad webinar from Autodesk (the folks that created the "Avatar" suits) and a brand new PhD design program in Biomimicry from our University partners up in Ohio. If any of you are interested, just give me a ring or an e-mail.

And because several of you liked the quote, we'll close with another:

*"After the Biomimicry Weekend was over, we were all sent a medallion with an engraved "Inukshuk" – a stone monument erected in the image of a human, used to mark a trail through the Arctic by the Inuit. It came with a long explanation, "thanks" for our participation, and the following message at the end: **"The difference we make today counts in all our tomorrows. Our company can never become what we are not."** - Diane Brandli blogging a Ray Anderson quote*

Here's to you and our small planet too,

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*Give good people good information and they'll do good things.*

(If you've just received this single newsletter, it may be because I thought you'd be interested in this particular subject. You may or may not get others. If you want on my list regularly, e-mail me. If you want off my list, e-mail me. Thanks!)